

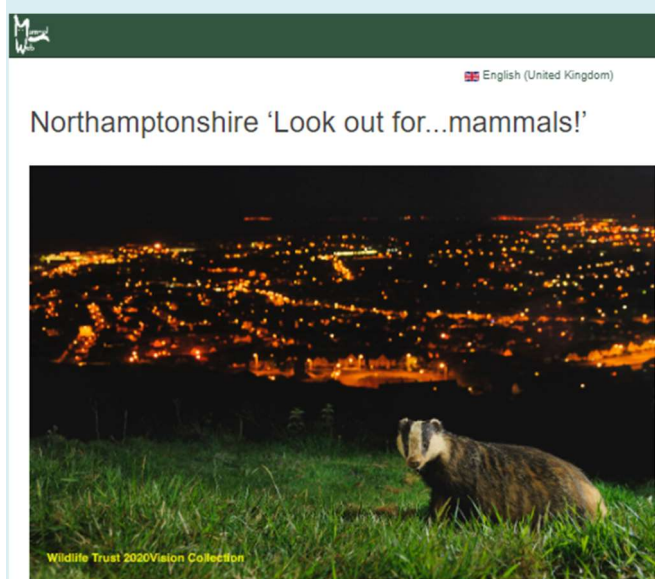
NBRC Newsletter 21

Spring/Summer 2021

Our database now stands at 1.2 million species (over 1 million verified), covering 11794 species in 57 taxonomic groups - as built through our wonderful [Recording Community](#), with their ever-increasing taxonomic and geographic coverage in submissions! Working with the Wildlife Trust, we actively monitor the condition of our Local Wildlife Sites, and keep our on-the-ground gathered habitat information up to date. Working with the Local Geological Group, we are working on updated assessments and agreed boundaries. Watch out for our upcoming 20-21 Annual Report, where we will share our key database updates.

Co-ordinated by Natural England and supported by the Woodland Trust we have been working hard to update Northamptonshire's **Ancient Woodland Inventory**. This project will bring mapped information up to date and include a more comprehensive coverage of mapped woodland by adding small woods (0.25-2ha). We are now two thirds of the way through the stage 1&2 of this project and on completion will (if local funding support is found) move to arranging archive reference and on-the-ground surveys to complete the project. This final completed map will be shared by Natural England as open data.

We have a number of 'look out for' surveys on our website for you to take part in!



We have launched as part of Wildlife Trust BCN Monitoring and Research the **Northamptonshire 'Look out for... Mammals'** on MammalWeb, a site that allows 'trappers' to upload captured camera trap footage and images and for 'spotters' to identify species records within the footage to create biological records. Read our [intro to the BCN MammalWeb](#) project and head over to our project pages to take part. If you are new to 'trapping' or want to improve your set up - join the [wildlife training workshop on the 3rd August](#) and learn from Henry Stanier.

Our three county **'Look out for...Swifts'** is now in its third year since launching as part of WILDside and has had 80 reports to date so far this year. This survey provides information on breeding sites and behaviour for informed swift conservation. Some of the installed Wildlife Trust BCN nest boxes from 2019 are starting to show the effect of intervention – and we are lucky to now have nesting swifts in our installed swift boxes at our Lings Office!

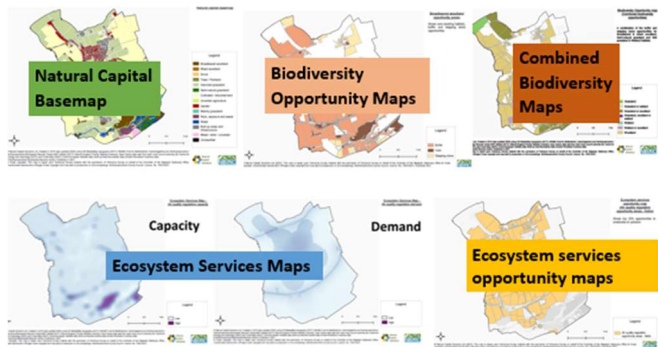
With support of the **Environment Agency** our **'Look out for Ponds'** aims to generate missing information on the distribution and health of this key Northamptonshire habitat. Summer is an ideal time for pond dipping and monitoring the species inhabitants. We have a number of guides to support you in your aquatic ID online and at our [Lings Library](#). Moving to the end of summer/autumn in wetter weather is the best time to report pond boundary information as ponds will be (more likely) at their maximum capacity. The survey is available as traditional 'paper and pen' and as a 'mobile' epicollect survey app. For boundaries you can map in the field by submitting as a drawn on OS map, photo and survey form or if confident in QGIS with use of our Qfield project.

Quality current environmental and species data is more important than ever, with upcoming changes expected through the planned UK Environment Bill later in 2021 that will outlay legally binding targets that aim for nature recovery. Local implementation to meet those targets will rely on continually enhancing what we know, on using this in quality data driven decisions, and improving how we monitor, capture and report change. Working with the new unitary Northamptonshire Councils, we provide up to date, quality checked data to both the North Northamptonshire Council and the West



Northamptonshire Council (covering the South District this year and proposed full coverage from next year) under annual licence for planning purposes. Working with Ryan Clark of the Wildlife Trust and our County Recorders on the [BCN State of Nature](#) project, we are supporting the data provision for wider local analysis and for a new species database for use by Wildlife Trust reserves managers. We work closely with a range of local stakeholders in the Local Nature Partnership (LNP) to ensure data is at the heart of local decision-making.

This year we have formed a new agreement to host and provide local level reports of, LNP supported, modelled basemap, ecosystem services maps, and habitat opportunity maps and combined habitat and ecosystem opportunity mapping as produced by [Natural Capital Solutions](#). This service 'add on' has been piloted with six parishes initially, with proposed application in Parish or Neighbourhood Plans and we plan to launch fully as part of our service in the autumn. The service aims to inform a Natural Capital approach in decision-making, as used alongside the most current designated sites, validated and verified species records and habitat data (annually updated based on ground survey). We are currently developing the supporting handbook with Natural Capital Solutions, for clear explanation of the report mapping and case study to aid local application in meeting the proposed local enhancements.



In addition, our [drone service](#) is now fully established, delivering project evidence simply and swiftly, with a number of projects under our belt over the last few years. We have captured before and after imaging on site, delivering: birds-eye-view orthomosaic/panoramic 'stitched' whole site, 3D, video and detailed (including in hard to assess on foot) image capture on sites. We aim to enable landowners and project partners to utilise this information, and having completed all CAA requirements, travel and flight on small simple sites in 5 hours we have updated to this minimum time (from a day) and our charges to hourly. We aim to improve accessibility of this service,

through this scale, quoting on time required by site size and project complexity. We charge for our services on a non-profit basis and aim for a self-supporting and accessible tool for environmental management.



Close up comparison of drone (300ft) image at Earls Barton (left) and Google aerials (right)

We are always working hard at the record centre to deliver a range of quality underpinning data, accessible and relevant to today's environmental and biodiversity challenges.

Rosalind Johnston, NBRC Centre Manager

Follow our [twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) for the latest from the team. [Email us](#) to keep our mailing list up to date with any changes in your details and preferences.

All Invertebrate Recorders Welcome!

As some of you may know, we have had a successful Diptera Recording Group for about 10 years. We have met every Sunday morning from the end of April into the autumn. Recently however, our numbers have declined and we have seen how successfully the Bedfordshire Invertebrate Group (BIG) has been operating. Indeed some of us have taken part in some of their events. As we dipterists have been recording other invertebrates on our field trips it seems an opportune time to expand our efforts more explicitly by inviting others who are interested in recording invertebrates to come along to our field meetings.

These take place on Sunday mornings from 10:00 to around 13:00 but are quite flexible. The current programme is:

25th July: Lilbourne Meadows

1st August: Wicksteed Water Meadow (park in Barton Seagrave and walk down to the site opposite Wicksteed Park)



The aim of the group is to record species and to submit records to NBRC and national recording schemes where appropriate. It is not aimed at general wildlife walks or photography, although photos may of course be used for recording purposes.

There are no specific requirements to join in. You can just turn up but you may want to check with me beforehand that a meeting is still going ahead. Any suggestions for sites later in the year would be welcome. It may be possible to arrange some identification workshops during the winter if there is a demand.

John Showers, County Diptera Recorder

Blog: <http://northantsdiptera.blogspot.com/>

Email: showersjohn@gmail.com

Kelmarsh Estate Bioblitz 2021

Sunderland Wood



Sunderland Wood ©Nathalie Hueber

We all had a good first day of this year's Bioblitz organised at Sunderland Wood on the Kelmarsh Estate. There was blue sky and bright sunshine in the morning of the 24th May, however rain was forecast at midday. We had to keep all the equipment to a minimum this year due to the Covid-19 situation and so had to forego the usual welcoming tea and biscuits.

Four of us set off into the wood - it was nice to see all the ransoms in the wood along with the other woodland flowers such as goldilocks and bluebells. This is a predominantly Ash woodland, but there were quite a large proportion of Elms already with their leaves out. The rain came at 11 am as predicted and it quickly turned to hail, although the sun came back after this short shower - it was enough to deter any flying insects such as butterflies. David, our County Recorder for Butterflies, was only able to record one Green-veined White, but he had his camera set on a

great spotted woodpecker, as he said, 'The male's beak is a bioblitz in itself, I can make out crane flies and various larvae in one beak full there!'



Male Woodpecker ©David James

We came back at lunchtime and everybody was cheerful despite the start of the rain. It was nice to be able to meet up outside after this very difficult year. We left just before the second shower, perfect timing!

Kelmarsh Hall – Daytime Session

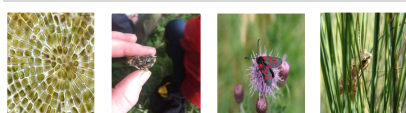
Our second visit took place on 12th July near the lakes and meadows of Kelmarsh Hall. It was wet before leaving for the event, but despite the weather forecast, this time the rain stopped on arrival and the sun gradually came out.

There were seven of us surveying the meadow, the lakes and the wilderness. Many dragonflies were out-and-about and Alan, our new County Recorder for Reptiles and Amphibians, spotted a *hummingbird hawkmoth*, *banded demoiselle* and a male *broad-bodied chaser* – as well as recording two *grass snakes*. I was focusing on the county rarity of *wood club-rush*.

There were plenty of aquatic plants in the water for me to have a look at and I was quite excited to find *lesser pondweed*, *fennel pondweed*, a *stonewort* and *Fan-leaved water-crowfoot*. Maybe it had been me disturbing the fish in the water with the grapnel!



Wood club-rush ©Nathalie Hueber



We spent a bit of time puzzled by something quite large swimming in the lake that kept surfacing and disappearing – we dubbed the ‘Kelmarsh Unidentified Swimming Object’. We had a few suggestions for the mystery shape in the water; we particularly hoped it might be an otter, as they have been recorded on the site.



Rachel took a video of mystery the shape. After looking more closely at the pictures, our USO looked most likely to be a large fish.

When we all came back together at lunchtime, we agreed the day was successful, meeting up safely within the restrictions and we are looking forward to the day when we will be able to hold larger events for local recorders once again.

Nathalie Hueber, NBRC Data Officer

Kelmarsh Hall –Evening Session

The night session once again just dodged the rain. Juliette and myself headed round to map out our route for a bat transect and James began the set up of three moth-trapping sites.



Kelmarsh moth trapped species ©James Skinner

There was activity right around the walk with great habitat structure of the established woodland, interspaced with open sections and right by the water where we were treated with a low flying body of a *Daubenton*. There were four species identified with a bat detector (*Common* and *Soprano*

Pipistrelle, *Noctule* and *Daubenton*) and a likely pipistrelle roost identified. Juliette is now going back through the recording for the full results!

Meanwhile, after a slow start, James had around 90 species of moths picking up as the night went on. A couple of micros were picked up, new to the Estate. Lovely to see *Scarlet Tiger*, which didn't exist much in the county when trapping there in 2012-2013, but is increasingly widespread now and noticed by more and more recorders.

Rosalind Johnston, NBRC Centre Manager

Recording elms in Northamptonshire

Books on the British flora have differed hugely in their approach to classifying elms, ranging from one or two variable species, or up to seven species with numerous named hybrids and varieties. The late Oliver Rackham wrote 'There are arguably more kinds of elm in England than of all other native trees together' so it's a shame few people have taken the variation seriously. Sell & Murrell's *Flora of Great Britain and Ireland* (2018) treats each of 62 recognisable forms as separate named microspecies, based largely on a 1992 PhD by Jayne Armstrong. They also argue (and Rackham agreed) that nearly all the smooth-leaved elms are native to Britain, and most are endemic (not found in mainland Europe), so I think they are a priority for conservation. Since spring 2018, I've been testing the new approach, and it seems to make sense. There's good evidence that many insects and galls that live on elms can tell the difference between the microspecies too. Moreover, central-eastern England is a real stronghold.

Sixteen of the 62 species are recorded in Northants, but there are 45 in Beds-Cambs-Northants, so more can be expected in Northants. Two of the new species were described from Northants, and one, [Laxton Elm, *Ulmus crassa*](#), is currently known only from the village green and area around Laxton near Corby. It's a beautiful, very broad-crowned tree. If you visit, look out for the distinctive and contrasting [Plot Elms](#) in the hedgerows nearby: a very narrow tree with drooping branches and a floppy top. Don't be put off by Dutch Elm Disease: most elms survived the disease, at least as regrowing suckers, which often reach 10m or taller. Forest Research reckon there are more elms in England now than before the disease. I've refound 95% of the trees surveyed by Armstrong and Sell in the 1980s. Some books say that almost all elms are impossible to identify since DED. Sell & Murrell (2018) argued that most elm suckers grow tall



enough to provide the 'mature leaves on short shoots in full sun', which are the essentials of elm identification (details in the new key, below). In my experience, at least 90% of elms are identifiable, though long loppers help to get a good sample.

I'm just putting the finishing touches to a new (free!) identification guide (Sell & Murrell key is not easy to use, and their illustrations are limited to two leaf-outlines per species). The new key will be available at www.wildlifebcn.org/wildlife/wildlife-guides & there are lots of photos and more information about elms at wtru.st/elms. All feedback welcome!

Brian Eversham, Chief Executive

**Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire
and Northamptonshire**

Water, Litter and Shore Bug keys

Draft keys to the Water Bugs of Great Britain and Ireland

Kev Rowley

Photographs by **A.A. Cook**
Draft 0.3 : Feb 2021

Based on **Nau, B.S.**, (2010)
Keys to Aquatic & Semi-aquatic Heteroptera. unpublished.



The Covid period has given me more time at home rather than being out recording. I have managed to use some of that time to reflect on water bugs, update and expand the information I have on the website, and expand my keys. The [website](#) is building into a repository for Water Bugs, with an online Northants Atlas of all the 53 species we are recording and pen portraits of each of those species; including behaviour, distribution, habitat and identification.

When thinking about identification, there seemed to be a gap these days of a modern published key with photographs of species for both beginners and experts to use. Southwood & Leston (1959) and also

Savage (1989) created the go to publications in their times, but it was really Bernard Nau (2010) and Peter Kirkby (2015) that helped me understand the groups better. They both aided with keys that were easier to follow, with drawings of features and more modern wording. It was sad news to hear of Bernard Nau passing away recently. The courses that he and Sheila ran, together with Richard Chadds, have really helped drive my interest in aquatic invertebrates and supported my thirst for information and validation of my identification. It made me realise that if I worked through my own version it would allow me to understand the group in much more detail.

Tony Cook, the National Recorder, was taking some excellent photographs - so I found what specimens I could from around Northamptonshire, and added to Tony's photographed collection. Northamptonshire is well covered with specimens so my next challenge is to travel further afield to the coasts and uplands and fill in the gaps. As a call out if anyone has any fresh samples of the ones missing, they would be gratefully received. I started with an id guide and a family key, as they are a great introduction into the groups. I then did a key of everything with the exception of *Corixidae* and *Saldidae*, which are trickier. Recently, I have been working through these two groups and while the shape and content is looking good, I am still searching for some of the samples to photograph. The *Corixidae* key could be of interest to moth trappers as they regularly turn up in the bi-catch. *Callicorixa praeusta* has a distinctive dark rectangular mark on the hind tibia. *Hesperocorixa.sp* have a pointed xiphus and the number of lines on the pronotum can separate the two larger species.



Experts have reviewed the keys and a few people have been using them, so although still work in progress I have decided to publish them on my site. They are really helping new people to gain a better understanding of the group and I have found them to be great as a referral for people who want to start to record and are building their deeper knowledge. The key is there to support new recorders to start with some species confidently and build up. This I hope will help recorders, especially with my work on iRecord.

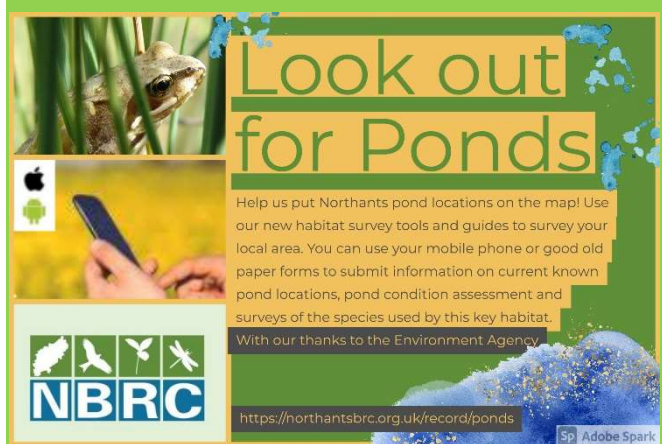


Where, for example, I receive many common backswimmers for verification but not the other three *Notonecta* species, which are nearly as common.



The detailed Northants Water bug keys can be downloaded from <https://bit.ly/NorthantsWaterBug>

Why not use the keys to develop and extend your aquatic ID while joining in with a summer pond dip as part of our 'Look out for... Ponds' to add species and habitat records to the Northants Database?



Kevin Rowley,

Northants County Water Bug Recorder

References

- Kirby, P. 2015.** British Heteroptera. Keys to terrestrial families other than Miridae (2nd draft)
- B.S.Nau.** 2010. Keys to Aquatic & Semi-aquatic Heteroptera. Unpublished.
- A.A.Savage.** Adults of the British Aquatic Hemiptera Heteroptera. A key with ecological notes. Freshwater Biological Association, Ambleside, Scientific Publication No.50, 1989.
- Southwood & Leston.** Land and Water Bugs of the British Isles

This is our 'look out for...swifts' story!

In around 2005 we put up two wooden boxes on the back of our house and they were only used by starlings and house sparrows every year— which is

good news anyway. Then in 2011 we put up on the gable end of our house one wooden swift box – occupied within 20 minutes of putting up! We put two up in 2012, increased to three in 2018, all external wooden ones made by Terry using the first one (bought from RSPB) as a template. Terry religiously put the boxes up every late April and took them down in October (to deter sparrows and starlings). In 2019 we went to four Schwegler boxes and two old wooden ones fitted externally and four were used (2 old and 2 new). In October 2019 we installed six Schwegler Starling proof boxes into the wall. Terry cut the blocks out of the wall to install the inset ones (using scaffolding this time) and in 2020 all six were used.

In April this year, Terry installed cameras in two boxes. All six are being used! And in the two camera boxes we had a chick hatch on 29th June in one and the other we had three eggs, but it appears a new pair took up residence and we have video of an egg being chucked out. They are nest building but no eggs yet. Even when the boxes are all occupied we still have at least eight more swifts looking and one pair are even trying the old wooden box on the back of our house having turfed out sparrows.

The other evening we had a huge scream, I just pointed my phone camera to the sky and snapped, the photo looked like just blue sky until I zoomed in and counted 25 birds which was amazing!

Lesley & Terry, local volunteer recorders

Join in!

Share your records of swift breeding activity in Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, and Northamptonshire in 2021 <https://northantsbrc.org.uk/record/swift>

Annual Update from the Northants Badger Group

Northamptonshire Badger Group has had a busy year so far with the past few months being a key time for rescues, badger road deaths and of course the emergence of cubs. We have seen an increase in cub rescues in the past few years, with this year being no exception and this does seem to be reflected across many areas of the Country. Our changing weather patterns and very dry spring weather leaves cubs and badgers susceptible to dehydration and starvation.

We've been involved in the rescue of six cubs so far, and whilst our protocol is always to try and return cubs back to their natal sett, sadly this is not always possible. Therefore, we have four surviving cubs that



have spent time at The Nutkin Ward for initial treatment and are now having care up at a specialist centre, Cuan Wildlife Rescue in Shropshire. We are pleased to say that they have passed their bTB tests, have been vaccinated and are now being prepared for the next stage of their lives. Finding a release site in Northants for this year has been a frantic and difficult process. We haven't had much time to arrange everything including a site, materials, equipment as our first site option fell through. However, we are now currently finalising a release site and about to build the artificial badger sett for a soft, monitored and supported release in August.



Rescue badger cub *Meles meles* Photo ©Sally Jones

As a group, we are keen to return to finding & building release sites in Northamptonshire for our rescued cubs, something we haven't done for quite a few years. We are actively looking for any suitable release site in the County for next year. We would need to build a small two chamber artificial sett on the site, utilise electric fencing and support feed the cubs, daily, for a few weeks.

We have also been support feeding a family of four cubs, whose mother was killed on the road. Luckily, our records were good for the area, and we knew exactly where the sett was and the presence of the cubs was confirmed using our trail cameras. We were able to support feed, with the landowners' permission, initially daily then tapered off and these cubs are now thriving.

Another important piece of work we have been doing this year is actively focussing on sett surveying and gathering badger activity data for West Northamptonshire. It is an area we have only looked after for a few years, as we started out as North Northants Badger Group.

Watch the Northamptonshire Badger Group 'signs and evidence video' to learn what to look out for and get involved in filling the data gaps with our joint '[Look out for....badgers](#)' survey on the NBRC website



We now know that there has been an expression of interest or an application for culling of Badgers in Northamptonshire, therefore there is a high possibility that the cull is coming to our County this year or next and it is expected from the Warwickshire and Oxfordshire Border. The Government has announced a phased end to culling, but full four-year cull licences will be issued up to 2022 (usually around ten new areas per year). Plus, potentially additional two-year supplementary licences after them which aims for a 70% reduction in badgers. This means the continuation of intense badger culling until at least 2028. It is of the utmost importance that our records are updated ahead of this.

Sally Jones, Northamptonshire Badger Group

How can you help? Any badger activity or sett locations can be emailed directly to Peter, our sett recorder: northantsbadgerrecorder@gmail.com.

We are a very small handful of volunteers involved in this work. If you can help with any of the above, want to know more about what we do, or to get more involved please contact us:

northantsbadgergroup@gmail.com
www.northamptonshirebadgergroup.co.uk

Facebook: @northantsbadgergroup

Twitter: @Northantsbadger

Instagram: @northamptonshirebadgergroup

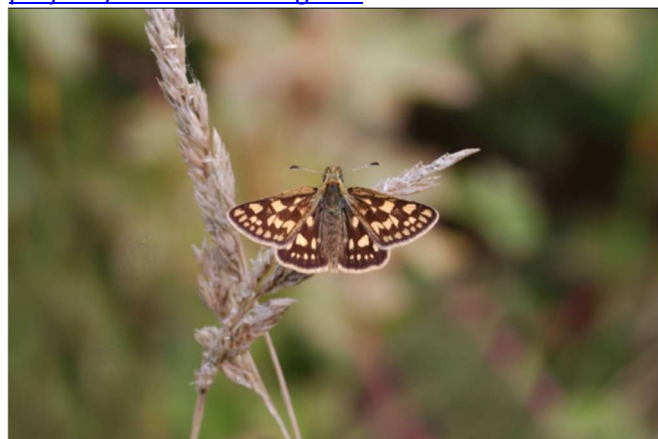


Butterfly recording in Northants 2020

I think it goes without saying that 2020 was a difficult year for many reasons and the devastating impact of the Coronavirus pandemic put butterfly recording justifiably on hold for the majority of the spring. Official transect walks were temporarily cancelled and non-essential car journeys to nature reserves were not allowed. We did however receive quite a few records during the lockdown as people used their hour of daily exercise to explore the local countryside and urban parks - counting the butterflies they saw.

As the rules relaxed, people could drive further and exercise for longer. But, many (quite rightly) avoided recording in the more popular sites. Thus, during the spring we received fewer records than usual overall and annual butterfly comparisons of totals was trickier this year. Particularly, when analysing the localised spring butterfly species such as Dingy Skipper, Grizzled Skipper and Green Hairstreak. My full [2020 butterfly report](#) is available online, and I would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who has taken the time to contribute records during this challenging year.

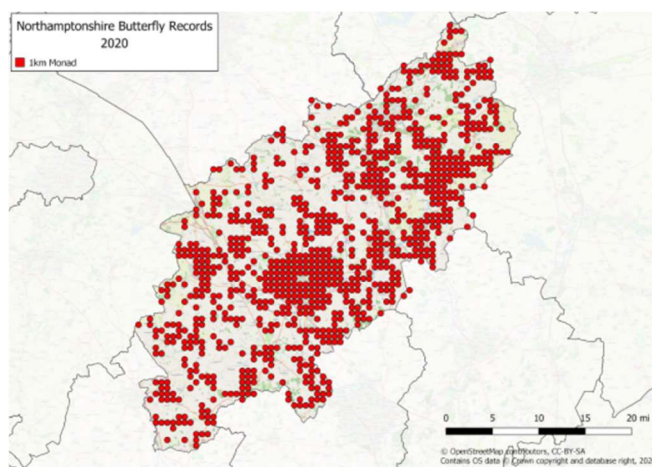
We were lucky enough to have two exciting projects continue in Northamptonshire during 2020 with Back From the Brink's Roots of Rockingham Project based in the Rockingham Forest area and Woodland Wings Project down in the south of the county along the Yardley Whittlewood Ridge. Fortunately, the lockdown restrictions were relaxed just in time for the Chequered Skippers flight period, which allowed for some monitoring of the reintroduction area. For up to date news please see the Roots of Rockingham: Back from the Brink page: naturebftb.co.uk/the-projects/roots-of-rockingham.



Chequered Skipper ©David James

Across the county, so far we received 29,499 records detailing the locations of 103,206 individual

butterflies. There has been a big uptake in people using the iRecord website, and the excellent iRecord Butterflies smartphone app, to submit records - something I encourage!



If you want to be involved in our local butterfly conservation committee please do get in touch, and let's hope there are better times ahead!

David James, County Butterfly Recorder VC32

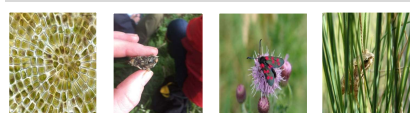
Join in the group: <https://www.beds-northants-butterflies.org.uk/vacancies.html>

Gill's Meadow



**Gill's Meadow, Meadow Saxifrage in flower
©Nathalie Hueber**

On 9th June 2021, there was a special event taking place at Barford Wood and Meadow Nature Reserve in Kettering. A small committee gathered in the SSSI Meadow to admire a fine display of wild flowers in the memory of Gill Gent, former Northamptonshire County Plant Recorder. The meadow has been renamed "Gill's Meadow" in her honour. Gill loved painting wild flowers and she was particularly fond of *Meadow Saxifrage* which is plentiful there. It usually flowers in May and we were extremely lucky this year to actually find it still in flower in June! Together with Rob Wilson, they left us a wonderful legacy for the



county by publishing the county flora in 1995 and a detailed revision in 2012. I would like take this opportunity to celebrate their achievement and remember their dedication and enthusiasm.

Nathalie Hueber, NBRC Data Officer

New County Recorder for Amphibians and Reptiles

My name is Alan Butler and I have recently taken over the role of County Recorder for Amphibians and Reptiles and as Chairman of NorthantsARG, allowing former recorder and chair Brian Laney to devote more of his time to plants. I have only been in post for less than 2 months but in this short time, I have been delighted with the welcome I have received from everyone, and also with the sheer enthusiasm out there.

My lifelong passion for wildlife, and in particular for the herptofauna, began during my early school days in Uxbridge when I used to go on cub and scout summer camps to places like Frensham Ponds where all six of our native reptiles, and the Natterjack Toad were present. As a teenager, I used to travel by bus (which took a few hours) to Newdigate in Surrey where there was an abundance of both native and more exotic animals in the general area, escapees from an Aquatic Farm located there.



Common Frog, Towcester Pocket Park ©Alan Butler

I first came to Towcester, where I still live, in 1980, but spent five years living in The Netherlands where I had the opportunity to see and photograph many of our rare reptiles, such as the Sand Lizard and Smooth Snake which are much more abundant and widespread there, and also other species not native to the UK. I have also been lucky to travel abroad, and to Australia, in particular where I have managed to see and photograph many of the native species of

frogs and reptiles there, including some of their highly venomous specialities!

Looking at the Amphibian and Reptile records for Northamptonshire, it seems that the north of the County has a much higher diversity of species, and indeed much higher numbers of animals than are recorded in the south. For example, Fineshade Wood holds a healthy population of Adders and an abundance of Common Lizards and Slow Worms.



Adder, Fineshade Wood ©Alan Butler

Adders do not appear to be present further south, although there are always rumours of sightings that need to be checked out, and whilst Common Lizards and Slow Worms are present, their abundance appears to be much lower than in the north. This is a bit of a mystery, and whilst this is probably true, there is no doubt that there are far fewer records for the south. We therefore need to encourage people to send in their records, even for what they might regard as the more common species, so that we can provide a much more balanced picture of the whole of Northamptonshire.

Get in touch with Alan and help fill the gaps

Email: alanibutler@icloud.com Mobile: 07706 351171

New Bat Group in Northants



Pipistrelle ©Amy Lewis

The Nene Valley Bat Group is newly formed in Northamptonshire, and a partner group of Bat



Conservation Trust. We can arrange talks and bat walks in your local area to help understand bats, why they are important to the environment and what we can do to help bat conservation. We would love to hear from new members and particularly any members who can help out in the committee and with roost monitoring.



info@nenevalleybats.org.uk

Join us on [Facebook](#)

<http://www.nenevalleybats.org.uk/>

PTES Hedgerow Survey

The People's Trust for Endangered Species have put together some wonderful guides for both rapid hedgerow assessment and in depth wildlife assessment. *Healthy Hedgerows* asks key condition questions for landowners and guides how best to how to manage them. *Great British Hedgerows Survey* looks more deeply and aims to generate national level data to support restoration of this habitat and associated wildlife.

Find out more and take part!

<https://hedgerowsurvey.ptes.org/about>

Recorders invite to Bragborough Farm

The Phipps family would like to invite recorders to survey their 300 ha farm near Braunston, Northants, to establish a baseline against which we can measure the impacts of ongoing and planned nature-friendly farming practices. Birds are ringed by the Arden Ringing Group and bird surveys have been done regularly for the last four years following BTO methods (BBS and EWBS). We are particularly interested in invertebrate records, fungi records and plant records for habitat classification, but all taxa are of interest. It is an interesting time on the farm as we are implementing additional measures to "make space for nature". Since autumn 2020, we have created 10 km of grass-flower margins around arable fields and created two new ponds. See our website for more information on the site:

<https://www.bragboroughhallholidays.co.uk/>."

We have facilities for a range of events and meetings at Bragborough Hall Business Centre based on the farm. Please contact Louis at farmnaturewalks@outlook.com or 07870692757 for further information.

Peatland Progress at the Great Fen

We have just been awarded more than £8million from the National Lottery Heritage Fund for *Peatland Progress: A New Vision for the Fens* to tackle climate

change, biodiversity loss and youth wellness head-on. We are bringing together the north and south 'halves' of the Great Fen:

<https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/our-work/peatland-progress-new-vision-fens>.

You can guarantee it will get busier over the next few years! We are coming up to the 20 anniversary of Darlow's Farm purchase, and to celebrate I am inviting botanists and entomologists to add to our records for the Great Fen as a whole, so spread the word!

Henry Stanier, Great Fen Monitoring and Research Officer

Email: Henry.Stanier@wildlifebcn.org

Project polecat

Since 2015, Henry Stanier has been gathering records about the re-colonisation of the local area by this species. By the end of the 20th century, **polecats** had recolonised England as far north as the southern fringes of Manchester, as far south as Wiltshire, and east into Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire. As of 2021, this species has been recorded twice, less than 5 miles from the Great Fen, so a new [page](#) on the Great Fen website has been created, to appeal for any sightings from the public in our region. The area around Cambridge is already known as a hotspot for this species, with sightings of adults with kits and it is exciting to monitor as the species spreads!



Polecat ©Elliot Smith

NBRC Contact Details

Northamptonshire Biodiversity Records Centre

c/o The Wildlife Trust BCN
Lings House, Billing Lings, Northampton, NN3 8BE
Tel: 01604 400448

Email: nbrc@northantsbrc.org.uk

Website: www.northantsbrc.org.uk

Twitter: [@ Northants BRC](#)

Facebook: [WILDside Recording Community](#)

NBRC's staff members are Rosalind Johnston, Nathalie Hueber, Rachel Tate, and James Skinner.



2021 GAPS IN THE MAPS

Since launching, you submitted species in over 130 of our previously 'unrecorded' 1km squares in Northants - turning the orange squares blue. This is amazing progress! In 2021 please monitor through re-survey of your squares and explore new 1km 'yet to be discovered' parts of Northants - help us reach them all.

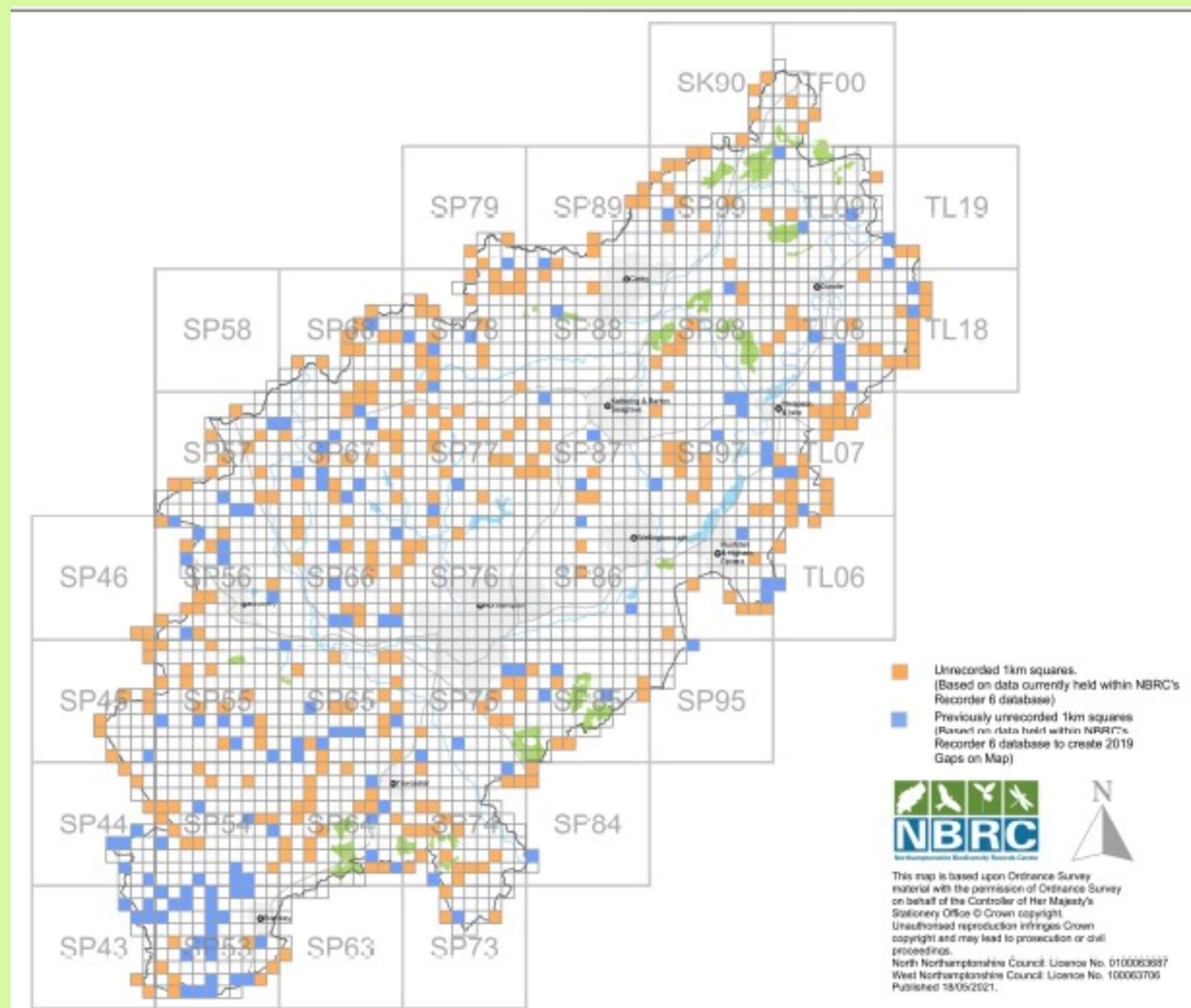
Our online map can help you target the remaining squares

<http://bit.ly/21gapNBRC>



ALL RECORDING
HELPS AND ALL
RECORDS MATTER!

<https://northantsnbrc.org.uk/record/submit-a-sighting>



Please record safely and legally. Check you have right of access / landowner permissions.