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Avocet & chicks

(Stephen Hewitt)

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From the Editor

I can only apologise for the late issue of this volume of the *Carlisle Naturalist*.

Additions to the Library

Peter Kelly's daughter generously offered some of his (chiefly entomological) journals and reports. I have been pleased to accept a number of these for the Society's library and a fully itemised list will be produced.

New Natural History material in Tullie House collections

Marjory Garnett's notebooks have been given to Tullie House Museum by Derek Ratcliffe. Miss Garnett (1896–1977) was a long time member of this Society who lived for many years near Windermere and contributed an article on the wintering birds of that lake to the *Transactions* of this Society in 1948. She later lived at Seascale and Kirksanton. She gave her collection of bird skins and seashells to Tullie House in 1936. The present archive comprises natural history notebooks dating back to before the First World War and containing many fascinating historical records of birds and mammals in Cumbria. There are also photographs and some of her own fine illustrations included.

Discounted publications to Society members

The following publications of the Society are available to members at the discounted prices shown:

<i>Cumbrian Wildlife in the 20th Century</i> (1996)	£5.00
<i>Lakeland Ornithology</i> (1954)	£5.00
<i>Lakeland Molluscs</i> (1967)	£3.00

Also:

Lakeland Birdlife 1920–1970, R.H. Brown (1974) £5.00

Reports on Field meetings

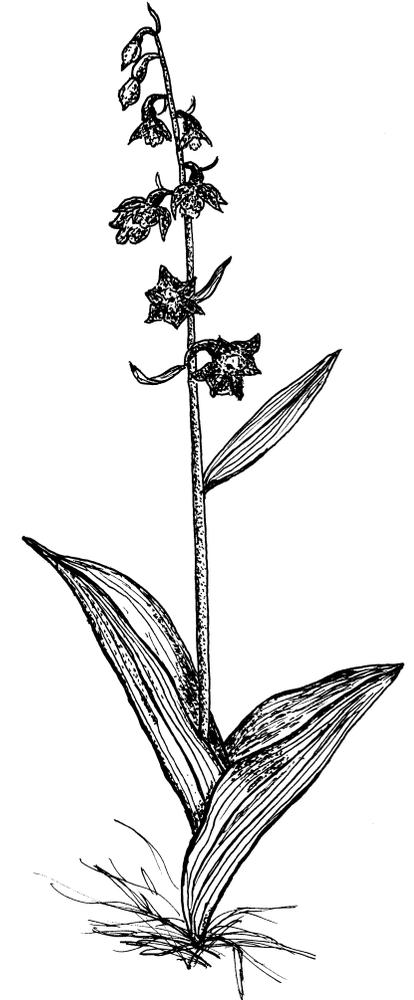
Gaitbarrows NNR: 7th July 2001

Leader: Rob Petley-Jones

Roudsea Wood, the planned venue for this meeting, was still closed due to Foot and Mouth Disease restrictions, so an offer from Rob Petley-Jones of Gaitbarrows National Nature Reserve as an alternative site was very gratefully accepted. This provided eagerly sought after relief for several members whose field activities had been severely restricted by the official reaction to the disease. 11 members eventually assembled at the site, to be met by the Warden, Rob Petley-Jones.

A recent (1997) visit had been curtailed by heavy rain but this one was different. It was an incredibly hot and sunny day, ideal for insects and just about the peak time for flowers. If we had stayed in the car park all day it would still have been a reasonably successful trip. There were lots of butterflies, including Grayling, Meadow Brown and High Brown Fritillary with many more of the latter (a regional speciality) throughout the morning. Many plants, including Knotted Pearlwort and Scarlet Pimpernel, were also seen here.

Proceeding into the reserve, Limestone Bedstraw was noted and then several Rose Chafers (a large metallic green beetle) feeding on Privet flowers. Lepidoptera then became dominant with sightings of Northern Brown Argus, Large Skipper, Silver Y moth, Speckled Wood, more fritillaries and a Small Tortoiseshell. Two specialities of the site were pointed out – a small black ant *Lasius fuliginosus* and Pale St. John's Wort (*Hypericum montanum*) before we were shown another – the extremely rare and extremely small snail *Vertigo angustior*, known from only two other sites in SW Scotland and S Wales.



Dark-red Helleborine (David Clarke)

For most people, however, the highlight was probably the relative abundance of Dark-red Helleborines in their best flowering condition. Other notable species were the grass *Melica nutans*, Rigid Buckler Fern and the beetle *Clytra quadrimaculata*, associated with nests of the Red Wood Ant (*Formica rufa*) of which there were many. A single Brimstone butterfly was also seen.

After lunch in the car park, the majority of members were keen to see the recently hatched Avocet chicks at nearby Leighton Moss. After thanking Rob for his time and knowledgeable leadership, this was duly accomplished with good views of both parents and two small chicks.

There was a lot more of interest in the area with 'Shelducklings', several passage Ruff and Black-tailed Godwit, with one of each still in partial summer plumage. A final bonus was birds of prey with Buzzard and Kestrel overhead, a rather distant, perched Peregrine and better still, a quartering Marsh Harrier at reasonable range.

By mid afternoon, the heat was quite overbearing and the weather began to threaten thunderstorms. The meeting was concluded amid requests for more rearranged field meetings.

Geoff Naylor

High Stand (Moth Trapping): 10th August

Leaders: Mike Clementson, Richard Little

A small but select group gathered some two hundred metres in from the north-eastern car park (not public) in High Stand. Two illuminated sheets and a Robinson trap were operated. The small number of members present was due at least in part to the change of venue, stated on the programme as Wan Fell, which was closed to access due to F&MD.

The weather conditions were not ideal, though nineteen species were caught at light and identified. All were common species. The list is given below. Due to the increasingly chilly conditions the meeting was terminated at 11.30pm.

Small Fan-footed Wave *Idaea biselata*
 Large Yellow Underwing *Noctua pronuba*
 Shaded Broad-bar *Scotopteryx chenopodiata*
 Dark Arches *Apamea monoglypha*
 Mouse Moth *Amphipyra tragopoginis*
 Brimstone Moth *Opisthograptis luteolata*
 Six-striped Rustic *Xestia sexstrigata*
 Flame Carpet *Xanthorhoe designata*
 Mottled Beauty *Alcis repandata*

Lesser Swallow Prominent *Pheosia gnoma*
 Green Carpet *Colostygia pectinataria*
 Pebble Prominent *Eligmodonta ziczac*
 Iron Prominent *Notodonta dromedarius*
 Common Rustic *Mesapamea secalis*
 Twin-spot Carpet *Perizoma didymata*
 Ruby Tiger *Diaphora mendica*
 The Spinach *Eulithis mellinata*
 Riband Wave *Idaea aversata*
 Small Wainscot *Photedes pygmina*

Richard Little

Middle Gelt Woods (Fungus Foray): 15th September 2001

Leader: Geoff Naylor

Seven members joined me for a gentle stroll through Middle Gelt Woods on a sunny September afternoon.

It was perhaps a little early in the season (we don't usually manage to pick the right day!) and fungi were rather few and far between. As a result we put together a list of 50 species, when we may have expected 70 or more; but thanks to Peter Wilberforce, who identified a further 10–12 microfungi. These were things which none of us had experienced before, and, although practically invisible to the naked eye (mine, that is), were often quite beautiful when viewed with a hand lens.

In the list of larger fungi, the following were of the greatest interest: *Pleurotus cornucopiae* (a white bracket fungus), *Creolophus cirrhatus* (another white bracket, but with 'hedgehog'-type 'gills'), *Peziza badia* (a brown, leathery-looking, disc-shaped fungus, growing on soil) and *Cortinarius lepidopus* (a.k.a. *C.anomalus* var. *lepidopus*).

Peter Wilberforce encountered problems looking for microfungi as the majority of the group, searching for the larger fungi, tended to range over a wide area when he would prefer to concentrate on a small area! Peter provided the following notes on the microfungi:

"There was the lovely *Hymenoscyphus calyculus* with large bright yellow discs attached to dead wood, in this case probably oak. This particular autumn was apparently a 'good year' for the species since several folk in the north-west sent me collections.

Wet, debarked (decorticated) wood is often a very rich source for some of the minute haired Discomycetes, some barely visible without a hand lens. A piece

of soaking beech wood had a species I had not previously collected: *Hyaloscypha priapi*. Magnified, many of these really small fungi are most attractive with their fringes of various shaped and coloured hairs.

As usual on any foray I collect pieces of loose elder bark for later incubation in warm damp conditions since several species of fungi occur on this material. This time was no exception, but the strange thing was the species: large cushion-shaped Ascomycetes that completely fooled me. These turned out to be *Iodophanus carneus*. This is a species frequently encountered on cow and rabbit dung. Some correspondence revealed that the slime-mould types have noticed this preference for bark well away from dung contamination. Middle Gelt Woods are on my list for more collecting visits.”

In addition to fungi, we also noted Grey Wagtail, Dipper, Buzzard and Jay. Despite the relative scarcity of interesting species – a very enjoyable walk.

Geoff Naylor & Peter Wilberforce

First occurrences of the Migrant Hawker dragonfly (*Aeshna mixta* Latrielle) in Cumbria

Given its spectacular spread, starting from south-eastern England in the mid twentieth century, and reaching most of the rest of England and Wales by the millennium, the occurrence of this species in Cumbria had been expected for some time.

The superficial resemblance of the Migrant Hawker to the larger, resident, Common Hawker has meant that its detection almost inevitably would have been by an ‘initiate’. One such is Dr Dave Thompson of Liverpool University, and it is through chance contact with him that records have come to light. It transpires that he has noted the species in small numbers in the vicinity of Castle Head Field Centre, Lindale (SD4279) in early September in 1999 and 2000. (Access restrictions prevented observations in 2001.) Being familiar with the species a little further south in Merseyside, it came as a surprise, and slight embarrassment, to him to learn that he was the sole custodian of Cumbrian records! This slightly retrospective revelation is from precisely where records might have been expected, being but a short distance from known sites near Carnforth and Heysham in north Lancashire. Since then, it has also transpired that Stephen Dunstan had noted a single male at North Walney (SD17) on 26th August 2001.

Aeshna mixta is predominantly a late summer species, seen most often in August and September, and usually occurring in small groups rather than singly. Its English name derives from its migratory habits that, together with climatic warming, have doubtless aided the continuing spread northwards. Confirming its presence in 2002 will be something to look forward to – and hopefully may include evidence of breeding activity. This very mobile species might be expected to use coastal routes for movements into new areas, and further records from the south Cumbria coast are especially likely.

A simple key to distinguish between mature examples of the three similar hawker species when seen close up:

- 1 Leading edge vein of wings bright yellow **Common Hawker**
 Leading edges of wings brownish black **2**
- 2 Top of thorax with two conspicuous rounded yellow-green patches **Southern Hawker**
 Thorax with at most two thin short yellowish marks behind head **Migrant Hawker**

Note: female Common Hawkers have the yellow veins and almost no markings on the thorax; refer to books for other features to confirm these species.

David Clarke

The Emperor Dragonfly (*Anax imperator* Leach) in Cumbria

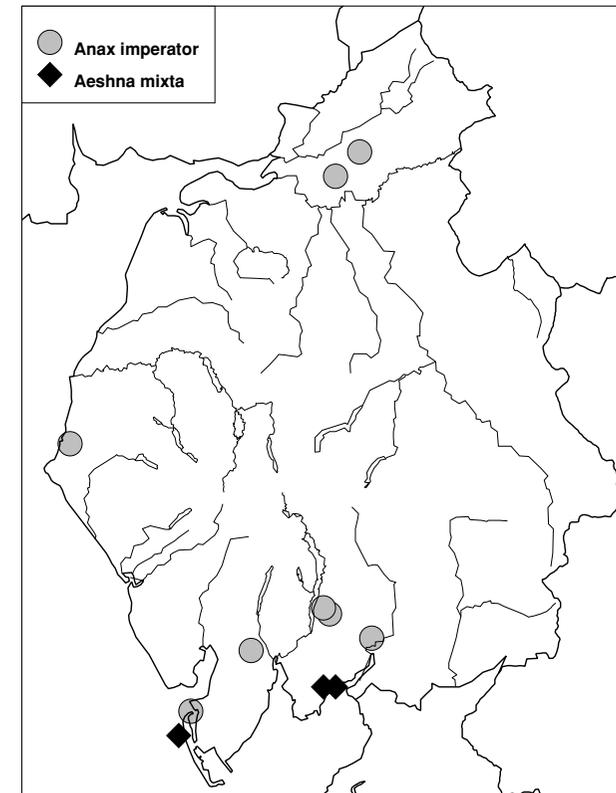
Britain's largest dragonfly, aptly named the Emperor, continues to show signs of advancing north into Cumbria.

The exceptional summer of 1995 brought at least two reports. Neil Ferguson was sure this was the species egg-laying in his garden pond at Drigg (SD09) on the south-west coast on 9th July; another wanderer appeared at a remote pond near Rowelton (SD47) in August. The first visual record of the Emperor in Cumbria came from Lowick Common (SD28), where Ian Hulme photographed a somewhat ragged-winged male at Minnow Tarn on 23rd August – near the end of the species' normal flight-period in the UK. There were no reports from the year following, but in 1997 John Read saw two males at ponds on Hensingham Golf Course, Whitehaven (NX91) on 8th August; two days later I had brief views of a male at Scaleby Moss (NY46), when it appeared suddenly at the largest pool and flew off again after making brief circuits. 1999 produced another instance of breeding when David Tucker discovered an egg-laying female at the Cumbria Wildlife Trust's Barkbooth Lot Reserve on 9th July. A male had been seen by Malcolm Hutcheson at Sizergh Castle (SD48) earlier that year (26th June), and Pete Burton saw another at Sandscale Haws (SD17) on 2nd August.

Little coverage of sites was possible in 2001 because of F&MD access restrictions. However, a male was noted patrolling over the largest area of open water at a mire near Ludderburn Hill (SD49) on 5th August. This site is within 10 km (6.5 miles) of those mentioned for 1999. More significantly, whilst monitoring Barkbooth Lot, Clare Hughes found 5 Emperor exuviae – possibly the outcome of the egg-laying noted in 1999. These are the first to be found in the county and Clare has kindly donated examples to the collections of Tullie House Museum. There have been a few other less certain reports over these years.

The near-annual continuity of sightings, and recent breeding presence in north Lancashire, all point towards the likelihood of the Emperor spreading in Cumbria – perhaps to become an established resident. The relatively early sightings in 1999 give some support to this notion. However, its populations are prone to fluctuations, as at Ainsdale Dunes in south Lancashire, where it persisted from about 1976 until 1990, not re-appearing until the 1995 summer.

Fortunately, the species is conspicuous, especially the male. At a distance, and whether seen from above, the side or even below, its abdomen appears almost uniformly kingfisher-blue in colour. Closer up, a dark mid-dorsal line is seen. The last two or three years have seen incursions into the UK of a more southern European *Anax*, the Lesser Emperor (*A. parthenope*). This shows much less blue – mainly a 'saddle' towards the base of the abdomen. Though not recorded for



Cumbria, it does need to be considered when making field identifications. Flight behaviour is also highly indicative: male Emperors characteristically make long-duration patrol flights at a height of several metres above open water. This is in contrast to the usual behaviour of the larger species of *Aeshna*, which are less overtly territorial, and seek females in low flights – at about a metre or less – over marginal vegetation. Where present, *Anax* usually dominates, with powerful flight and aggressive reactions to other large dragonflies.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to Clare Hughes, Lancaster University and Cumbria Wildlife Trust for the data from the Barkbooth study, and to those mentioned for other records.

David Clarke

The leaf beetle *Oulema rufocyanea* (Suffrian) new to Cumbria

The brightly coloured leaf beetle *Oulema rufocyanea* (Suffrian) was only recently recognised as a separate species when, through the research work of Berti (1989), it was discovered that the species was part of a complex and distinct from another similar species *O. melanopus*. In a detailed paper by Cox (1995) the *Oulema* 'melanopus' species group is discussed and *O. rufocyanea* is recorded for the first time from Britain.

Identification of *O. rufocyanea* relies on a detailed examination of the male genitalia and in particular the internal armature (Cox, 1995). The females can be identified from the spermathecal duct, but this structure can be quite difficult to see and is easily broken during dissection, especially if specimens are old and have become brittle.

As *O. rufocyanea* had not been recorded from Cumbria I decided to check all the specimens standing under *O. melanopus* in the collections of local Coleoptera in Tullie House Museum. I dissected all the males and discovered five specimens from Cumbria in the F.H. Day collection. These specimens had the following data written on the labels: Wreay, 2.5.1898; Kirkbampton, 11.5.1907, FHD; Petteiril Valley, 27.5.1900, FHD; Upperby, 2.5.1901 and Newbiggin, 4.6.1899. In addition to the above specimens was one individual male from my personal collection, which I gave to the Museum in 1993. It was found at Fleswick Bay, St.Bees (NX945134) and was collected on 24th April 1978.

These records establish the presence of *O. rufocyanea* in Cumbria and it can now be added to the county list of Coleoptera.

Acknowledgement

I wish to thank Stephen Hewitt for kindly allowing me access to the Museum collections of Coleoptera.

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R.W.J. Read

43 Holly Terrace, Hensingham, Whitehaven

[I am sure the reader will be able to sympathise with John's frustration at discovering that the only specimen of *O. rufocyanea* that he has ever collected himself, he gave to Tullie House Museum before the species was recognised as distinct in Britain! – Ed.]

A further record of the rove beetle *Stenus fossulatus* Erichson from Cumbria

Stenus fossulatus is an exceptionally rare beetle in Britain and is classified as Endangered by Hyman (1992). Until recently this small rove beetle was known only from Castle Eden Dene, Durham (Reid, 1982).

On 24th July 1999 Stephen Hewitt collected *S. fossulatus* (identified by Magnus Sinclair) for the first time in Cumbria (Hewitt, 2000) as part of this Society's survey of river shingle invertebrates in the north of Cumbria. Two specimens were found on an area of sand and shingle at Kellwood (NY524633) on the River Irthing at the confluence with the King Water. A follow-up visit to Kellwood by members of the survey team in May 2000 identified a population of this beetle on the sandy-clay landslips of the River Irthing just upstream of Kellwood. John B. Parker also discovered a further population, confirmed by Magnus Sinclair, of this species on a similar landslip on the Roe Beck below Middlesceugh (NY396413) (Hewitt, *op.cit.*).

These recent records were the only known reports from Cumbria, but I have recently discovered a specimen of *S. fossulatus* from the county in the collections of local Coleoptera in the Carlisle Museum. Just lately I have been going through all the *Stenus* in the Museum's collections and extracting the specimen data for the current *Stenus* recording scheme which is being co-ordinated by the Biological Records centre at Monks Wood. While examining a small series of *Stenus guttula* Muller, in the F.H. Day collection, I noticed that one specimen stood out from all the rest. It did not have the two eyespots on the elytra, which is a characteristic feature of this species and also the legs appeared very dark and lacked the usual yellow bands. The specimen was later examined under the microscope and by using the key in Tottenham (1954) it was provisionally identified as *S. fossulatus*. Fortunately the specimen turned out to be a male and identification was eventually confirmed with Stephen Hewitt by examining voucher material at the Tullie House Museum. The specimen was collected by F.H. Day and bears the following data Irthing (T), 22.7.1899. So, it would appear now that Stephen's record of *S. fossulatus* was not the first for Cumbria and that Frank Day beat him to it by exactly 100 years!

Acknowledgement

I wish to thank Stephen Hewitt for his kind assistance with the identification of *S. fossulatus* and for allowing me access to the Museum collections.

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R.W.J. Read

43 Holly Terrace, Hensingham, Whitehaven

[Stephen Hewitt is resigned to having all his best discoveries upstaged by the late, great, F.H. Day. Diligent readers will doubtless recall that Hewitt's discovery of the shore-bug *Saldula melanoscela*, new to Britain, had been pre-empted by F.H. Day by 70 years! Still, it all goes to show what an amazing entomologist F.H. Day was and what excellent collections Tullie House Museum has. Day's specimen of *S. fossulatus* is not only the earliest Cumbrian specimen, but also pre-dates the first published record of the species in Britain (1946) by almost 50 years. – Ed.]

Some notes on the occurrence of Blair's Shoulder-knot (*Lithophane leautieri* (Boisd.)) in Cumbria.

The moth Blair's Shoulder-knot was first recorded in the U.K. by K.G. Blair on the Isle of Wight on 26th October 1951. He recorded it at the time as *Lithophane (Graptolitha) lapidea* (Hubn.) and suggested the vernacular name as the Stone Pinion. The scientific name was subsequently corrected to *Lithophane leautieri* (Boisd., 1829) as subspecies *hesperica* (Boursin, 1957). Following the first capture in 1951, possibly a migrant from France, the species spread quite rapidly east and west along the south coast from the Isle of Wight. After 1961 it became much more widespread in southern England and as far north as the midlands so that hopes arose that even further northward spread would occur. (The sort of

spread reminded one of the similar spread of the Golden Plusia moth (*Polychrysis moneta*) in the decades following its original immigration in 1890 into Kent.) The hopes have been fulfilled and the first Cumbrian specimen of the moth was taken in on 19th October 1996 in Kendal by N. Littlewood (no relation, I think, of the former well-known entomologist, the late Frank Littlewood of Kendal who died in 1950). It is worth noting here that a single specimen was sighted at Hornby by Jennifer Newton in 1992 and another specimen was recorded from Gait Barrows NNR by the Warden, R. Petley Jones, on 29th September 1998. Both these records, however, are in VC60, North Lancashire.

I took the first Grange-over-Sands (VC 69) specimen in the m.v. moth trap in my garden on 1st October 1998. Trapping was continued for some weeks in October 1998 but no further specimens of *leautieri* were taken. Likewise in 1999 trapping was carried on at the time of year when the species might be expected – but none appeared.

At a meeting of entomologists in London at about that date (October 1999) I mentioned to an entomological friend that I had taken one specimen of Blair's Shoulder-knot and he forecast that it would soon turn up "commonly in the locality".

Captures in the Millennium have more or less substantiated his forecast. On 29th September 2000 a specimen was taken in my garden trap and in the week following at least six specimens were observed – one or two in the trap, others at rest on the neighbouring house wall.

The geographical range of the species is described as Atlantic-Mediterranean. Within its range are a number of geographical races or subspecies. A French entomologist Boursin of Lyons separated *leautieri* from the very closely related *Lithophane lapidea* (Hubn.) – a species which does not occur in the UK, but has a distribution from Italy eastwards as far as Lebanon. The ssp. *esperisa* is the form found in this country. It occurs also in northern and western France parts of northern Spain. Ssp. *hesperica* is of a rather dark hue. In southern Spain the ssp. *andalusica* occurs, which is distinctly paler than our form. I have in my collection two specimens taken in South Devon in 1975 and these are virtually indistinguishable from the recent Grange specimens. I also have two specimens taken at m.v. light in Javea (Alicante) Spain in November 1977. These are of a much lighter hue and are referable to ssp. *andalusica*. I have no experience of the other subspecies described from the French Riviera, the valleys of the Rhone and Durance and even Corsica. My record from Javea may well be a new one for Alicante province in Spain.

It is perhaps not surprising that Blair's Shoulder-knot is now appearing in the

Westmorland part of Cumbria. In the recently published Journal of the Lancashire and Cheshire Entomological Society S. Palmer (1999) gives numerous records of its occurrence in, mainly, south Lancashire but also a number from VC60 which adjoins our VC69.

It is a great pleasure to be able to note the increase of a species when the reverse is now so often the case.

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Dr Neville L Birkett

Beardwood, Carter Road, Grange-over-Sands, LA11 7AG

[Richard Little provided the first record of this moth in Cumberland (v.c. 70) when he had one in his moth trap at Cumwhinton in October 1999. - Ed.]

Wildlife reports

These records go back to the last spring indoor meeting of 2001 and by the time they are read, some of the sightings could be almost a year old [*or more!* – Ed.]. The records are based on record cards submitted by members at indoor meetings and are not, therefore, necessarily fully authenticated.

In late March there were still up to 100 Whooper Swans in the Kirkbride area and, at the same time, the first Sand Martins were arriving. There was also an early report of a Sandwich Tern on the west coast and an Osprey at Bassenthwaite on 25th March – but we all know what happened there later!

A ‘small’, therefore probably wild, Canada Goose was with Barnacles on Burgh Marsh on 23rd April – believed to be the race *minima*, sometimes called Cackling Canada Goose and originating in Alaska (there are 12 subspecies of Canada Goose, one of which is extinct).

Following on, in May, a Little Gull was seen by the river in Kendal.

Crossbills were present in good numbers between June and August but didn’t stay

longer.

In August and early September, Anthorn was host to Spotted Redshank, Curlew Sandpiper and, even more unusually, a Turnstone.

Two Pintail were at Longtown on 20th September with c.30 at Bowness three days later. In September Talkin Tarn had Ruddy Duck, Common Scoter, Gadwall and Shoveler, some staying on. There was a record number of 22 Teal there on 25th September.

There were a few Brambling in early October but thousands of Fieldfares and Redwings passed through. A Slavonian Grebe was at Bowness on the 1st. Late records were Swallows on 2nd October, a House Martin on 29th October and an amazing 20+ Black Terns at Longtown on 6th October.

An unusual sighting of 8 Stonechats together was reported from near Talkin on 16th October.

A Hen Harrier was seen at Bowness Common on 6th November with another at Smithfield on the 13th. There were good-sized flocks of Twite at Bowness Common and Newton Marsh and several Jack Snipe at Wedholme Flow with another at Port Carlisle on 2nd December.

By mid-November, numbers of Whooper Swans on the Kirkbride area had reached at least 200 and Barnacle Geese were (unusually for the time of year) on the Cumbrian side of the Solway.

Just outside our area was a huge Starling roost at Gretna, estimated at over 300,000 birds.

By mid-December numbers of Wigeon at Talkin Tarn had exceeded 400 for the first time.

Other winter records include other Hen Harriers at Border Marsh and Rowrah, a roost of 2,500 Wood Pigeons at Finglandrigg, several wintering garden Blackcaps and an encouraging number of Tree Sparrow flocks. More unusual was a report of 3 Hawfinches at Hayton Town Head and an amazing 17 Short-eared Owls at Drumburgh Moss.

Early January 2002 saw the arrival of 2 drake Smew at Talkin Tarn, with the Goosander flock there exceeding 150 for the first time.

Geoff Naylor

Observations on Bees, Wasps and Ants in 2001

Neil Robinson

3 Abbey Drive, Natland, Kendal, Cumbria

Like most naturalists, my activities were curtailed by the Foot and Mouth Disease restrictions this year. My projected study to try to find out more about the RDB3 mining bee *Colletes floralis* at Sandscale Haws had to be postponed to next year, but the fact that the beaches remained open caused me to concentrate on coastal cliffs. This resulted in me finding new sites and making some new records for the county.

Colletes cucicularius – males found at Hodbarrow Point (SD1878) and females at Askham-in-Furness dunes (SD2076) in May showed that this RDB3 bee is not confined to the major Cumbrian dune systems where it is well known.

Andrena apicata – females of this handsome spring mining bee were found foraging female catkins of Sallow at White Creek (SD4377), near Arnside on 7th May. This is a new record for Cumbria – not surprising because I had found it just outside the county boundary in recent years, though searching the Levens-Grange coast in 2000 had been unsuccessful.

Andrena angustior – females of this inconspicuous little bee were found at Askham-in-Furness dunes on 11th May and near Burns Beck Moss (SD5987) on 23rd May. It was reported by A.E. Wright at Grange-over-Sands in 1945, but had not been found by the early Carlisle naturalists.

Andrena coitana – females of this little shiny black bee with white abdominal hair bands were found foraging Knapweed at Silver Tarn (NY0006) near Nethertown on 23rd August. This is one of the late flying *Andrena* sp. which is known to occur throughout Britain, but is always very scarce. It was recorded by the Carlisle naturalists in the early decades of the 20th century and there are specimens in Tullie House Museum. This record confirms that it is still present in the county.

Sphecodes puncticeps – a female of this small cleptoparasitic bee, generally regarded as a south of England species, was taken at sandy cliffs at Concle, Rampsdale (SD2366) on 20th July. This is a new record for Cumbria. Along with other unusual species found here this year (see below), it suggests that these glacial sand cliffs could be an important aculeate site.

Melitta haemorrhoidalis – a male taken from a small patch of Harebell at Concle on 20th July showed that only a very small amount of this plant is enough to account for the presence of this bee, which specifically visits its flowers. This is only the third recent record of this species in Cumbria, but suggests that there could be more to be found.

Bombus muscorum – A Liverpool Museum survey team found queens and workers of this uncommon relative of the Carder Bee *B. pascuorum* foraging Sallow catkins at Burns Beck Moss on 10th May. The only other recent records of this species are from Sellafield and Sandscale Haws, but it was recorded widely on Solway mosslands in the early 20th century and could easily still be present on these, and coastal, sites.

Bombus monticola – it was a surprise on 12th June to find workers of the Mountain Bumblebee foraging Bird's-foot Trefoil on the coast at Silecroft. This bee is an upland species noted for foraging Bilberry. However, Bilberry has a short flowering period. In addition the flowers are very susceptible to being grazed off by sheep, which presumably explains why it is also found feeding in lowland areas.

Bombus soroensis – a worker taken from Heather beside the A684 at Roan Edge (SD5993) on 10th September was the first record since 1971 of this bee which was recorded by G.B. Routledge and F.H. Day from 1917–1919. This bee has recently been found to be more common than had been realised in the southern England, and may be quite widespread in Cumbria – the problem is distinguishing it from the ubiquitous *B. lucorum*. The only field character, the yellow abdominal band being broken by black hairs in the centre, is not reliable because worn *B. lucorum* can have a gap in the band; and definite identification depends on a small detail of the mandibles.

Priocnemis fennica – this spider-hunting wasp was found at Burns Beck Moss on 23rd July. It had been reported at Cliburn Moss in 1988 by the NCC Cumbria Mires Survey, but without a voucher specimen. This is the first confirmed record for Cumbria, but as it seems to prefer wet habitats it could be present on other lowland mossland sites.

Gorytes tumidus – this uncommon solitary wasp, which has been recorded at Sandscale Haws by Michael Archer, was found at Concle Cliffs on 22nd June and 20th July – evidently there is an established colony there.

Ectemnius sexcinctus – this large solitary wasp, considered to be a southern species, appeared in the utility room at my home in Natland on 5th July – the first record for Cumbria. However, on 18th August I received a call about wasps nesting in a window frame in Kendal which also turned out to be this species. One was tunnelling in soft woodwork but another was struggling to squeeze large flies in through a ventilation hole in the double glazing frame. This wasp seems to have a preference for urban situations.

Formica lugubris – the National Trust have recorded and mapped 198 colonies of this mound-building wood ant in the Ashness-Lodore Woods in Borrowdale and are preparing a report on its ecology.

Next year I hope to be able to resume work on *Colletes floralis*, which was thought to be confined to the west coasts of Scotland and Ireland until Michael Archer found it at Sandscale, and to make further investigation of the soft clay cliffs from Concle to Westfield Point near Barrow and, further north, from Gutterby to Annaside, which seem to have good potential as Aculeate sites.

Peter Kelly

Peter Kelly, who died on 26th July 2001, was not well known to most other members of the Society because he lived in, or more lately near, Kendal. He joined this Society only recently and attended, and greatly enjoyed, the excursion to Knock Ore Gill on 5th August 2000, where he explained his exclosures and studies on the effects of grazing on the Yellow Marsh Saxifrage (*Saxifraga hirculus*). After a career in teaching he began to work for the Nature Conservancy Council, initially surveying the Chequered Skipper in Scotland. He came to the Cumbria office of NCC at Blackwell in the early 1980s to supervise the Manpower Services Team engaged on the NCC Phase 1 Ecological Survey of Cumbria and other areas, which forms the basis of English Nature's and Local Authorities current knowledge of their wider countryside. When this work was completed in 1985/86, after a year on SSSI Monitoring, he resumed work as a freelance consultant. Unfortunately this also saw the beginnings of health problems which encumbered him for the rest of his life.

Peter had an infectious enthusiasm for natural history and insatiable curiosity which led him to accumulate keys, reprints and knowledge about an extraordinary range of invertebrate and plant groups. He was also an avid reader of journals and was equally well-informed on ecological and conservation matters. Over the last decade he had been working for EN, Scottish Natural Heritage and the Northern Ireland Conservation Service on the conservation of *Saxifraga hirculus*, and had become knowledgeable on the autecology of this internationally endangered species over its whole European range. EN and SNH hope to publish a paper on his work posthumously. Peter had an enthusiasm and dedication to get to the bottom of things for which he will be gratefully remembered.

Neil Robinson

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Information for Authors

The *Carlisle Naturalist* publishes material on all aspects of the natural history of Cumbria. General articles, results of personal research, news items, records and letters of relevance to Cumbrian naturalists are welcomed. Material accepted for publication must not be submitted in a similar form to any other journal.

Material should be clearly legible – ideally type-written double-spaced on one side of white A4 paper, or submitted on DOS-formatted 3.5 inch computer disc in ASCII or RTF format and accompanied by a paper copy. Only species and genera should be underlined. Authority names should be given in full. Illustrations should be in black ink; they must be originals and not photocopies. Whilst every care will be taken of original artwork, the editor can not be held responsible for any loss or damage. References should be given in full at the end of the article or note.

Authors of papers two or more pages in length will be provided with 10 reprints. Papers may be submitted to a referee.

Opinions expressed in the *Carlisle Naturalist* are not necessarily shared by the Council of Carlisle Natural History Society nor the Editorial Panel.

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Membership application forms are available from the Secretary.

Winter Programme 2001/2002

10th October 'The Work of the Eden Rivers Trust': an illustrated talk by
Alasdair Brock

24th October 'The Med, the Red and the Dead – Natural History in Israel': an
illustrated talk by Geoff Naylor

7th November Members' Night: contributions from the membership

21st November 'Smardale Gill': an illustrated talk by Ron Baines

**5th December 'Hugh Alexander Macpherson – a naturalist worthy of Lake-
land':** a talk by Dr Frances Celoria

9th January 'Repeat Upland Bird Survey': an illustrated talk by Trevor Smith.
A joint meeting with Cumbria Bird Club

23rd January 'Antarctica': an illustrated talk by Jeremy Roberts

2nd February (Saturday): Field Meeting Loch Ken, Galloway (wild goose
chase) Leader: Geoff Horne Depart 9.00 am.

6th February 'Bats': an illustrated talk by Geoff Norman

20th February 'My Wildlife Garden': an illustrated talk by Richard Little

6th March AGM & Members' Night: Annual General Meeting followed by
contributions from the membership