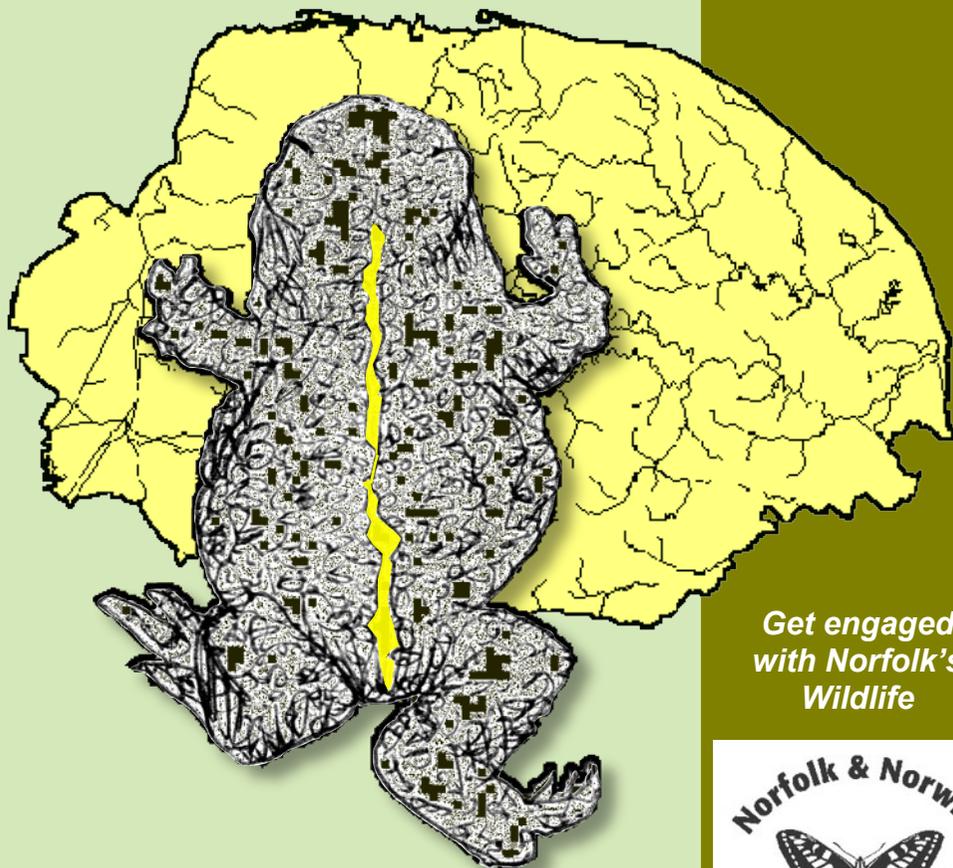


The Norfolk

SUMMER 2011  
Number 113

# *Natterjack*



Get engaged  
with Norfolk's  
Wildlife



The quarterly bulletin of the  
Norfolk & Norwich Naturalists' Society

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# Norfolk & Norwich Naturalists' Society

Founded 1869

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## Toad-in-the-hole....

What a Spring we have enjoyed but at what cost later. Will the lack of rain throughout April have a dramatic effect on our wildlife. Insects it seems have enjoyed the sun and when they have managed to keep out of the biting NE'ly they have filled the air with tiny wings - at least as far as the St. Mark's Fly and the micro-moth *Adela reaumurella*. Both have been seen from the end of April through the beginning of May in profusion, at least around my patch - Beeston & Sheringham Commons.

My thanks to all those who have contributed to '*Natterjack*' this quarter and I trust all members will have a great summer ahead.

FF

## The Wind In The Willow

Laurie Hall

I have been recording plants in the village of Felthorpe for a bit over twelve years. During that time it has become evident that certain genera are very well represented there. Two of particular note as species or hybrids of these include some particularly scarce members of the Norfolk flora. Here I shall deal with one of these genera, *Salix*. Members of this genus form the willows. A total of 17 species of this genus or its hybrids have been found, reinforcing my belief that frequent recording in the same habitat is quite likely to yield good results.

I present results in order of the year of discovery and include the name of a verifier. This name will be that of Alec Bull (ALB) or of Bob Ellis (RWE), both distinguished botanists and either present or past county recorders, whilst the abbreviation (ref) refers to the national referee for *Salix* (Mr. Desmond Meikle) who is also the author of the BSBI handbook on Willows and Poplars. The initials (BE) refer to Brian Eversham, Director of the Wildlife Trust of Beds, Northants and Cambs. Also given for some plants is the number of squares that the plant appears in in E. Norfolk (Some 1440 such squares of side 2km in the county as a whole.)

1998 As might be expected, very common species were found first. These include *Salix alba* (White Willow), *S. cinerea* (Grey Willow), *S. caprea* (Goat Willow), *S. fragilis* (ref)(Crack Willow) and *S. viminalis* (Osier.) Also found were *S. repens* (Creeping Willow),(ref, ALB, RWE) a less common very small species, in some 28 squares in the Flora in E. Norfolk, present on a very old meadow and the hybrid *S. x smithiana* (formerly *S. x sericans*) (Broad-leaved Osier)(*S. viminalis*

*x S. caprea* (ALB) in a meadow partly used as a woodyard and present in some 21 squares in E. Norfolk in the Flora. This number will be shown as N from now on.

2000 A willow found in a hedge in a lane proved to be *S. aurita* (Eared Willow) (ALB, BE) (N=14). Nearby and at two other sites was *S. x calodendron*, a triple hybrid (*S. viminalis x S. caprea x S. cinerea*) (Holme Willow) (ALB.)

By 2004, I had realised that some hybrids appeared well represented in West Norfolk but had very low appearance figures in the East of the county. Low density recording seemed to be one possible answer so I set out to find some of the 'missing' hybrids. *S. x reichardtii* (*S. caprea x S. cinerea*) (ref.) was found at a lake edge (N in E. Norfolk 2, W. Norfolk 38) and *S. x multinervis* (*S. cinerea x S. aurita*) (ref, ALB) (N =1 in E and W. Norfolk.) *S. x rubens* (*S. alba x S. fragilis*) (Hybrid Crack Willow) (ref) was also revealed (N = 5 in E, 6 in W) and then followed two exciting discoveries. *S. x ehrhartiana* (*S. alba x S. pentandra*) (ref) was found on the churchyard bank. This involved sending leaves and catkins in two separate years to the referee. The plant has N = 0 in E and 1 in W. Norfolk. An even rarer specimen was then found in a small wood behind the cricket ground. Again after two sets of submissions to the referee, this proved to be *S. pontederiana* (*S. purpurea x S. cinerea*) (ref). Never recorded in E. Norfolk and with one record from 1969 in the W, this hybrid had never before been seen by the referee in England although he was familiar with it from Scotland. The same year had yielded one of the parents just mentioned, *S. purpurea* (Purple Willow) (ref., RWE) from the same wood (N =24 in E.) I continued the 'hybrid hunt' in 2006 and found *S. x holosericea* (formerly *S. x smithiana* (*S. viminalis x S. cinerea*) (ref) (N = 5 in E, 7 in W) and also confirmed was *S. x sepulcralis*, a hybrid Weeping Willow (*S. alba x S. babylonica*) (ref).



Last year, 2010, turned up what might prove to be an extreme rarity. On the side of a drain in an ancient meadow was found a tiny willow with notably dark leaves. Specimens were sent to the referee, correspondence followed, a further specimen and photographs of the site and plant were despatched and the referee suggested that the plant might be *S. x felina* (*S. repens x S. myrsinifolia*.) This hybrid has only three British occurrences as shown by the BSBI maps. Confirmation will not be possible until the April of this year when catkins can be sent to the referee but such confirmation would provide a very welcome addition to the county flora.

# Ruby-tail Puzzle

Hans Watson



On the last occasion that I watched Ruby-tailed wasps, I witnessed behaviour that I had previously heard about but not taken seriously, and certainly had not seen myself.

There are several species of Ruby-tail wasps in Britain and they are well known for their cuckoo-like habit of laying their eggs in the nests of other species of solitary wasp or bee. Whilst searching for the nests of host species, ruby-tails are placing themselves in a fairly hazardous situation, as species such as Mason wasps and bees, will aggressively defend their nest if they catch the ruby-tail near it, and they have potent stings. There are also spiders that like to lay in wait in holes and cracks, and this brings me to the behaviour mentioned above.

Whilst watching and photographing Ruby-tailed wasps (*Chrysis ignita*), I noticed that there were quite a few webs radiating out from holes and cracks in the stone wall where the ruby-tails were active. On several occasions I saw ruby-tails get caught up in the larger tangles of web, but almost immediately manage to free themselves, and continue with their active searching. On one of these occasions a spider rushed out and appeared to grab the ruby-tail briefly, before releasing it, and speedily retreating back into its lair. The ruby-tail appeared completely undamaged and continued with its business, seemingly unconcerned with this encounter. Ruby-tails are blessed with a very hard cuticle that protects them from the stings of other wasps, and presumably from the spiders that they encounter. They can also roll up, ball like for extra protection. The oddest behaviour that I witnessed was when a ruby-tail appeared to repeatedly tap one of the spider webs near to a hole containing a spider, almost as if it was trying to provoke the spider to emerge from its hole. I have since looked many times at the photograph taken of the ruby-tail tapping the web, and can think of no logical explanation for this behaviour. I am aware that the society has members with vastly more knowledge of these insects than myself, and wonder if they have witnessed any similar behaviour, or know of any literature concerning the interaction of ruby-tails with spiders.



# The hairy-footed flower bee, *Anthophora plumipes*, on Weybourne beach



Nick Owens

On Weybourne beach there is a large colony of the bee, *Anthophora plumipes*, in a stump of eroded cliff, surrounded by shingle. In spring 2010 there were around 800 nest holes, all on the south-facing (landward) side. This is a solitary bee rather than a social bee – but they tend to gather together at suitable nesting sites. From April to June there was a melee of bees coming and going. The females dig the holes and stock one chamber at a time with pollen. An egg is laid on the pollen, which is the food for the growing larva. The chambers are egg-shaped and a couple of centimetres long. When the cliff crumbled at one point in March, some of these fell out as compacted clay shells, leaving a surface like giant Aero chocolate. Each chamber was lined with a skin, which is said to be secreted by Dufour's gland (see photo). The bees spend the winter newly emerged inside their sealed chambers. One of the part-broken chambers I found in March contained a male, ready to go (see photo).

The males are ginger-brown and the females are all black, except for orange hairs on the hind tibia and tarsus. The males appear first, and have a darting rapid flight. They mark territories on branches to attract emerging females. It is the male that gives the species its name from the strange long hairs on its middle legs, but what these are for I have not discovered – perhaps distributing pheromones. They can easily be confused with bumblebees. The male looks very like a common carder bee. However, the male has a yellow face and the female does not have a proper pollen basket on the hind tibia. The tongue is very long. Lungwort is a favourite nectar source, as well as primroses and members of the mint family (Lamiaceae). Pollen collected at Weybourne varied from yellow to orange in colour, possibly from pussy willow and gorse (see photo).

Among the *Anthophora* on Weybourne beach I found their beautiful cuckoo bee, *Melecta albifrons*. (see photo). This bee is slightly smaller than its host and has prominent white hair patches on the abdomen and legs. The female cuckoo bees were crawling in and out of the holes, looking for newly supplied cells (where they lay their own egg in the food store of *Anthophora*). David Baldock reports seeing a female *Anthophora* dragging a *Melecta* out of its burrow, but I have not yet seen this at Weybourne. The frenzied circling flights around the nest area my help to deter *Melecta* from following returning pollen-laden females (as well as memorising the position of the nest hole on leaving). *Anthophora plumipes* is very common in gardens in early spring. *Melecta* can also be seen in gardens. It is widespread in Norfolk, but rather scarce, though probably overlooked. I have also found *Anthophora furcata* in my Weybourne garden – a smaller greyish species. Two other members of the genus occur in Norfolk, but both are rare.

**Footnote:**

I watched two Rooks eating the bees at the colony in the mound of marl on the beach at Weybourne just to the west of the reed bed on the morning of 1<sup>st</sup> April. They were simply picking them up as they landed near the holes. The other bees flying around did not seem to be concerned and showed no signs of aggression and the Rooks were clearly not worried by their presence. I have looked it up in BWP and see that *Hymenoptera* are included in their diet but I bet this is the first time this particular prey item has been recorded.

[both female and male bees were observed being taken]

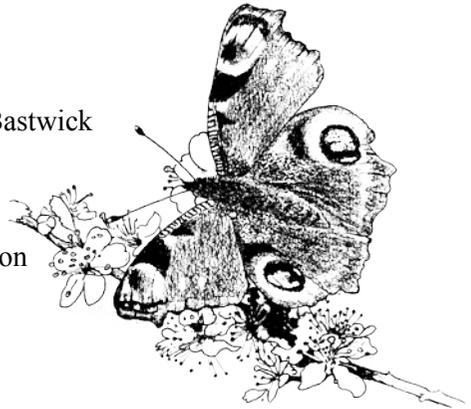
*Moss Taylor*

## The First of Spring

Some early records of common species from the NNNS Wildlife Group forum:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/norfolk-wildlife>

Red Admiral 16th Jan Felbrigg  
 Brimstone 16th Jan Lynford  
 Adder 1st week of Feb Roydon Common  
 Small Tortoiseshell 8th Feb Repps-with-Bastwick  
 Small Tortoiseshell 8th Feb Drayton  
 Peacock 8th Feb Beeston Common  
 Common Frog 10th Feb Norwich  
 Common Lizard 24th Feb Roydon Common  
 Comma 7th March Hoveton  
 Speckled Wood 9th March Dryton  
 Small Copper 12th March Kelling Heath  
 Chiffchaff 13th March Thetford



## 'Cyclopiian' Gatekeeper

*Bernard Watts*

*My apologies to Bernard and NNNS members as part of the last sentence of the article in Natterjack No 112 (page 4) was inadvertently missed off due to a text box error. Please find the completed sentence below:*

This suggests a wasp, say, pierced the pupa twice just after formation and probably actually struck a vein.

# Beautiful Grebes

*Tony Howes*



During early spring, birds start going through their breeding rituals, giving display flights such as the marsh harriers over the fens, wood pigeons strutting about with their inflated breasts etc, they are really showing off, holding territory and looking for mates.

One display I have always looked forward to is that of the great crested grebe, this must be one of the most elegant rituals in nature. The birds come together on the water with rusty red ruffs and crests spread wide, they sway their heads from side to side as they face one another. Some times it culminates in the 'weed dance' which entails one or both birds diving to the bottom and bringing up weed, again facing one another but rising right out of the water by paddling with their lobed feet. These displays are usually accompanied by their deep growling calls. Later they start building their floating nests, often in a reed bed, consisting of vegetation built up to make a stable platform, on which they lay up to six eggs. The young, when they hatch are the cutest little things, black and white stripes, like mint hum-bugs.

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## Identification Perseverance

*Nick Elsey*

We spent breakfast gazing out of the window at the gloom that greeted us on a February morning and anticipated that we were unlikely to witness any wildlife behaviour. How wrong could we be?

Not being particularly cold and with our windows open so that we could enjoy the garden birds singing, Rubyna said that she thought lots of geese were flying directly over our property. Looking out, we could hardly see 20 yards up the road, never mind skyward. Having had a likely identification half put into my head, I listened intently, but the sound didn't quite fit the bill (no pun intended). The call of the flock sounded much gentler than that of our most likely goose species, the Greylag.

My next thought was that the noise might be coming from the wing beats of Mute Swans, a sound of which I am familiar, but I didn't think that we were likely to get such a large flock of these magnificent birds flying over us. So we concluded that if they were probably not geese, then they could still be one of our species of migrant swan.

I checked on Paul Doherty's DVD guide to the Birds of Britain and Europe. Sadly, there is no soundtrack for the Bewick and I wondered if they are also mute. I then

loaded the British Library CD of British Bird Sounds. By this time I was wondering how accurately I could remember the sound that we had heard. Thankfully, there was a recording of the Bewick swan and our identification was almost complete. My only nagging doubt was that we live about 4 miles south of Norwich, not near Welney or Catfield, where we have seen them before. Luckily and maybe because of their disorientation in the low mist, the flock appeared to fly back over us once again.

Not wishing to be defeated, I phoned Chris Skinner, a neighbouring naturalist, who farms at a higher elevation to us. He verified that he had seen two distinct flocks (so they hadn't come back) totalling about 150 individuals, flying in V formations over the village and were heading in a north easterly direction.

Although we hadn't seen anything, we could feel satisfied that through perseverance and having access to good references, we were able to make an accurate identification which was then promptly recorded at the BTO and WWT.



## **The Mysterious Death of a Deer**

*Michael Olin*

This article in Natterjack No. 112 makes fascinating reading, particularly the paragraph on Mr Coates's sighting.

In the spring of 2007, a friend and I were doing a bird survey on a farm near Briston as part of the RSPB's VFA project. At around eight on a sunny morning, I saw what I believe to have been a panther disappearing into a hedge. I didn't see its head, but I saw its shoulders, body (around 1 m in length, and around 75 cm high at the shoulders), typically feline hindquarters, and a long slim tail. The animal was completely black. I mentioned the sighting to the farmer, who said whilst he'd not actually seen the cat, whenever he'd taken cattle into the field there, they'd been uneasy. This was a good location for deer - we saw some during our visit - so there'd be no need for the creature to trouble the cattle.

# Winter Survival

*Tony Howes*



The severe weather we experienced over the last winter was exceptionally cold at times, with hard frosts and snow for long periods, testing times indeed for all our wildlife, especially the small birds. They really do struggle to survive in such conditions

Keeping feeders topped up, and water kept free of ice helps of course, but the long hours of darkness take their toll on these little balls of feathers and one expects casualties. However, I have been pleasantly surprised at what I have been seeing over the last month or so; long tailed tits, goldcrests, cettis warblers, pied wagtails, have all been seen in pleasing numbers, likewise barn owls. I have not seen any kingfishers, and herons seem thin on the ground, but most birds seem to have come through the cold spell very well.

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## What's in a name?

*Mike Sweeney*

Today was an interesting one for birds in my Langham garden. First to arrive this morning was a party of Long-tailed bushtits, so aptly (re-)named as they swooped in to some...bushes. Meanwhile a European robin began singing, and at the top of the large ash I could hear the twinkling calls of some European goldfinches. Then a raucous party of Western jackdaws descended onto the shed roof for the bread, obviously in high spirits at finding themselves in the West. Not to be out-done, a Winter wren sang his marvellous song- a bit of a surprise now that Spring is here- shouldn't he be gone? Amidst all this I could just make out the soft calls of an elusive Eurasian bullfinch in the brambles at the edge of the garden. Finally, and best of all, a couple of Bohemian waxwings flew over, no doubt heading back to Bohemia (somewhere near the Czech Republic).

Well, a nice morning I'm sure you'd agree, except that to me none of the named birds actually appeared. But I did see such nice old friends as Long-tailed tit, robin, goldfinch, jackdaw and bullfinch. The waxwings I made up.

I know that some of these new names have been around for a few years now, but I dislike their ugliness and proliferation. Publications are increasingly cluttered with them- for example the Norfolk Bird Report, and now the Checklist of Norfolk Birds which came with the latest *Natterjack*. I thought Winter Wren was

bad enough, but I find that the British Ornithologists' Union commands us to use Long-tailed bushtit. (The checklist helpfully puts Tit in brackets). Many of these new names are classic committee products, such as the over-used Common and Eurasian ('Come on, we've been at this for five hours already, surely someone can do better than Eurasian?')

But are there good reasons for all this name altering? Well, I can understand it if a bird is misnamed (such as the hedge sparrow, which is not a sparrow). And I realise that the Long-tailed tit is only related to the true tit family, - but what do we actually gain by calling it a bushtit? Perhaps it helps to avoid misunderstandings between ornithologists in other countries, or even within our own? But does anyone really think that if I refer to a 'wren', even in writing, I mean anything other than our familiar wren, as long as I also use its Latin name, which is known the world over? That's why we have the Latin names, ever since Linneaus invented the system.

Our common, vernacular names are delightful, often centuries old, and not to be trifled with! The French also have theirs, and no-one is covered in confusion as a result- for instance we have the Hen harrier, they have the lovely Busard Saint Martin. Perhaps they are even now changing it to L'Harrier du Nord?

That is one of the saddest things about the mania for new names and this boring uniformity- it reveals a lack of feeling for tradition and the delights of the language. Imagine if the re-namers got their hands on our even more wonderful moth names... the Eurasian Oak Beauty anyone?

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## A biting question that's hard to swallow

*Carol Carpenter*



During the very warm spell in April I discovered a dead adult frog on the grass next to my pond. I went to find a trowel to remove it and on my return was somewhat surprised. A rather large Grass Snake had appeared and had already got half of it in its mouth. I had no idea that snakes eat carrion and (as you can see from the photo in Nats' Gallery) it had been dead for some time as there were flies on it even as it was being devoured. I wonder if this is usual. I have seen very few frogs this year, maybe due to the freezing winter or the extra dry spring or perhaps the snake has eaten them all already. I would have presumed that a shortage of food would drive it elsewhere. Any comments would be appreciated.

## A NOTE FROM YARMOUTH

*Michael Bean*

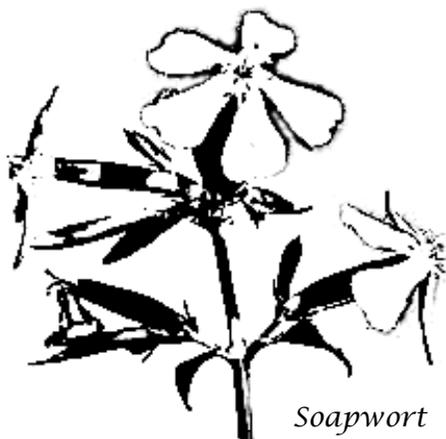
In 1977 I attended a talk by Ted Ellis on nature in east Norfolk. Among his many slides was one of a very healthy clump of Soapwort (*Saponaria officinalis*) growing at Burgh Castle. The significance of its occurrence there was that it was recorded in the same place – ‘near the inn’ – by Charles and James Paget, in 1834. Regrettably, to my knowledge, it no longer occurs at this site.

To be able to pin-point the recorded location of a species and recognise its longevity and health, over time, is a valuable aspect of survey work. The Pagets’ ‘Sketch of the Natural History of Great Yarmouth’ is one of the earliest examples of a published flora and fauna.

I’m reminded of the Common Sea Lavender (*Limonium vulgare*) which is abundant every year on the saltings of Breydon Water. This was not recorded at this location until the early 1930’s when Ted Ellis, whilst looking out of the window of a train, spotted a small clump growing on one of the ronds on the estuary’s north wall. He informed Arthur Patterson of his find by letter – a fascinating observation saved in the latter’s diaries kept in the Norfolk Records Office. After the floods of 1953 this plant took hold at the east end of the estuary and continues to flourish.

All of this came to mind on a weekend at the end of February, this year. In the 1970’s I undertook a survey of the flora in Yarmouth’s cemeteries. Quite a few of the species found must have been planted by relatives of those interred. Among them was Winter Heliotrope (*Petasites fragrans*). In years gone by the flower stems were often gathered and taken indoors where the warmer conditions would encourage the plant to infuse the home with its sweet fragrance; a pleasant effect which could last for days. I did once try this and can attest to its properties.

In the 1970’s there was quite a patch established in the northern section of the cemetery, which I guessed must have been introduced many year before. How delighted I was to revisit this spot, nearly 40 years later, and find the plant flourishing amongst the gravestones.



*Soapwort*

# Wells Sea Wall

Paul Banham

Wells Sea Wall runs for a mile due north from the Quay. On one side is the Beach Road, while on the other, to the East, is the "run", a wide tidal creek linking the Quay to the North Sea. Off shore, there is a tidal range of some seven metres. In the run, however the tide never falls much below mean sea level, but big spring tides, around new and full moon, can cover the saltmarsh, which is around 2.8 metres above sea level.

The run is worth a look, even though it is not as good as the rock-pools at West Runton. There are brown, green and red seaweeds. The browns are the "wracks", especially bladder wrack. Greens are represented by Sea Lettuce *Ulva lactuca* and reds by *Porphyria umbilicalis*, from which the Welsh make Laver Bread. All these can be found near the southern end of the Sea Wall, a stretch which the late Dick Hamond referred to as "Wells Rocks". On some of the upper lumps of flint or concrete grows the Channelled Wrack, here occurring in its "proper" form, contrasting with the form *libera*, to be found in saltmarshes near Blakeney Point, unattached to anything, but surviving caught up amongst the saltmarsh flowering plants. Of animal life, watch out for Gobies, Prawns and Possum Shrimps, looking rather like a swimming apostrophe! Back at the Quay, crabbing (known locally as "Gillying") may well be in progress. Many of these Shore Crabs no doubt get caught time after time.



Of larger plant species you can't miss the bushes of Shrubby Seablite, forming a belt along the upper tide-line. Here it is almost at the northern limit of its range. A bit further north there has been, in recent years, a good growth of Marsh Samphire, *Salicornia europaea*, prized as a delicacy. When I was a lad it was sold by fishmongers as far inland as Wymondham, and you can still buy it, roughly from July to September, from the mobile fish-bar on Wells Quay. On top of, and on the landward side of the wall, watch out for the wonderfully named Viper's Bugloss towards the north end, while down at road level grows Pale Flax, *Linum bienne*, one of very few sites for this species in the county.

One hardly needs to say that the wall is excellent for bird-watching: Little and Common Terns in Summer, Brent Geese in Winter, plus the occasional Grey Plover, Bar-tailed Godwit, and flocks of Dunlin and Knot.

# Strumpshaw and Cley

*Brian Macfarlane*



I am pleased to say that the weather has warmed slightly since I last wrote. In fact there has been a lot of warm sunshine recently. However that does not mean the birds have started to show in greater numbers.

Early last month I was in the Fenn hide at Strumpshaw when a fox appeared on the opposite bank. The bank consists of the spoil dug out of the channel, and stands about three feet higher than surrounding area. The fox was therefore in good view, and each time I clicked the shutter it turned and looked in my direction. It did not appear to be concerned and went on it's way, staying in view for some considerable time before heading for the river.

Another time I went into the woods to photograph the smaller birds, such as the tit family ( Great, Blue, March, and Coal ). This was very good despite low light, and sitting out in the open where they could see me 25 feet away. I spotted several Long-tailed field mice foraging on the ground, plus the usual Robin. I was thrilled to have a Tree Creeper come in quite close as I have never had the opportunity to get a shot of one so near. Inevitably a grey squirrel showed up very close and posed for me.

I occasionally go to the Tower hide along the river bank. The reason I avoid it is because it can be very muddy, and I don't want to slip over carrying expensive camera equipment! I think the easiest way to travel there is by ski-ing over the perfect mud consistency. Once I was there a dozen or so Canada geese flew in to land on the water. It was not long before there was unrest, and chaos ensued. I enclose one encounter of many. Note they are even putting their tongues out at one another. ( The height of rudeness!) Redpoll and Bullfinches have been seen along the sandy path recently. The Chiffchaff is calling frequently.

I took a trip up to Cley recently to spend time in the Daulk hide. It was a lovely day, but the problem for photography can be the sun shining towards the hide openings. As I entered the hide I saw a Little Egret feeding just 20 yards away. I quickly got in position to get a few shots before it moved off. It came back later giving an opportunity for a few landing shots. Over to the left of the hide there was about 100 Avocets all huddled together fast asleep. After an hour or so they, along with many other species, were spooked by something flying overhead. The sky was filled with wheeling birds, which made a great spectacle, and gave great opportunities to photograph flying birds which until that point had been devoid of all life!

Visiting these reserves is a great privilege, and give me many hours of pleasure. Needless to say it relieves me of having to do the washing up which is also beneficial. Thanks to all those who keep them managed for our benefit.

# RESEARCH

**Round-up**

## Research Group Field Meetings

The following meetings have been arranged:-

**Thursday April 14<sup>th</sup>** Bowthorpe Marshes etc.

Parking and meeting at the small car park at the SW corner of Bland Rd, West Earlham (there is additional roadside parking here if the car park is full), at approx. TG185087.

**Saturday May 14<sup>th</sup>** Mile Cross/Marriots Way (CWS);

Parking and meet at eastern end of Swanton Rd, just off Mile Cross Rd at TG216099.

**Thursday June 9<sup>th</sup>** Bowthorpe;

**Sunday July 10<sup>th</sup>** Joint NNNS meeting at Knapton to explore nearby green lanes. Parking in small car park at the end of disused railway cutting nature reserve at TG300331.

**Thursday August 11<sup>th</sup>** Bowthorpe;

**Saturday September 10<sup>th</sup>** Mile Cross;

**Thursday October 13<sup>th</sup>** Poringland to explore nearby green lanes. Parking in unmarked layby on SW side of B1332 at TG274014.

All meetings start at 10.30 am.

All are welcome. Please contact either Bob Ellis or myself for further information. (Contact details in the front of *Natterjack*.)

Mary Ghullam  
Research Committee secretary

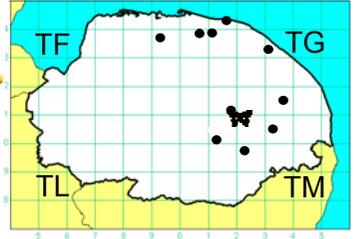
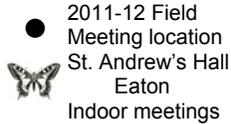
### ARTISTS WANTED

Do you have a flair for drawing? If so would you like to see your illustrations in '*Natterjack*? Our new chairman, Nick Owens thinks that this personal touch adds to the publication and has sent in some pictures. I agree with his thoughts and have included his 'swans in flight' and 'peacock'. It can be good if the drawings link to text therefore some pictures could be held over until a suitable article arrives or again they could be used alone on their own merit. Any natural history subject is welcome as long as it is from Norfolk and simple line / pen and ink type drawings reproduce much better. Other illustrations in '*Natterjack*' are often computer generated or clipart so to have the personal touch from members is far more pleasing and it would be another way that you can become involved with your Society.

**FF**

# Excursion

## Reports



The programme of field meetings and workshops has been completed and the programme cards / flyers give the details of the various 2011/2012 events. The *Natterjack* likes to carry as many of the Excursion reports as possible, so if you have particularly enjoyed an excursion or a workshop please volunteer to write up a short account and send it in.

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## 75 Years Ago from the NNS Transactions

### THE SEASON, 1935-36

BY THE SECRETARY (*H. W. Black*)

During 1936, five excursions were held as follows: - May 14th : At the invitation of Mr. And Mrs. McLean, members viewed the waterfowl kept on lakes at Gressenhall, Gorgate and Elsing. June 23rd : Mr. G. O. Searle took members over the Flitcham Flax Factory and showed how a new and successful Norfolk industry had been built up in recent years from small experimental beginnings. Improved varieties had been and were still being obtained by an elaborate system of cross-breeding and the microscopic examination of samples. Mycologists present were especially interested in cultures of flax pathogens in the laboratory at Flitcham. July 2nd : Thirty members and friends visited Scolt Head Island, where, despite a rather unfavourable season, nestlings were numerous. July 16th : An expedition to Wicken Fen, Cambridgeshire, took place mainly for the benefit of botanicle and entomological members who wished to compare Wicken with the East Norfolk fens. Insect life was little in evidence, following the stormy weather, though the warden managed to produce one of the naturalised large copper butterflies for inspection. Novel features were the presence of *Aster salignus* and compfrey (*Symphytum officinale*), the latter heavily rusted by *Melampsorella symphyti* (DC.) Bub. October 8th : A fungus foray, led by the President (*Colin McLean*), took place in Westwick woods and North Walsham Wood. After a successful afternoon, during which some species were discovered new to the county, members were entertained by Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Brooks.

(Extract from NNS Transactions 1936 Vol. XIV. Part II, pages 163-164)

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The next issue of '*The Norfolk Natterjack*' will be August 2011. Please send all articles and notes to the editor as soon as possible by

**July 1<sup>st</sup> 2011** to the following address:

Francis Farrow, 'Heathlands', 6 Havelock Road, Sheringham,  
Norfolk, NR26 8QD Email: [francis.f@virgin.net](mailto:francis.f@virgin.net)

Please send **all photographic material** to:  
Simon Harrap, 1 Norwich Road, Edgefield,  
Melton Constable, Norfolk, NR22 2RP Email: [harrap@onetel.net](mailto:harrap@onetel.net)

## Membership subscriptions

The N&NNS membership year runs from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> March. During this time members will receive four copies of the quarterly *Natterjack* newsletter, and annual copies of the Transactions of the Society, and the Norfolk Bird & Mammal Report.

**Membership renewals** are due on *1<sup>st</sup> April each year* and should be sent to the treasurer:

- David Richmond, 42 Richmond Rise, Reepham, Norfolk, NR10 4LS.

**New memberships** should be sent to:

- Mike Stew, 'Sandpipers', The Street, Kelling, Norfolk, NR25 7EL.

**Current rates are £15 for individual, family and group memberships** (£25 for individuals living overseas).

*Cheques payable to: Norfolk & Norwich Naturalists' Society.*

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## **Illustrations:**

Willow (page 2), Ruby-tailed Wasp (page 3), Soapwort (page 10) and Shore Crab (page 11) *Computer / Clipart*  
Peacock Butterfly (page 5) and Bewick's Swans (page 7) *Nick Owens*