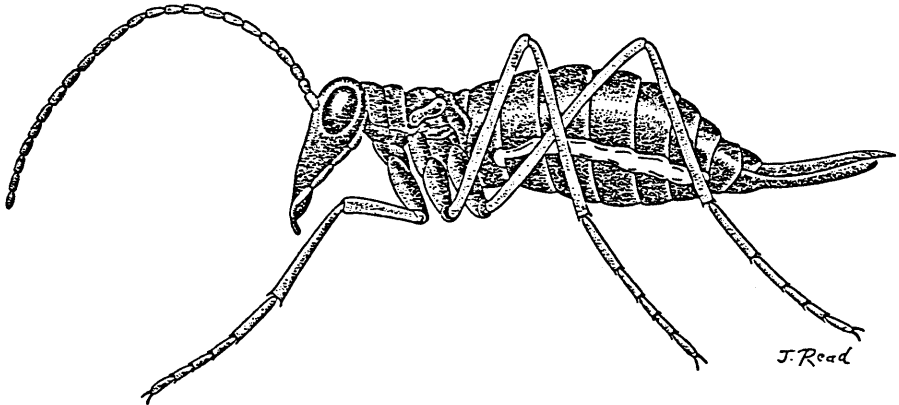


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Snow Flea – Boreus hyemalis

(John Read)

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Reports on Field Meetings

15th October 1994: Naddle Woods – Fungus Foray Leader: Geoff Naylor

Despite irresistible competition from Cumbria's first Greater Yellowlegs (*Tringa melanoleuca* – the bird – not *Cantharellus tubaeformis*, a fungus also known as Yellowlegs!) ten people found their way to the venue at various times.

A stroll along the road south of Burnbanks revealed a good variety of species including the scarce “Hoof Fungus” (*Fomes fomentarius*) which occurs in a few birch woods in North Cumbria but is normally associated with the Scottish Highlands. There followed a steep climb through Naddle Woods before eventually descending back to the road close to Haweswater Dam. A short diversion was then made along the “concrete road” towards Frith Woods, before returning to Burnbanks.

The autumn of 1994 had produced one of the best fungus crops for several years, but as usual we got the date wrong – in this case just a little too late. Nevertheless, after taking into account those species found before the official start of the meeting and those identified subsequently a substantial list of just over 80 was compiled. Notable amongst these were the following: *Macroscyphus macropus* – now apparently renamed *Helvella macropus*. *Clavulina rugosa* (Wrinkled Club) *Asterophora parasitica* – an unusual white fungus growing on the decaying remains of *Russula nigricans*. *Russula caerulea* (*R. amara*) and *R. queletii* were two impressive species found earlier in the day near the dam.

More common, and also more spectacular, were specimens of Orange Birch Bolete (*Leccinum versipelle*), Clouded Agaric (*Clitocybe nebularis*), *Tricholoma album* and Fly Agaric (*Amanita muscaria*). Another species, new to the leader, and apparently rare, was *Inocybe tigrina*.



Wrinkled Club Fungus

(Roy Atkins)

Other than fungi, a few moths aroused some interest and included Winter Moth, Autumn Green Carpet and Mottled Umber. Steve Hewitt found the notable lacebug *Acalypta brunnea* amongst moss in the wood.

Birds of note were Buzzard, the odd Nuthatch and a Woodcock in the high part of the wood.

A relaxing afternoon and a list of fungi roughly equal to last year's record total at Miltonrigg Wood.

GN

5th February 1995: Galloway – Wild Goose Chase

This trip suffered from the absence of Geoff Horne who, through illness, was unable to fill his usual role as leader. However, a small party of “hardy perennials” set out in inauspicious weather.

Beyond Cummertrees were unusually large numbers of Oystercatchers with Redshanks and Curlew. Near the Willow Burn was a group of 30 Whooper Swans and nearby, a small number of Shelduck. Fair numbers of Barnacle Geese were in the air and, near Caerlaverock, a large number was grazing. A flooded field contained some Mute Swans.

On the Nith estuary were Goldeneye, Wigeon and about a thousand Pintail on the far shore.

In the River Dee at Threave were Little Grebe, Goldeneye, Goosander, Teal and *ca.* 100 Wigeon which took off spectacularly at the appearance of a Peregrine just as we were leaving. We also saw *ca.* 50 White-fronted Geese beyond Threave Castle. From the west bank of the river we saw (? the same) Whitefronts, but this time counted *ca.* 150 geese. Near Loch Ken we saw a Buzzard and 25 Grey-lag Geese.

We started home rather early because of the rain and mist, but made a detour to Rockcliffe (Cumbria) where we had good views of Barnacle Geese and very distant sight of Pink-footed Geese.

Brian Spencer and John Hamer

Footnote – Just over two weeks later GN and a visiting birdwatcher from Leicester made a similar journey. Stopping at Auchenreoch Loch on the way to Loch Ken, a splendid drake Smew was found and on arrival at Loch Ken, almost incredibly, another one. On a bright sunny day, the Greenland Whitefronts gave the best possible views and a few Greylags were seen in a nearby field. Further downstream, 33 Whooper Swans were of note.

Next stop was at Southernness where 14 Purple Sandpipers gave very close views; then on to Caerlaverock where there were only 3000+ Barnacles but all the birds were together, and unbelievably close to one of the hides. This probably eased the difficulty of locating the single Light-bellied Brent which was found as close as the other geese. There was also a single Pinkfoot in this flock. Other birds of interest on the trip were several (Common) Buzzards, a Merlin, and in a mixed flock of finches at Southernness, a few Twite.

Geoff Naylor

Notes and Records

Status of Rough-legged Buzzards during Winter 1994/95

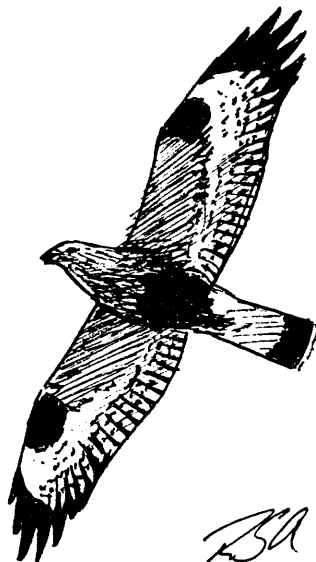
The autumn of 1994 will stick out in the minds of many bird-watchers for the remarkable migration of birds from the North East. This was unusual because rarities were turning up well into November. As well as many small passerines, there was an influx of raptors ranging from Common Buzzard, Red Kite, Goshawk (the first ringed bird to be found in Britain) and one of the largest movements of Rough-legged Buzzards to enter Britain.

Estimates suggest that up to 700 Rough-legged Buzzards entered the British Isles, with the majority seen along the east coast. By October 25th, birds were beginning to be seen around the Cumbrian border, with a single bird at Eals on the South Tyne and another reported from Carrock Fell in the northern Lakes. No records materialised in November.

On December 11th the Eals bird was still present and a further two were seen from the Penrith – Alston road near Hartside. The Eals bird drew the Cumbrian bird-watchers, some going as many as four times but all “dipped out”, including myself. The bird was showing very well on the 11th and 12th with even the postman being shown the bird by a Northumbrian naturalist. This same person, who tends to find a good view point and then sit and watch, actually sat for eight hours on the 12th and only had one view of the bird coming over from the Cumbrian border and flying into Whitfield.

Rough-legged Buzzard

(Roy Atkins)



There was an unconfirmed sighting of a bird over Milton near Brampton on 20th December, and two days later a

single bird flew from Crammell Linn near Gilsland over Spadeadam and on towards the Bewcastle Fells. This bird was probably seen again by John Hamer on 28th December on his way along the A69 near Gilsland, flying with Common Buzzard. Two birds were seen around this time perched in a tree at Nenthead and the Eals bird

was still present up to 8th January when the Eden Valley started to see birds.

Three birds were seen on Lazonby Fell circling high on 7th January and a single bird was seen flying over Kirkoswald on 8th January.

Many Cumbrian birders are very sceptical about these records (perhaps because they have not yet "ticked" the bird for themselves in Cumbria!) and one has been quoted as suggesting "They are all Common Buzzards". However, two of the people supplying records have studied Rough-legged Buzzards in Norway and Sweden, while others live with the Common Buzzard all the year round.

With half-term just about to start as I write I am sure more records will emerge and if more people had the patience to sit and wait for eight hours then perhaps there would be more satisfied twitchers.

John Miles

(Of the Cumbrian sightings mentioned here, only that at Carrock Fell has yet been confirmed by Cumbria Bird Club Records Panel. – Ed.)

Beetling About on St Bees Head in 1994

During 1994 I made several trips to St Bees to search for beetles and I managed to find some interesting species. My first trip to the Head was on 20th May when I collected and observed a number of weevils, the most noteworthy being *Otiorhynchus rugifrons*, and *Ceuthorhynchidius dawsoni* which was found in small numbers on its host plant Sea Plantain. On the same day I also found the intertidal staphylinid *Micralymma marina* in a rock crevice on the shore.

My second visit to the Head was on 6th August and on this occasion I was fortunate to find the very decorative weevil *Limobius borealis* on its foodplant Bloody Crane's-bill. This is apparently a new record for Cumbria. On the same day I found one specimen of *Apthona melancholica* which also turned out to be new to the county. This latter species is a minute leaf beetle which feeds on Sea Spurge and is quite a localised species in Britain.

My last trip to South Head was on 8th October in company with Stephen Hewitt. On the day a number of beetles were observed and recorded, the most notable being *Apion pallipes* which occurred in small numbers on Dog's Mercury. This is an uncommon weevil in Cumbria and is only known from a few scattered localities. Other notable insects seen on the same day were the Speckled Bush-cricket and the Dark Bush-cricket. A surprise sighting was a Clouded Yellow butterfly observed flying around a few Ragwort plants by the footpath just below the Pattering Holes.

John Read

Taphropeltus contractus – A Ground Bug New to Cumbria

On 22nd January I found one adult specimen of this small ground bug in litter and deep humus beneath a few stunted Gorse bushes on South Head, St Bees (NX 956117). This apparently is a new record for Cumbria and the first for vice-county 70 (Cumberland). *T. contractus* is widely distributed throughout southern Britain where it is usually associated with dry habitats.

I wish to thank Stephen Hewitt for very kindly identifying the bug for me and for information regarding its distribution and status.

John Read

Acalles roboris – A Weevil New to Cumberland (VC70)

On 9th December 1994 I found two specimens of this weevil in Talkin Head Wood (Geltsdale SSSI). The beetles were found in leaf litter and accumulations of humus in a small area of sessile oak woodland above the River Gelt (NY 544561).

Acalles roboris is a small, mottled brown weevil and is associated with leaf litter, mainly in oak woods. It is widespread but local in Britain and, due to its secretive habits, is possibly under-recorded in many areas. *A. roboris* was discovered in Roudsea Wood NNR (VC 69) by R.A. Crowson who found it while carrying out a survey of the coleoptera on the reserve during 1971.

The Talkin Head specimens provide the first record of this species for vice county 70 (Cumberland).

John Read

Two Recent Records of the Snow Flea in Cumbria

On 8th December 1994 while searching for beetles in Talkin Head Wood, Geltsdale, I found one adult female Snow Flea (*Boreus hyemalis*) in leaf litter and humus at the base of some sessile oak trees on a steep bank above the River Gelt (NY 544561). On 21st January 1995 while fell-walking in the Ennerdale Valley I found one adult male specimen walking over a small patch of snow near Low Beck (NY 151129).

B. hyemalis is a small, flightless insect related to the scorpion flies. It lives in moss and is active in the autumn and winter, usually from November to March. The database at Tullie House Museum has records of the species from the following 10km squares in Cumbria (VC 69 and 70): NY 11, 21, 22, 31, 32, 32, 41, 55; and SD 37, 38,

39, 47. Most of these records relate to upland areas although it can also be found at low altitude. To date the highest record in Cumbria is from Striding Edge on Helvellyn where it was found at 3000 feet in 1972 by R.G. Paul.

John Read

(Although living in moss the Snow Flea is most frequently noticed by the casual observer, hopping about on patches of snow – hence its common name. This curious insect is well worth watching out for when out walking in snowy conditions in the winter. Adults can be found through to the end of March. I can add an additional recent record of a female on snow, Melmerby Fell (NY 641362), 30th January 1995.

Ed.)

Wildfowl Travellers

I have received details of the sites of ringing and further sightings of some ringed wildfowl observed locally in recent months in conditions where the ring-numbers could be discerned.

Whooper Swan

A colour-ringed bird **VHP** (one out of a flock of 22) on fields near Longtown on 19th December 1994 had been ringed at Martin Mere on 15th December 1993, had then wintered at Martin Mere over the 1993/4 winter, and was back at Martin Mere three days after the Longtown sighting – on 22nd December 1994.

Greylag Goose

Two colour-ringed birds **PB** and **PV** with other Greylags by the River Eden near Scotby on 1st January 1995 had been ringed as a pair at Loch Eye (Easter Ross) on 16th October 1994, and were at Cromarty Firth on 22nd October 1994.

Pink-footed Goose

A colour-ringed bird **FZI** with 740 mixed Greylags and Pinkfeet by the River Eden near Scotby on 3rd January 1995 had been ringed at Martin Mere as a juvenile on 26th October 1991. It was in the Fylde area for the rest of that winter and in January/February 1993. There were no reports of the bird in the following winter (1993/4). After being seen at Scotby, it was reported near Annan on 28th January 1995.

Jeremy Roberts

Dragonfly News

Although 1994 was not an auspicious year for these sun-loving insects (ditto, naturalists!), there were at least a couple of interesting records.

From 30th May to 11th June, a male Broad-bodied Chaser (*Libellula depressa*) was present at Muncaster Castle (SD 19), where it was noted by Tony Warburton. It was clearly not fully coloured – and therefore recently emerged. For this reason alone, it may well have hatched nearby, making it the first Cumbrian breeding record since the 1980's, when there was a brief occupation of Tony's garden at Eskmeals by this species. The circumstances of the latter were clouded by a possible accidental introduction. The species is known to have wandered quite a bit in 1994, following good spring weather further south, but its established sites are, at nearest, in south Lancashire. Perhaps 1995 will reveal all.

The Keeled Skimmer (*Orthetrum coerulescens*) is an established species, but a scarce and restricted one. The finding of a good breeding colony near the south end of Lake Coniston, originally by Pete Burton on 20th July, was therefore a welcome discovery. This was not particularly close to any of the known sites and a new 10km record for the county (SD 29). As always for this species, the habitat is specialised – a boggy flush with very slow-moving shallow water-courses.

David Clarke

Moth Mouthings

I read Geoff Naylor's "Selections from the Moth Trap" (Vol. 2 No. 2) with interest and would like to make a few observations regarding moths and mothing myself.

For some years I have been running two Heath moth traps in my garden in Cumwhinton and recently have become the proud owner of a Robinson trap. However my "Heath-Robinson", or should I say my "Geoff Naylor", trap has been just as successful in its catch, both in number and diversity. This trap was based on the "G.N. prototype" *ie* an inverted plastic lamp-shade resting on a small dustbin; the hot and expensive bulb being protected from falling rain by a wired up pyrex oven dish lid.

I have recorded the macro moths which have come to light over the last ten years, and it is interesting to compare the times of capture from one year to another. The first moths to be caught each year nearly always include Early Moth, Dotted Border, Pale Brindled Beauty, Chestnut, March Moth and Hebrew Character. The last moths in late November and December include December Moth, Mottled Umber and Scarce Umber. My list for 1994 was checked by Geoff and he also compared his first date of capture with mine with interesting results. A comparison of the number of species common to our two gardens produced a total of 86 macros.



The number and diversity of moths reaches a peak around the middle of July when up to 30 species can be caught on one night in a single trap. The moths most frequently caught are Large Yellow Underwings and Common Rustics. New moths for 1994 include The Sprawler and the Swallow-tailed Moth. My total for 1994 is 105 species of 'macro' moth. I also have several species of Pug whose identifications await confirmation, and specimens of several genera which can only be positively identified by examining their genitalia. Many thanks to Mike Clementson for his invaluable help in identification.

As several of us operate moth traps in our gardens, an annual comparison of numbers, species and dates of first (and last) capture at light would be interesting.

Richard Little

*A Possible New Host Plant for the Leaf Beetle *Chaetocnema sahlbergi**

On 31st May 1994 while searching for beetles on Campfield Marsh (NY 207619) I discovered several adults of *C. sahlbergi* feeding on the leaves of Common Sorrel. The adult beetles were feeding mainly in the centre of the leaves, making small, irregular shaped holes in the surface. This species is usually associated with Glasswort (*Salicornia*) and in Britain this is regarded as being the main host plant of both the adults and the larvae. I plan to return to the site and make further observations on the association of this beetle with Sorrel and try to establish if this plant is also a larval host.

John Read

*A Red Data Book Hoverfly, *Anasimyia interpuncta*, New to Cumbria*

On 30th May 1994 I caught a single female *Anasimyia interpuncta* among rank vegetation by the River Waver at Lessonhall (NY 220503). This brightly coloured hoverfly has previously only been recorded from south-east England where it is rare (RDB3). It is known from coastal and inland marshes, where it is associated with tall emergent vegetation such as *Glyceria maxima*. The Lessonhall specimen is the first record for Cumbria and well north of the species' known range. Two other local hoverflies were also seen at the site – *Portevinia maculata* (the larvae develop in Ramsons) and *Chalcosyrphus nemorum* (a mainly southern species, associated with fallen timber in wet situations).

Stephen Hewitt

Results of the CNHS Questionnaire

Thank you to the 30 people who returned their questionnaires to me. I have done a quick analysis of the returns and give some of the findings below.

Length of membership varied from one year to 63 years, with an average of 15 years. The distance travelled to indoor meetings ranges from less than one mile to over 50 miles, with an average of about 12 miles.

Most people subscribe to the Society primarily for the evening lectures, while meeting other naturalists came a close second, followed by field meetings, the newsletter and workshops – in that order.

A popularity rating was worked out for each of the five choices by adding up the priority numbers given by each member (1 – 5) and dividing the total by the number of returns (where just one option was ticked this was translated as a 1 for that option). So if the 30 returns all put evening lectures as their first priority we would have $30 \times 1 = 30$. This total is divided by the number of returns (*ie* 30) to give a popularity rating of 1. Thus 1 represents the most popular choice, and 4 the least. In fact the ratings were as follows – Evening Lectures = 1.4, Meet Other Naturalists = 1.8, Field Meetings = 2.5, Newsletter = 3.5, Workshops = 4.0. As both the newsletter and workshops are new ideas it will be interesting to see if this pattern of reasons for joining the Society changes in the future.

87% thought that the format of the lectures was good, while 13% thought it fair, and nobody thought it poor. Among the suggestions were – more audience participation, more local records, fewer local records and more talks from members.

The majority of people felt that the balance of subject matter covered by the lectures was about right (77%), while some (17%) felt it was not. Among the subjects for which more talks were requested, “plants” was the most popular with “local subjects” and “mammals” close behind. Subjects which people asked for less of were “exotic subjects” and “birds” (it must be remembered that the majority were happy with the balance as it was – this is borne out by the fact that lectures on birds are regularly the best attended meetings).

Only 27% of members attend field meetings, the most common reason for not attending being lack of time and conflict with other interests. Most people did not want any change to the field meetings, although several returns did request more meetings on particular subjects as well as more surveys of specific sites. Subjects proposed were a moth evening (we have organised one for this summer), birds, mammals, flower meadows and limestone pavement (don't miss the trip to Orton Scar in May). One person requested Sunday meetings rather than Saturdays and we will try to get a better mix of the two days next year.

The vast majority of members (83%) have not attended the workshops. This is not



surprising as they are a recent development and also tend to be specialised. They have however been much enjoyed by those who have attended and several requests for future sessions have been received.

Everyone claimed to enjoy the newsletter. Suggestions included more contributions from different members (yes please! Let me have them), more information on specific sites, make it bigger and issue it more frequently (you must be joking!).

Some 70% of you claim to fill in record cards (which is encouraging – if it's true). Records are always welcome from anyone and everyone, as they help to build up a picture of the local wildlife.

It is encouraging to see that most people feel involved in the Society (66%). Although most (40%) do not want any increase in social events, 27% were in favour – with an Annual Dinner being the most popular proposal. There must be concern however over the 20% who did not feel involved in the Society – with one member complaining that the Society is unwelcoming.

It is apparent from the returns that members of Carlisle Natural History Society have many demands on their time and resources from a large number of local and national natural history organisations, covering a broad spectrum of natural history interests. The RSPB was the most frequently named, with Cumbria Wildlife Trust a close second.

General comments with regard to the Society included requests for more involvement in local conservation issues, resuming the Transactions of the Society, involving members more in local surveys and more frequent Centenary Conferences!

If you have any comments on the results of the questionnaire please let me have them – either as a note for the newsletter, or in confidence if you prefer. If you have not returned a questionnaire but would like to do so, I can supply one if required.

Stephen Hewitt

Your records wanted

The Society is carrying out ongoing surveys on the following groups, and any records you have for any species in these groups will be very gratefully received at Tullie House, or at any meeting:

Mammals;

Reptiles; Amphibians;

Dragonflies; Grasshoppers; Butterflies.

The Return of the Polecat

The Polecat is a native British mammal which had a widespread distribution until the 19th century gamekeeper and the gin-trap eradicated the species from England and Scotland. Now, from its Welsh refuge, it is spreading across the English Midlands. Co-incidentally with this return has come the appearance of the species in Cumbria. Its arrival here is not the result of natural colonisation. It has, over a period of possibly more than fifteen years, been re-introduced by a number of people, from stock about whose origins we know little. Unfortunately, those people responsible for the re-introductions have not, to my knowledge, published any information.

The Polecat, and its relative, the Ferret, are species about which a good deal of taxonomic confusion exists. The Ferret is certainly a domesticated Polecat. Because of minor skull features it was argued until recently that the Ferret was derived from the Steppe Polecat (*Mustella eversmanni*) rather than the western species (*M. putorius*), although there is now doubt about this. During its two thousand years of domestication the Ferret has been selectively bred and various modified colour forms have evolved. The albino form, especially, has been much favoured. Some Ferrets, however, retain the basic Polecat coloration but are in general lighter in colour, especially in the face. To ferreters these forms are known as "Polecat-ferrets". They are not Polecat × Ferret hybrids.

All Ferrets, of whatever colour, interbreed freely with Polecats and, of course, they do escape into the wild so that there can be a continuous, if small, admixture of Ferret genes in any wild Polecat population, and thus "genuine" Ferret × Polecat hybrids. Moreover, in various parts of the country breeding populations of feral Ferrets exist, so it is easy to understand the impossibility of assigning any positive genetic status to any one of these animals in the field. In fact we can see such a range of coloration in our Cumbrian animals from what looks like a "pure" Polecat through to what in some features may look more like a Polecat-ferret. From a practical and conservationist viewpoint of view, however, it seems reasonable to call our Cumbrian animals "Polecats" and note any unusual colour variants. It would certainly be interesting to discover if the number and type of these variants ultimately decline.

The presence of Polecats, which are very nocturnal animals, has come strongly to the notice of interested Cumbrian naturalists within the last three or four years. A letter in the *Cumberland & Westmorland Herald* told of some in a hen-run, there were instances of individuals in gamekeepers' Fenn traps (although Polecats are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act), others in Mink cage-traps and, most importantly, road casualties. It was only when the latter were recorded that the range of distribution was realised. Specimens have come from as far north as Brampton, as far South as High Newton, east from Garsdale and west from Bassenthwaite. It is probably only a matter of time before our Cumbrian population will have assisted in the recolonisation of neighbouring counties. Road casualties are always required by



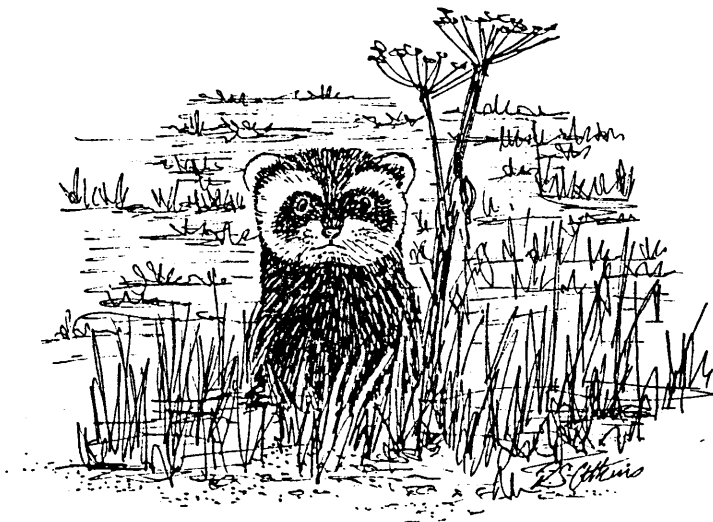
the Museum for the information they can provide both on the spread of the species and on its genetic status.

The national situation is being monitored through the Vincent Wildlife Trust's Polecat Project. As part of this initiative 1km squares are surveyed with a standard methodology based on seven nights' live-trapping with sixteen traps, thus allowing comparisons to be made across the counties. Three such squares have been trapped to date in Cumbria. One, to the west of Windermere, gave a negative result, but two in the Eden Valley produced eight different males trapped in a total of 208 trap-nights. A further square, in the Lune Valley, will be trapped during February. The Eden Valley figures are high nationally, and compare favourably with those from Welsh sites.

It is an encouraging prospect to mammalogists to witness the return of a native carnivore, and one which could have a wider welcome as a predator of the Rabbit and the Common Rat. Had it been here earlier it may well have modified the colonisation by the American Mink, and it could yet play a part in the control of that species.

John Webster

(Stop Press – I have heard from John that the trapping exercise in the Lune Valley has produced a negative result. I understand that this may in part be due to the time of year. It would be very interesting to conduct a live-trapping survey in the north of the county. Anyone who knows a landowner who would be willing to allow such a survey on a 1km block of their land (preferably a river valley), please let me know. – Ed.)



Polecat

(Roy Atkins)

Humphrey Head

During the summer of 1994 I visited several sites in the south of the county with various members of the Society. One such visit was to Humphrey Head, a rather imposing limestone headland pointing south into Morecambe Bay. The site is now a Cumbria Wildlife Trust reserve.

The flora of the area is quite remarkable and amongst a number of scarce plants are four of particular note. Hoary Rockrose is known from only two other localities in Cumbria as well as Teesdale and a few other sites further south. Spotted Cat's-ear is a spectacular, large, dandelion-like flower which grows nowhere else in the county. Spiked Speedwell is similarly scarce in Cumbria. Perhaps the rarest of all is Goldilocks (*Aster linosyris*) – this is a relative of Golden Rod which also grows on the Head. Goldilocks is known at only four other places in Britain and is one of the latest plants to flower – October being the best time to see it, although David Clarke and I were fortunate to see it, plus both species of rockrose and Spiked Speedwell, in flower in September.

Other notable plants found on the headland include Southern Polypody, Lancashire Whitebeam, Green-veined Orchid, Autumn Lady's-Tresses, Rock Samphire, Portland Spurge, Long-bracted Sedge and Curved Sedge. The latter species has been recorded only once – in 1971 – and has not been found since. At least five of these plants are at their northern limits in Britain, as is the recently discovered Apple Snail (*Pomatias elegans*), which was found here in 1988 by Roy Atkins.

Access is via a minor road leading south from Allithwaite to a parking area at SD 390740 but, a warning, the headland rises to 175 feet and is very steep and dangerous. Good views of the Goldilocks are only possible by hanging over the top of the cliff and looking down to one particular small ledge. Spotted Cat's-ear is equally inaccessible but, being large, can be viewed easily (when in flower) from the beach below. If the tide is flowing, the only way on or off the headland is a treacherously steep path which should not be attempted in wet conditions or with small children.

Geoff Naylor

Cumbria Bird Club Surveys

CBC is undertaking a pilot survey of **Starling** roosts in the county during the 1994/5 winter, for a full survey in winter 1995/6. Details of roosts and counts will be gratefully received by: Richard Wimpress, Brookdale, Cockermouth Lonning, Brigham, Cockermouth, CA13 0TF.

Any breeding-season records of **Nuthatch**, and of any of the three **Woodpecker** species, would be much appreciated, as part of a two-year survey of breeding distribution in the county. Contact the organiser for this area, Roy Atkins, at 4 Garden Walk, Edmond Castle, Wetheral, CA4 8QD.

Announcements

Annual Dinner: Friday, 31st March 1995

The venue for this event is the Dalston Hall Hotel as originally planned. Time 7.30 p.m. for 8.00 p.m. If you have not booked but wish to attend, you can still do so by contacting David Clarke or Stephen Hewitt at Tullie House, before Friday 17th March. Last year's Dinner was enjoyed by all; please come if you can.

Amphibian Survey

Yes, it's that time of year again. Please record all sightings of amphibians on the form enclosed with this newsletter. Records and counts at breeding ponds are particularly useful. If you have submitted records for particular sites in the past please revisit them and count the number of amphibians present this year – this sort of information helps us to monitor how populations are managing at sites across the county.

Anyone wishing to check known newt ponds to count and identify the species present should contact me for a list of sites.

Stephen Hewitt

Survey of Kingmoor Nature Reserve

Carlisle City Council has requested that the Society conduct a survey of the wildlife of Kingmoor Nature Reserve with a view to producing some baseline information against which to monitor the effects of proposed management work on the reserve. The Society will receive a small fee for this work.

Council of the Society has agreed to this request and work will begin this spring to survey various groups of vertebrates, plants, fungi and invertebrates on the site. I would be pleased to hear from anyone with a special knowledge of Kingmoor and its wildlife, or anyone who would like to be involved with the survey.

Cumbrian Wildlife in the Twentieth Century

This is to be the title of the centenary publication of the Society which we plan to publish this summer. The publication will contain the papers presented at the Centenary Conference of the Society in September 1993.

Society Constitution

A copy of the draft Constitution is circulated with this newsletter. Please read it and let David Clarke or Stephen Hewitt have any comments as soon as possible. The Constitution will be formally put forward for acceptance during the winter session.

Field Meetings and Workshops, Summer 1995

Meetings start from Carlisle College, Victoria Place, Carlisle. (Leaders may cancel meetings at this rendezvous if they consider conditions unsuitable.)

22nd April (Saturday): Borrowdale. Leader Geoff Horne. Depart 9.30 a.m. Meet Great Wood car park (NY 271212) at 10.30 a.m.

6th May (Saturday): Cross Fell. Leader Stephen Hewitt. Depart 9.30 a.m. Meet at Kirkland (NY 648325) at 10.30 a.m.

20th May (Saturday): Sunbiggin Tarn/Orton Scar. Leader Geoff Naylor. Meet at Orton Scar (NY 627098) at 10.30 a.m.

11th June (Sunday): Colvend, Kirkcudbright. Leader David Clarke. Depart 9.30 a.m. Meet at Colvend Village Hall (NX 867545) at 10.45 a.m.

8th July (Saturday): Kirkstone/Brothers Water. Leader David Clarke. Depart 9.30 a.m. Meet Kirkstone Pass (NY 400080) at 10.15 a.m.

14th July (Friday evening): Orton Moss. Leader Mike Clementson. Depart 9.30 p.m. Meet (NY 338540) at 10.00 p.m.

5th August (Saturday): Introduction to hoverflies (Workshop and fieldtrip). Leader Stephen Hewitt. Meet at Tullie House at 10.00 a.m. Please book in advance with the museum.

2nd September (Saturday): Identification of ferns (Workshop and fieldtrip). Leader Jeremy Roberts. Meet at Tullie House at 10.00 a.m. Please book in advance with the museum.

Winter Programme, 1995/6: dates for your diary.

Evening meetings in Tullie House, 7.15 p.m. on these Wednesdays: October 4th, 18th; November 1st, 15th, 29th; December 13th; January 17th, 31st; February 14th, 28th. The full list of titles and speakers will be dispatched to members before the first meeting.

Credits

General editor

*Stephen Hewitt **

Word-processing

Stephen Hewitt and Geoff Naylor

Layout and D.T.P.

Jeremy Roberts

Artwork

Roy Atkins & John Read

Please submit your observations, findings, notes, requests, views, drawings, to the editor for inclusion. Also please make sure we know your views on what you would like to see included.

Deadline for the next issue: 1st September 1995