

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Newsletter No. 167

Autumn 2019

*Chorley and District Natural History Society is a
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EDITORIAL

Our 40th Anniversary year is drawing to a close and I believe we have achieved most of what we set out to do. Trees and nest boxes have been donated to local schools. Two Bioblitzes were held in Astley Park. The photographic competition has reached its conclusion with over 80 entries being received. A selection can be seen on the web site, with hopefully all entries being shown at our December meeting. The competition has been run in conjunction with the Chorley Guardian, which will be publishing the winners in a forthcoming edition.

Our 40th Anniversary talk by Gordon Yates was a trip down memory lane for many of us and his film and talk were as entertaining and informative as ever, even if Gordon himself was on pins as to whether the film would stay intact for the whole talk!

At the AGM, David Beattie stepped down as Chairman and was replaced by Keith Woan as acting chairman at least until the New Year, when it is hoped that David Morrison will be able to take on the role. Many thanks David for your work over the years. Two new committee members – Neville Root and Paul West - were also elected at the AGM.

The analysis of last year's garden bird survey is included in this newsletter. We will be running the survey again this winter. Forms will be included in the Newsletters of those who took part last year, and copies will also be available at the meetings. An electronic version will also be available. If you didn't take part last year and would like to do so this year, please let us know and we will get a copy of the form to you.

Neil Southworth (Editor)

FUNGI REPORT

This period began slowly and numbers improved in August and then increased greatly in September with the following species seen and recorded:

July – Peeling Oysterling was spotted in Wild Bottoms Wood in Hoghton, a bracket species was seen in Whins Lane in Wheelton and Yellow Stainer was spotted in Chorley Cemetery.



Common Puffball

August – Common Puffball was seen at Great Knowley and Yellow Brain was seen in Tan House Brook Woods; Jelly Ear fungus was spotted adjacent to Belmont Reservoir; The Blusher was seen in a Great Knowley Garden; Scarletina Bolete were seen in Buckshaw; a group of large Polypore species were noted on a decaying ash tree adjacent to the canal at Withnell Fold. A Golden Waxcap was spotted in an Euxton Garden. In Chorley Cemetery a large Artist's Bracket was seen together with Wood Woolyfoot, Tawny Funnel, The Miller and Common Inkcap. At Hic Bibi Nature Reserve Poisonpie and Cauliflower Slime Mold were seen.

At the Bioblitz in Astley Park on 24th August the following species were recorded – Purple Brittlepill, Ochre Brittlepill, Charcoal Burner, Giant Polypore, Common Earthball, Fly Agaric, The Blusher, Smoky Bracket and Bruising Webcap.

September – At Withnell Fold Nature Reserve Common Earthball and Ivory Coral were noted. At Chorley Cemetery Golden Waxcap, Golden Spindles, Clustered Bonnet, Common Puffball, The Prince and Dog's Vomit Slime Mold were noted. At Hic Bibi Nature Reserve Poisonpie, Toad's Ear and a possible Stubble Rosegill were seen. In Tanhouse Brook woods Plums & Custard, Blackening Brittlegill & Giant Puffball were recorded. At Great Knowley Shaggy Inkcap was spotted. In Euxton Clustered Domecap was seen; at Common Bank Stump Puffball were noted and on Chancery Way Astley Village Dryad's Saddle was seen. In Charnock Richard Delph, Fly Agaric was photographed and in Brinscall Glistening Inkcap was noted.

Yarrow Valley Country Park was a particularly good venue, where The Deceiver, Candlesnuff Fungus, Amethyst Deceiver, Conical Brittlemstem, Glistening Inkcap, Common Inkcap, Sulphur Tuft, Dryad's Saddle, Blackfoot Polypore, Collared Earthstar, Peeling Oysterling, Brown Mottlegill, Common Brown Conecap, Angel's Bonnet, Dead Man's Fingers, Common Earthball, Bruising Webcap, Common Bonnet, Velvet Shank and Jelly Ear were all recorded.



Toad's Ear - Seen at Tanhouse Brook Woods

Dean Wood also proved to be an interesting venue, where Rosy Bonnet, Candlesnuff Fungus, Sulphur Tuft, Common Jellyspot, Shaggy Scalycap, Common Bonnet, Bruising Webcap, The Sickener and Blackening Brittlegill were seen.

Len Poxon

INSECT REPORT

At the end of my previous report, I hinted that there might be more to come about Painted Ladies. I was not disappointed. Reports came from everywhere in the area and in places numbers were very high. For example at Ellerbeck on July 30th a recorder described numbers as a “swarm” and estimated 12 insects in a 10 square yard area when the whole site is the size of a football pitch! He was unable to guess at the total number. On 2nd August an astonishing 194 were counted on Lower Burgh Meadows along with 138 Peacocks. I take my hat off to the patient and meticulous recorder!



Painted Lady

The massive numbers were found throughout the country. The best year by far in my experience, with only the 2009 influx getting close. We actually did get more individual records in 2009, but numbers were not as high. A single larva was found on Nettles (not the preferred foodplant) at Great Knowley at the end of August. The Painted Lady is, of course, a migrant which we get in small numbers every year. This year we were also treated to an appearance by the Clouded Yellow – actually three appearances on Croston Moss in mid-September. There were a couple of other suspected sightings but not firm enough to count. We also had a few records of Hummingbird Hawk Moths – another migrant which turns up in small numbers most years.

The large number of first generation Common Blues made me hope for large numbers in late summer, but this did not happen. In fact numbers of 2nd generation were well down on recent years.

Purple Hairstreak was reported from Euxton (4th July) and Astley Park (24th August). I received no records from Alance Bridge where numbers were good in 2018. Let me know if you saw any there please. White Letter Hairstreak was seen in Astley Park on 3rd August and that was the only record received so far – again let me know if you saw any. Two Wall Butterflies were seen near Great Hanging Bridge on August 18th.

Highlights amongst the Odonata were the records from 5 sites for the Migrant Hawker and 3 sites for the Southern Hawker. Emperor dragonflies were seen at a dozen sites. Ovipositing was observed at Hic Bibi on 15th July.



The same site produced confirmed sightings of the **Ruddy Darter** – our first definite records since 2016.

The Oak Bush Cricket was seen in the one and only place it has ever been seen locally – a garden in Adlington. It seems to show up every two years at the same site, this year on 2nd August. Surely it must occur elsewhere too???

Also near Adlington, a **Slender Ground Hopper** was recorded in early September. This was last recorded locally in Euxton in 2015. Orthoptera (Grasshoppers, Crickets etc) are grossly under-recorded locally. We must try harder in future.



Alder Leaf Beetle *Agelastica alni* was reported by members in large numbers. This is supposed to be a rare species in Britain, but not in the Chorley area, where it is defoliating all our alders! Let's hope they recover next year.

Phil Kirk

BIRD REPORT

July

The moulting flock of geese was still on Anglezarke Reservoir until at least the 10th and contained around 100 Canada and 20 Greylag Geese. The pairs of Great Crested Grebes with young in Yarrow Valley Park and at Heapey Lodges managed to hold onto their families, but a count of 15 adults on Lower Rivington Reservoir (13th) suggested that there hadn't been much success elsewhere, with perhaps the exception being a pair on Croston Twin Lakes. The pair of Little Grebe at High Bullough held onto at least 2 of their young, and a pair on Common Bank Lodge was also noted with young. Similarly, the Mandarin Duck with 2 young was again seen on Syd Brook on the 9th. Moorhens with 2 chicks were seen both on the canal at Sollom and on one of the ditches on Eyes Lane (7th) and on the same day an adult and juvenile were seen at Wymott. 12 Tufted Duck were on High Bullough Reservoir on the 31st but there was no evidence of breeding. Rarest duck of the month was a Common Scoter reported from Yarrow Reservoir on the 6th.



Just 5 species of wader were recorded. Pride of place goes to **Golden Plover** seen regularly on Anglezarke Moor, where one or two Curlew were also recorded.

On the reservoirs, up to 2 Common Sandpiper were seen regularly on Anglezarke reservoir and 2 on Lower Rivington Reservoir (2nd). Similarly, up to 4 Oystercatcher were seen around Anglezarke Reservoir, but with no reports of breeding. Out west, pairs were seen at Pincock, Bretherton Moss and Eyes Lane, where 3 were seen on the 9th. Lapwing were back in post-breeding flocks, with 80 on Mawdesley Moss (10th), 37 at Anglezarke Reservoir (10th) and 100+ at Lower Rivington Reservoir (13th).

Four species of raptor and three of owl were reported. Hobby was the star bird being noted on Anglezarke Moor (6th) and Yarrow Reservoir also on the 6th. All other reports came from Ecclestone, particularly the Syd Brook area. An adult Kestrel with 2 young was on Croston Moss (10th). A family group of 5 was at Lower Rivington (13th). A pair was also resident at Hic Bibi. Buzzards were reported from 6 sites, usually of pairs. Only one record of Sparrowhawk was received of a hunting bird over Yarrow Meadows. Barn Owl was noted on a couple of occasions on Bretherton Moss, as was Little Owl. One of the latter was also noted at a farm at Ecclestone. Adult and juvenile Tawny Owls were at Alance Bridge (6th) and on Bretherton Moss (7th). A couple of Ravens were seen regularly around Morrison's chimney as well as over Anglezarke Moor. A Grey Partridge was on Lower Burgh Meadows on the 4th – the observer's first record there for a few years. Three were on Bretherton Moss (7th). Nine young Pheasant were at Great Knowley on the 13th.

Swifts were well recorded during the month with 22 reports received from at least 14 different sites, with the largest counts of 20 at Ecclestone and Euxton, and 40 over Moor Road being towards the end of the month as they were gathering for the departure. Swallows were under-reported with records just from Little Knowley, Bretherton Moss and Euxton. 10 Sand Martin were noted along the Yarrow at Pincock where there is a small colony.



House Martins

A survey of House Martin nests was carried out in the Eaves Lane area on the 24th, when several new nests were found. The curiosity was that nests tended to be singles but forming a loose colony over several streets.

Lesser Whitethroat were recorded at Wymott (7th) and Bretherton Moss (2 on 15th). Common Whitethroat were noted at Bretherton Eyes, Bretherton Moss, Croston Moss, Hic Bibi, Lower Burgh Meadow and Yarrow Meadows. Ten Reed Warblers were along the Rufford canal at Sollom right on the boundary of the recording area with another 3 on Bretherton Eyes. At least 2 were on Top Lodge in Yarrow Valley Park. Sedge Warblers were at Belmont Reservoir, Bretherton Eyes and on Lower Burgh Meadow. Grasshopper Warblers were reeling at Belmont, Great Hill, Great Knowley and Wymott.

A juvenile Siskin at Great Knowley on the 15th was an intriguing record, possibly indicating local breeding. Similarly, 4 Lesser Redpoll at White Coppice (6th) and 10 on Anglezarke Moor (21st) were possibly family groups. A party of 10 Linnet on Bretherton Moss (7th) and one of 40 on Croston Finney (22nd) were presumably post-breeding flocks. Five singing Reed Buntings were on Lower Burgh Meadow (4th) with another on Top Lodge. Ten singing Yellowhammer were noted on Bretherton Moss (7th) and 7 on Croston Moss (14th). A minimum of 4 Corn Bunting were singing on Mawdesley Moos on the 14th.

Anglezarke Moor and Dean Black Brook accommodated at least 4 families of Stonechat. Other breeding records include Nuthatch with 3 young at High Bullough (43th) and a family group at Shaw Hill (8th).



Grey Wagtails had 2 young at Anglezarke Reservoir (4th) and 4 at Yarrow Meadows (29th).

A party of 10 Mistle Thrush was on Croston Moss (10th).

A Common Tern was seen fishing regularly in Yarrow Valley park without showing any inclination to breeding. One was also seen fishing the Rufford canal near Sollom (7th). Ring-necked Parakeets were reported essentially from the Shaw Hill / Whittle-le-Woods area. Kingfishers were noted at 4 sites spread across the area and Great Spotted Woodpeckers from 7. Last but not least, a Willow Tit was observed at Wymott on the 29th.

August



Mute Swans bred at several sites

A pair of Mute Swans with 6 young was on the canal at Withnell Fold (8th and 18th), but the actual breeding site is not known. Similarly, a pair on the Douglas at Bretherton with 7 young on the 12th was from an unknown breeding site. Pairs of Little Grebe on both Common Bank Lodge and High Bullough Reservoir had second broods of 2 in each case. A pair of Coot were seen with 4 young in Astley Park (1st) and one with 2 young was on Park Hall lake (4th). Moorhen were also successful with 2 young in Astley Park (1st), 1 at Park Hall (4th), 6 in Yarrow Valley Park (8th) and one on Croston Moss (13th). Canada Geese moved away from their moulting site with 70 turning up at Withnell Fold (2nd) and 60 on Croston Moss (5th). Two Teal on Mawdesley Moss (9th) and one on Croston Finney (13th) was a sign that autumn was on its way.

August though was a great month for waders with 11 species recorded. Pools on the mosses near Alma Wood and opposite Great Close were the big attraction with birds often commuting between the two.

Pride of place probably went to **Wood Sandpiper** with two present on 27th and 28th, and up to 3 of its Green cousin were present for most of the month.





Up to 5 **Greenshank** were there from the 12th as were a couple of Golden Plover from 13th to 19th.

A flock of 12 Black-tailed Godwit was a one off on the 19th, as were 3 Dunlin and 2 Ringed Plover on the same date. A Curlew took up residence from 17th to the month's end. Up to 40 Snipe were noted on several dates, and the Lapwing flock increased from 25 on the 6th to 100+ on the 19th. Away from the mosses, Common Sandpipers were at Anglezarke reservoir (4th) and Common Bank Lodge (18th). Seven Snipe were at Withnell Fold on the 8th and 15 were on Bretherton Eyes on the 26th, when there was also a Greenshank present. There was a flock of 125 Lapwing at Withnell Fold on the 11th.

Six species of raptor were recorded during the month. A female/juvenile Marsh Harrier was noted over Croston Moss and Bretherton Eyes on the 26th and 28th. Nine reports of Hobby were received from Croston Moss, Eccleston, Great Knowley, White Coppice and Yarrow Meadows. An adult and two juveniles together at a site near Eccleston on 31st must be our first confirmation of local breeding. Buzzard sightings came from at least nine sites with juveniles involved on several occasions. Nine records of Sparrowhawk included a report of breeding at Shaw Hill. Records of Peregrine came from 6 sites with probable breeding at two. Finally Kestrel were noted at 7 sites including 4 on Croston Moss (12th) and 3 at Rivington (19th) indicating successful breeding. Four species of owl were also recorded, the best of which was probably the Short-eared Owl on Mawdesley Moss on the 9th. Barn Owl and Little Owl were both noted on Croston Moss. Tawny Owls were noted from several locations including Eccleston, Euxton, Great Knowley and White Coppice.



In addition to the waders on the mosses a major record was that of a juvenile Cuckoo which was seen daily on Croston Moss from 12th to 20th. We receive very few records of juvenile Cuckoo so it was nice to have one which hung around for several days.

Juvenile Cuckoo

Another species which seems to be increasingly scarce these days is Green Woodpecker, but one was seen this month flying across Anglezarke reservoir on the 18th. Ring-necked Parakeet records were again mainly confined to the Shaw Hill / Whittle area, although two were seen in Astley Park on the 15th. Kingfishers were recorded from 7 sites across the area which hopefully indicates a healthy breeding population.

Swifts have usually left the area by the end of the first week in August, but this year the records continued to come with 20 records received throughout. Largest flock was one of 10 over Croston Moss on the 14th with the last being a single bird at Coppull on the 31st. Several flocks of migrating Swallows were reported during the month with the largest being 100+ at Withnell Fold on the 16th. House Martins were still breeding with 7 active nests at the Gillibrands and at least one on Moor Road. Migration was also taking place with a dozen large flocks recorded, the largest of which were 150 at Euxton and 200 at White Coppice, both on the 25th.

Wheatears were beginning to appear on return migration, both on the moors (8th and 13th) and on Croston Moss (13th and 31st). A Whinchat was also on Croston Moss (25th). A pair of Stonechat with 3 young was seen along Dean Black Brook on the 8th. Also passing through were Yellow Wagtail with up to 4 seen on the Alma Woods pools between the 18th and 31st. With them were up to 7 White Wagtail.

Ten Willow Warblers still in song at White Coppice on the 4th was a bit of surprise. One singing along Eyes Lane on the 8th was surely a bird on passage. A Lesser Whitethroat was noted on Croston Moss on the 5th. Two Reed Warblers were still in song in Yarrow Valley Park on the 1st with another 3 along the canal at Sollom on the 3rd. A Grasshopper Warbler was reeling on Wheelton Moor on the 8th, and a Sedge Warbler was seen carrying food on Croston Moss on the 12th.

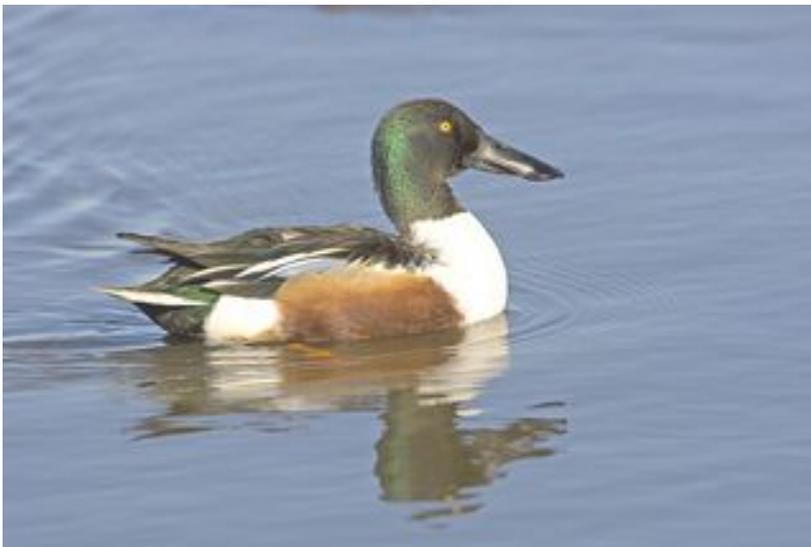
Finches continued to gather in post-breeding flocks with 30 Linnet near Croston sewage works (4th) and 50 on Croston Moss (25th). 80 Goldfinch were feeding on thistles on Croston Moss (14th) and 40 were on Tincklers Lane fields (24th).

Parties of 7 Tree Sparrow and 7 Yellowhammer were on Croston Moss on the 4th. Finally a willow Tit was again noted at Wymott on the 28th.



Tree Sparrow

September



Shoveler seen at Bretherton Eyes

A small skein of 21 Pink-footed Geese which dropped onto Bretherton Eyes on the 2nd were very much the vanguard of this autumn's arrivals. The next report was of a skein of 150 west over Croston Moss on the 15th, followed by two of 30 and 17 over Cuerden Valley Park (17th) and 70 again over Croston Moss (28th). There were also plenty of Canada Geese including 250 on Bretherton Moss (29th) and 300 on Bretherton Eyes (30th). Mixed in with the latter were a Barnacle Goose and 40 Greylag Geese. The 30th also the arrival of winter wildfowl to the site with 8 Wigeon, 6 Gadwall and a Shoveler. Teal numbers at Belmont Reservoir had built up to 40 by the 15th. A flock of 100 Mallard came in to roost on Croston Moss on the 17th. 10 Goosander were on the Douglas on the 6th. A Coot with 3 young was on Park Hall lake on the 1st and a Moorhen with 5 young was on Croston Finney (8th).



Most unusual record of the month was of a storm driven **Gannet** which arrived on Big Lodge in Yarrow Valley Park early on the morning of the 7th. Sadly, it only lasted for an hour or so before succumbing.

More happily, a Little Egret was seen daily during the first week of the month on Tincklers Lane fields, and another was on Bretherton Eyes on the 29th.

The waders which had frequented the Alma Wood pools last month remained until the 9th and included up to 5 Greenshank, 3 Green Sandpiper and 4 Curlew. A juvenile Ringed Plover was on Croston Moss (10th) and a Little Ringed Plover was there on the 16th. It has been a poor autumn for Little Ringed Plover records, perhaps because of high water levels in the reservoirs. Snipe were present on Croston Moss throughout the month with the highest count being 30 on 10th and 24th. The only significant Lapwing records were 100 on Croston Finney (1st) and 30 high west over Clayton-le-Woods on the 29th.

Nine species of raptor were recorded which covers most possibilities, with probably just Goshawk and Red Kite missing! There were four records of Osprey passing through – over Little Knowley (8th), Winter Hill (15th), Hic Bibi (21st) and Anglezarke Moor (22nd).



A ring-tailed Hen Harrier was seen on a few occasions hunting over Winter Hill (15th & 21st) and Anglezarke Moor (22nd).

A female / juvenile Marsh Harrier was again seen on several dates over Croston Moss and was joined by a male on the 8th. A female / juvenile was also seen over Anglezarke Moor on the 17th. In addition to Hobbies from the Eccleston family being seen regularly throughout, others were also reported from Bretherton Eyes (4th), Anglezarke Moor (8th & 20th) and Croston Moss (12th). One at Withnell Fold cricket club on the 14th put the batsman off his stroke! A Merlin was over Winter Hill on the 1st and another on Bretherton Eyes on the 30th. A Peregrine was on Croston Moss (8th) and around Morrison's chimney (18th & 22nd). 12 records of Buzzard were received including 5 together over Whittle-le-Woods (11th) and 6 over Clayton-le-Woods (29th).



Kestrel

Just 4 records of Kestrel and 3 of Sparrowhawk were received.

Three species of owl were noted – Little on Bretherton Moss (10th), Barn at Bretherton (10th) and Croston Moss (16th) and Tawny at Bretherton (10th), Anglezarke Moor (17th) and Eccleston (19th). Game birds were represented by Grey Partridge on several dates on Croston Moss including 10 on 15th, and Pheasant (7 young on Croston Moss on 17th, and 2 young in a Great Knowley garden (24th).

The last **Swift** record was a single over Great Knowley on the 1st.



Swallows continued to pass through including a massive 700 over the A49 at Charnock Richard on the 6th, with smaller flocks recorded at several locations until the 25th. House Martins were still attending nests at both Moor Road and Anchorfields at Eccleston, with the last activity being noted at Moor Road on the 19th. The largest migrating flock reported was one of 100 over Winter Hill (8th) and the last for the month was 12 over Yarrow Meadows on the 28th. A mixed flock of several hundred hirundines was noted over Hic Bibi on the 28th.

A Yellow Wagtail flew over the Gillibrands on the 9th and 3 White Wagtails were on Croston Moss on the same day. Wheatear passage continued with records split evenly between the moors and Croston Moss where 5 were together on the 6th.



More **Whinchats** passed through with birds on Winter Hill (20th), 2 on Croston Moss (24th) and one at Great Knowley (28th).

A minimum of 2 Stonechat families on Anglezarke Moor were presumably second or even third broods. A pair was also on Croston Moss from 21st. A pair of Black Redstarts were on the mast buildings on Winter Hill on the 21st. On passage was a Spotted Flycatcher along Syd Brook, Eccleston also on the 21st. A Whitethroat at Tincklers Lane fields on the 13th was the last for the year, as was the Willow Warbler on Anglezarke Moor on the same date and the Sedge Warbler on Croston Finney on the 15th. Chiffchaffs were recorded throughout the month from several sites, usually singing birds with the last record at Coppull on the 26th.

The first returning Redwing was at Anglezarke Reservoir on the 30th. Mistle Thrush parties included 20 at Shaw Hill (19th), 10 in Lead Mines Clough (20th), 20 on Croston Moss (21st) and 10 near Anglezarke Reservoir (30th). Finches continued to gather in flocks with 100 Linnets on Croston Moss (24th) and 200 Goldfinch there on the 28th, but the most noteworthy records were of single birds – Twite on Winter Hill (20th) and Crossbill in Lead Mines Clough (22nd).

A party of 3 Green Woodpeckers on Winter Hill were hopefully a family group. Ring-necked Parakeets were again at Shaw Hill (19th) with 2 birds seen and several more heard. 5 Tree Sparrow were near Smith's lodge at White Coppice (15th).

Many thanks to the following for submitting records:-

I.Ball, D.Beattie, D.Beevers, P.Brennan, J.Cobham, M.Cookson, P.Davenport, B.Derbyshire, P.Djali, D.Downing, T.Dunn, J.Edwards, M.Fishwick, J.Frankland, M.Graham, M.Greenhalgh, L.Griffiths, P.Hodson, J.Howlett, R.Hoyle, C&T.Johnson, P.Kirk, J.Kirkham, P.Krischkiw, E.Langrish, A.Leach, G.Lilley, S.Martin, M.Nightingale, D.Morrison, D.North, L.Poxon, J.Riley, P.Rhodes, V.G.Rhodes, N.Root, L.Rose, P.Ross, P.Rowlands, P.Scholes, N.Southworth, R.Spencer, M.Stuart, J.Sutton, C.Thistlethwaite, G.Thomas, N.&T.West, P.West, T.Westhead, K.Woan.

Please continue to send your records to the forum or the editor.

Neil Southworth

GARDEN BIRD SURVEY

The Garden Bird Survey again took place during the winter months between December 2018 and March 2019. 23 completed forms were returned, which pleasingly was an increase of four over last year. Thank you to all those who took part. The medium sized suburban garden remains the most numerous contributor. The average number of species per garden was 21.30, which is three species fewer than last year. Perhaps this is a reflection on a mild winter when Fieldfare, Redwing and Brambling were hard to find. Great Knowley was once more the winning location with a garden there recording 35 species, followed by a garden at Euxton with 32. The distribution of gardens was as follows:-

<u>Location</u>	Urban	Suburban	Rural
	2	15	6
<u>Size</u>	Small	Medium	Large
	4	12	7

The total number of species recorded this year was 53, two more than last year, but with no new species for the garden list. The total number of species recorded in the 20 years or so that the survey has been running now stands at 69. The chart below is based on the number of gardens visited by each species. A weighting is then used to separate species in case of equality. This year, only Blackbird visited all gardens. The big mover was Goldfinch which jumped from 9th to 5th, which finally reflects the species rapid increase in our area over the past few years.



Wren remains the perennial loser of the weighting system, being in 17th position despite visiting 21 of the 23 gardens but general recorded as rare. House Sparrow rose three places, hopefully indicating a small recovery in population. Greenfinch slipped back a place which was disappointing after it showed tentative signs of recovery last year. Nuthatch, which is a relative newcomer to the list, continued its upward progress. Song Thrush dropped out again after reappearing last year. It was replaced by Carrion Crow. Long-tailed Tit, surprisingly, slipped 4 places.

Outside the Top 20, Goldcrests were seen in 12 gardens and Siskin in 11. This year there were 4 records of Blackcap and two of Chiffchaff, but none of Brambling, which seems a bit perverse! The species which didn't make the Top 20 were as follows:-

Sparrowhawk (14 gardens), Song Thrush (13), Goldcrest (12), Siskin (11), Great Spotted Woodpecker and Jackdaw (9), Stock Dove and Treecreeper (6), Grey Heron

and Pied Wagtail (5), Pheasant, Blackcap and Lesser Redpoll (4), Mallard, Buzzard, Herring Gull, Rook, Redwing, Mistle Thrush, Grey Wagtail and Reed Bunting (3), Black-headed Gull, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Tawny Owl and Chiffchaff (2), and Moorhen, Kestrel, Feral Pigeon, Barn Owl, Fieldfare, Willow Tit, Tree Sparrow and Linnet (one each).

We will again be running the survey on the same basis in the coming winter, so I look forward to receiving all your forms, plus perhaps a few more besides?

Year					Species	Weighted score	Gardens visited
'19	'18	'11	'03	'98			
1	1	1	1	1	Blackbird	65	23
2=	2	1=	3	2	Blue Tit	61	22
2=	4	6	14	15	Woodpigeon	61	22
4	3	3	1=	4	Robin	60	22
5	9	13	16	17	Goldfinch	55	22
6	6	11	6=	5	Magpie	53	22
7	5	4	5	7	Dunnock	52	21
8	7	4=	4	3	Great Tit	50	19
9	8	8	10	13	Coal Tit	46	20
10	10	10	14	11	Starling	45	22
11=	12	9	6	6	Chaffinch	42	19
11=	14	14	11	8	House Sparrow	42	19
13	13	7	8	9	Collared Dove	36	18
14	15	---	-	-	Nuthatch	32	14
15	11	12	13	14	Long-tailed Tit	30	15
16	19	19	19	-	Bullfinch	29	12
17	16	16	12	12	Wren	27	21
18	17	15	9	10	Greenfinch	24	15
19=	20	18	18	16	Jay	21	12
19=	-	-	-	20	Carrion Crow	21	12

Neil Southworth

A SUMMER OF HOGS

Our adventure starts on a hot summer's day in early July, Monday the 8th to be precise. Margaret, my wife, was out in the garden doing a little bit of gardening in the afternoon when she came across two tiny hoglets out in the borders. With it being so warm she decided to bring them into the house for some shade and water, putting them into a large box with rags as bedding. She watered & fed them some beetles before they settled down in their bedding. The rest of the afternoon was spent looking under rocks, logs and flags to try and find them some more food but, due to the prolonged dry spell we were experiencing, only a dozen beetles and one or two woodlice were found.

That evening on returning home from work I was greeted by the site of the box in the kitchen and a jar with the beetles and woodlice. We waited till later that evening before disturbing the hoglets with the intention to feed them and check them over. The hoglets were truly tiny, the smallest hedgehogs that I had ever seen, measuring no more than 3 inches long, they were dwarfed by my hand. On close scrutiny it was determined that they were both males. Not wanting to anthropomorphise the hoglets, names were given as male A and male B.



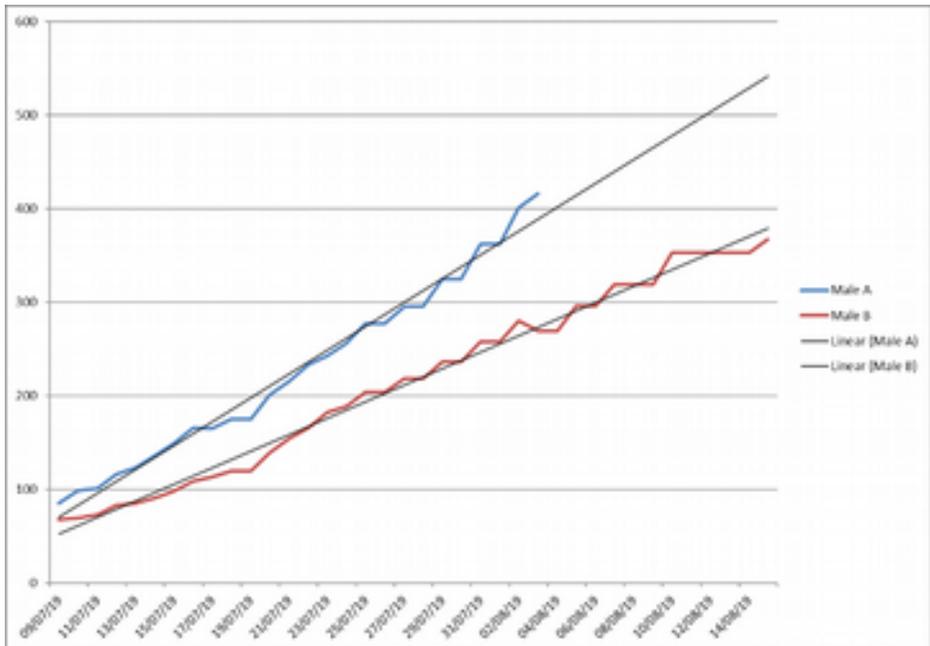
The picture here shows just one of the hoglets that first evening, after giving them both a good looking over for any signs of ticks or obvious ailments. I am glad to say none of the above were present.

The hoglets were put in a small box and fed some beetles, the larger of the two having no difficulty in catching and eating them. The smaller of the two though was so small it was unable to feed itself at this stage so using a pair of tweezers to hold the beetles it was fed from the tweezers. Glad I didn't use my fingers as it had quite a grip on the beetle and tweezers. We decided that both of the hoglets were just too small to be re-introduced into the wild. So, we decided we would keep them until they were of a suitable

size and weight to be released back into the garden. We spent the next few weeks feeding the hoglets on a daily(nightly) basis.

Food consisted of cooked egg yolk, cooked chicken, shredded beef, crushed peanuts and we purchased hedgehog food called "Spikes dinner", also ensuring fresh water was available all the time. From the 9th of July we also started to weigh the hedgehogs on an almost daily basis to monitor the hoglets hopeful weight gains.

	Found July 8th Monday		
	09/07/19	85	68
	10/07/19	99	69
	11/07/19	101	73
	12/07/19	116	83
	13/07/19	123	85
	14/07/19	136	91
	15/07/19	149	98
	16/07/19	166	109
	17/07/19	165	113
	18/07/19	175	120
Not weighed	19/07/19	175	120
	20/07/19	201	139
	21/07/19	215	154
	22/07/19	233	166
	23/07/19	243	182
	24/07/19	256	189
	25/07/19	277	204
Not weighed	26/07/19	277	204
	27/07/19	295	218
Not weighed	28/07/19	295	218
	29/07/19	325	236
Not weighed	30/07/19	325	236
	31/07/19	362	258
Not weighed	01/08/19	362	258
	02/08/19	401	280
Released  A	03/08/19	416	269
Not weighed	04/08/19		269
	05/08/19		296
Not weighed	06/08/19		296
	07/08/19		319
Not weighed	08/08/19		319
Not weighed	09/08/19		319
	10/08/19		353
Not weighed	11/08/19		353
Not weighed	12/08/19		353
Escaped	13/08/19		353
	14/08/19		353
Located in garden  B	15/08/19		367



The table and chart show the hoglets' weight progress to the point of release. As you can see, apart from 1 day for male B they steadily put on weight the whole time. The hoglets were moved from the kitchen to the polytunnel in the garden after a number of weeks, being kept in the base of a large Guinea pig cage. Male A was released on the 3rd of August weighing 416 grams. A weight gain of 331 grams. The second male B continued to be fed until on the 13th August it did a Houdini and escaped. Fortunately, we found the hoglets a couple of nights later out on the lawn late at night. So, I caught the smaller of the two the one that had escaped a couple of nights earlier to check its weight. The hoglet was still putting on weight and had reached a weight of 367 grams. A gain of 299 grams. We have continued to keep putting out food on a daily basis for all the hedgehogs in the garden. We regularly see the two youngsters and at least two adults out feed at night. I feel optimistic that the two youngsters will have gained enough weight by the end of autumn to successfully hibernate through the coming winter.

Paul West.

FIELD TRIPS

Grimsargh Wetlands – Sunday 8th December

A new venue for us. Grimsargh Wetlands has been created from Grimsargh Reservoirs and seems to attract a good selection of wildfowl in winter. Access is from the B2643 Preston Road in Grimsargh opposite the junction with Elston Lane at SD59037. Allow time to find somewhere to park.

Meet at the access point at 9.30 am. See the ELOC website gazetteer for a larger map.

If time allows we may also look at Alston Reservoirs / wetlands.



Lunt Meadows – Saturday 4th January

A return visit to see how this LWT nature reserve has developed since we were last there. Wellies are recommended for this site.

Meet at the reserve car park at 9.30 am, which is located off Lunt Road near Maghull at SD 355021, postcode L29 8YA.

Moore Nature Reserve – Sunday 2nd February

A new venue for us, Moore nature reserve near Warrington has long been known for Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, so fingers crossed on that one! It is also good for wildfowl and gulls.

There is free access and car parking. The address is Lapwing Lane / Birchwood Lane, Moore, Warrington, WA4 6. Meet at the site at 9.30 am. Google says it's 50 minutes drive from Chorley.

As these are winter field trips involving travel, please contact us before setting off in the event of adverse weather. Lifts can probably be organised for anyone without transport.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Will members please note that subscriptions were due for renewal on 1st September. Subscription rates are to remain unchanged for this season as follows:-

Grade of Membership	2019 / 2020
Adult	£10.00
Family	£15.00
Seniors.	£8.00
Senior Family	£12.00
Junior (under 18)	Free

Members who attend meetings are requested to make a donation at the door. A charge of £2.00 is made for non-members.

Members who are not able to attend meetings may send their subscription direct to:-

Mr Keith Woan,
80 Carleton Road,
Chorley, PR6 8UB

Subscriptions may also be paid by Standing Order. This reduces administration, particularly in enabling the Society, which is a registered Charity, to claim back tax on the subscription of those members who have also signed Gift Aid Declarations, and at no extra cost to the member. For further details, contact the Membership Secretary or the Treasurer. Thanks to those members who have already arranged to pay by Standing Order. Thanks also to those who have signed Gift Aid Declarations.

DATA PROTECTION

Records of name, address, telephone numbers and type of membership of the Society's members are now stored on computer. If you object to this information about yourself being stored in this manner, please notify the Membership Secretary in writing of your objection.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many thanks to Phil Kirk, Len Poxon, Paul West and the estate of the late Colin Smith for photographs used in the Newsletter.

Thanks to all those who have contributed articles for the Newsletter, which are much appreciated. More would be very welcome!

WINTER PROGRAMME 2019/2020

Sep 19	'Wildlife of North Wales'	David Winnard
Sep 26	Annual General Meeting	
Oct 17	'Birdlife through 40 Pennine Years'	Gordon Yates
Nov 21	'The Impact of Overfishing'	Christine Glaze
Dec 19	Photographic Evening / Bats	David Beattie
Jan 16	'The Wildlife of the Isle of Avalon'	Mike Roberts
Feb 20	'Attracting Wild Bees to Gardens'	George Pilkington
Mar 19	'Pennine Adders, Amphibians and Reptiles'	David Alred
Apr 16	'Wildlife Photography'	Roy Rimmer

All the above meetings will be held at St Mary's Parish Centre, Devonshire Road, Chorley and commence at 7.30 p.m. Please note that all meetings are on a Thursday evening. Visitors are welcome at all the meetings.

For confirmation of the programme and further information about the Society, please contact the Secretary:- Paul Brennan on 01257 275545 or alternatively visit our Website: www.chorleynats.org.uk. or follow us on Facebook and Twitter! A WhatsApp group has also been set up for members to communicate information quickly. If you would like to join please let us know. We will need your mobile phone number to admit you to the group.

DEADLINES

The deadlines for receipt of articles, letters and book reviews for the forthcoming issues of the Newsletter are:-

No 168	Winter 2019/2020	21 st January 2020
No 169	Spring 2020	21 st April 2020

All contributions for Newsletters should be sent to the Editor – Neil Southworth, 9, Queensgate, Chorley, PR7 2PX (01257 276065).