

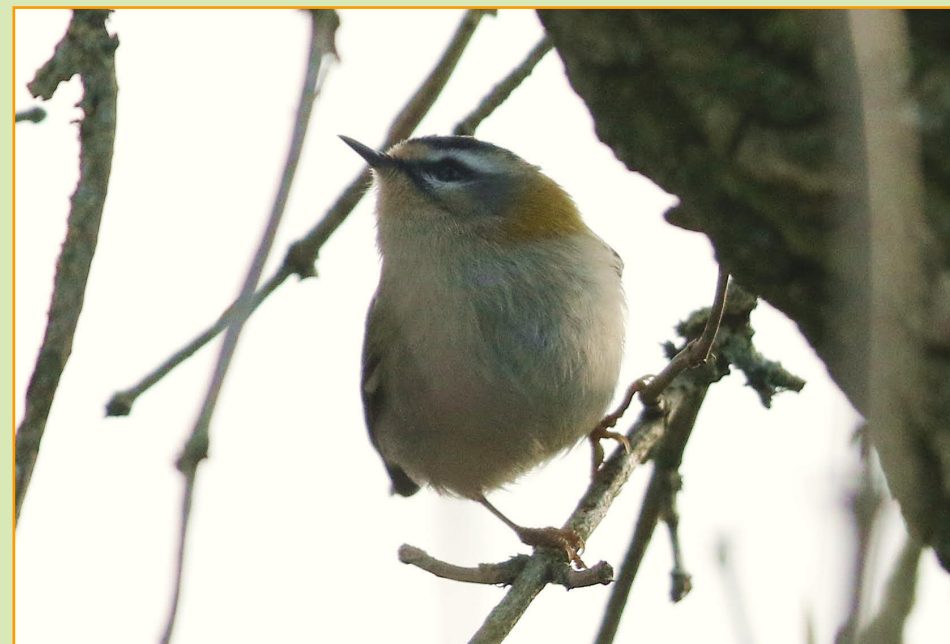
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# Lakeland Naturalist



— a journal of Cumbrian Natural History

## Spring 2020



**Lakeland Naturalist** publishes material on all aspects of the natural history of the Lake District, the wider county of Cumbria and its immediate environs

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## Notes for authors:

General articles, results of personal research, news items, records and items of relevance to Cumbrian natural history and naturalists, present and past, are welcomed. Material accepted for publication must not be submitted in a similar form to any other journal or magazine.

Material offered for publication should be in the formats used in this issue. Computer files should be in rich text format or Microsoft Word and e-mailed to the Editor, or submitted on CD/DVD accompanied by a paper copy. **Bold** and *italic* may be applied to text, but no other formatting should be applied. References should be given in full at the end of the article or note, and authors are responsible for their accuracy. Authority names for species, where given, should be in full. Line illustrations should be in black ink and must be originals. Good quality photographs are welcomed where these relate to submitted text. Each photograph, figure or table should be submitted as a separate file. Whilst every care will be taken of original artwork, the Editor can not be held responsible for any loss or damage. Authors of papers will be provided with PDF format copies on request. The Editor reserves the right to submit papers to a referee, and to reject items.

Opinions expressed in **Lakeland Naturalist** are not necessarily shared by the Council of the Carlisle Natural History Society or its Editorial Panel.

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Next issues: deadlines for final copy

1st September 2020 & 1st March 2021

## Cover:

Firecrest. Longtown Sewage Works, 8 January 2020. © *Guy Broome*

## Field Meetings 2020

### Coronavirus

At the time of publication, the UK is increasingly in the grip of this epidemic. The programme below is cancelled until further notice by mailout to all members. Contact Frank Mawby (016973 51301) if necessary. Updates will also be posted on the CNHS Facebook site.

### 19th May (Tuesday): Sand Martin walk by the River Eden.

Leader: Dorothy Iveson. Meet at 5:30pm at Carlisle Italian Gardens, NY400566. Easy walk, maybe a couple of miles along the River Eden, past the Sand Martin colony nests. One or 2 steep slopes descending onto the river, may be slippery. Walking boots advisable. Contact: Frank Mawby:

### 30th May (Saturday): Loweswater – Birds and Plants.

Leaders: Mike & Anne Abbs. Meet at 10.00am at NY117224 roadside parking at North end of lake. Terrain largely flat, walking boots advisable. Bring lunch. Tel 016973 51722

### 6th June (Saturday): Kershope Forest and River Liddle, for moths, invertebrates, plants and birds,

Leader: Guy Broome. Meet at 10.00am at NY47538288 forestry gate on South side of road on English side of river bridge, there are a few parking lay bys within site. Bring lunch. Contact Guy Broome 01768 896728.

### 21st June (Sunday): The Clouds - Geology and Landscape.

Leaders: Peter & Sylvia Woodhead. Meet at 10.30am at NY734006, Fell End quarry, near the north end of The Street, just off the A683. Walking up to 5 miles, some steep slopes, may be slippery. Walking boots advisable. Bring lunch. Contact: Marie Saag: [info@carlisenats.co.uk](mailto:info@carlisenats.co.uk), or Frank Mawby.

### 1st July (Wednesday): Sowerby Wood – All aspects of Natural History.

Leaders: Dorothy Iveson and Peter Wilson. Meet at 6.30pm at NY369527, limited parking available. Tel: 01228 596208.

### 11th July (Saturday): Upper Caldew Valley, Mosedale. Fellside fauna and flora, about 3hrs.

Leader: David Clarke. Meet at 11am initially at NY354335 opposite Stone Ends, Carrock Fell, for car sharing. Repark near Roundhouse in Mosedale. Walk about 2 miles, trackless rough ground, some boggy. Walking boots advisable. Bring lunch. Tel 01228 560117

### 19th August (Wednesday): Watchtree Nature Reserve Bat Walk.

Leader: Sam Griffin. (07786 318302). Meet at Watchtree Centre car park at 7.30p.m.

## Wildlife Reports: September 2019 - February 2020

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The following are based mainly on CNHS members' records from our Facebook pages, record cards and other recording media. Uncredited records are usually by FJM/GB

### *Weather*

September: an unsettled month but generally mild with some sunny spells. October: the first half was unsettled with most of the month's rainfall in this period. The last two weeks were settled and cooler with sunny days and morning frosts. November: was unsettled until 12th, the next two weeks were cooler and settled weather with frosts, becoming dull, mild and wet until 28th, with a return to cold, calm and frosty mornings lasting for two days into December. It then became very unsettled, often overcast, mild and wet. This weather largely continued into a windy and generally wet January with around 90 to 100 mm of rain, a weather pattern that continued into February with considerable rainfall and storms 'Ciara' and 'Dennis' causing wind damage and flooding. February was one of the wettest on record with on average of 155 mm of rain falling on the Solway Basin.

### *Birds*

**Whooper Swan:** The first arrivals noted were 20 on Rockcliffe Marsh on 2 October (RJ). The best count of the period was of 284 by the Wampool, Kirkbride on 8 February (AA). **Pink-footed Goose:** GB noted a skein of 11 flying N over Shap on 3 September. Many passed through our area in the following weeks but an unusually high number (over 10,000) stayed in the area through the autumn. A significant return movement from Southport was noted on a count on 19 January (FJM *et al.*) when 28,500 came off the key roosts at dawn. More were seen coming north at Allonby on 20 January (JC). **Eurasian White-fronted Goose:** three, two adults and a juvenile, were with c. 500 Pinks between Little Salkeld and Langwathby on 19 February (NF). A **Pale-bellied Brent Goose** was on Whitrigg Marsh with Barnacle Geese on 3 November (NF) and seen again with a flock near Cardurnock on 19 February (RH). **Barnacle Goose:** a skein of 30 was flying by Port Carlisle on 28 September (NF); large numbers were coming in over Longtown on 30 September (DJ), and on 2 October c. 2000 were present on Rockcliffe Marsh (RJ). The Moricambe Bay wintering flock seemed, as usual, to be between 4000–6000, unusually often feeding on inland fields by Seaville. Over 10,000 were on Rockcliffe Marsh on 5 February (RJ).

A single **Todd's Canada Goose** was on Whitrigg Marsh with 3000 Barnacles on 31 October, and seen again on 16/17 and 26 February with Barnacles near Anthorn (SM, NF). **Gadwall:** now a common duck with 30 or more regularly present at Watchtree (FJM). **Pintail:** c. 600 seen at high tide at Newton Marsh Point on 15 October (FJM). **Pochard:** eight males and two females were at Tindale Tarn, 4 November (AMo). **Mandarin Duck:** two females were on Talkin Tarn during February (GB).

**Black Grouse:** two males at Geltsdale, 15 October (AMo) and seven on 27 January at Binney Bank (GB). **Grey Partridge:** three in a field near Thornhill Meadows on 21 January and two on 28 February (FJM). **Red-throated Diver:** an estimated 500 drifted in with the tide at Maryport on 2 October (DS), but one at Tindale Tarn and some juvenile **Black-throated Divers** on 23 & 24 September (AMo, CH) were an unusual occurrence. **Cormorant:** exceptional numbers were at Workington harbour, exceeding 1,000 in mid-October (JC). **Little Egret:** JC recorded one on the road verge at Blitterlees on 2 February and NF had 20 in a muddy field near Rockcliffe on 11 February, both unusual locations for this now common Solway bird, which is more usually seen on the marshes. **Great White Egret:** one at Wilkins Pool, Longtown on 8 November (DJ).



Todd's Canada Goose with Barnacle Geese near Cardurnock

Stephen Mott



Water Rail Foulshaw Moss

Guy Broome

**Osprey:** autumn sightings were at Tindale Tarn on 7 September (FJR) and one flying over Wilkins Pool, Longtown on 15 September (DJ). A **Red Kite** was at Gowthwaite 16 October (NG). A single **Marsh Harrier** seen by NF at Cardurnock on 30 September is the only report for this period.

**Merlin:** winter sightings included a female at Jockey Shield on 20 September (JM), one on Calvo Marsh on 15 December (FJM), a female at Kershopefoot on 4 February (GB) and a bird by the R. Patteril at Aikbank on 7 February (AM). **Peregrine:** two were present at Whitbarrow Scar, 1st January (GB), one at Port Carlisle on 12 January unsuccessfully pursued a Lapwing (RH). **Water Rail:** two were present under bird feeders at Foulshaw Moss, 2 January (GB).

**Golden Plover:** 35 on High Pike, Caldbeck 26 November (PK). There were numerous records from the coast, but numbers were notably low. **Curlew Sandpiper:** one at Port Carlisle 28 September (NF). **Purple Sandpiper:** 18 by breakwater at Workington Harbour 25 January (DB). **Ruff:** NF noted five with Golden Plover at Anthorn 16 September; three were at Newton Arlosh 30 October (PK). **Woodcock:** one flushed from bracken in Geltsdale 3 January (DC), three at Skelton 28 January (GB). **Jack Snipe:** one at Cliburn Moss on 17 January (CA); at least 12 were present at Thornhill Meadows, disturbed by CM when mowing vegetation on 8 February; two were still present on 28 February (FJM & GB). **Black-tailed Godwit:** six were at Port Carlisle 28 September (NF); a juvenile was seen at Watchtree, 17 October (PK). **Spotted Redshank:** a single bird at Port Carlisle on 16 and 28 September (NF). **Greenshank:** four seen on passage at Anthorn, 14 September (RJ). **Green Sandpiper:** one at Wilkins Pool, Longtown on 17 September (DJ) and at roadside pool on Burgh Marsh 19 February (RH). **Long-billed Dowitcher:** this long-staying

transatlantic migrant was first found at Campfield by John Ireland on 10 November, and last reported on 8 February (FJM, NF, CA).

**Mediterranean Gull:** five were at Siddick on 17 January (CH). **Guillemot:** one at Wilkins Pool by R. Esk at Longtown on 15 September (DJ) and another found dead at Grinsdale Bridge on 7 September (RG) were presumably storm-driven. **Wood Pigeon:** large flocks this autumn and winter were scarce, thus *c.* 200 at Brampton Golf Course on 18 January was noteworthy (RJ). **Short-eared Owl:** autumn records were from the Shap fells, 4 November (TW), and the summit of Cold Fell on 6 November (BH). **Barn Owl** had relatively few records this winter: one near Cumwhitton, 8 January (DC), one at Carlton, 22 January (JM). A chick ringed at Newton Arlosh in July 2019 was a road casualty at Blencogo on 13 February.

**Swift:** a very late bird was seen at Wetheral Pasture on 5 September (FJR) in a flock of hirundines. **Kingfisher:** one was present at Hodbarrow on 22 October and 1 November (RS); also seen regularly at Wilkins Pool, Longtown. An unusual record was one along Flimby Beach on 21 January (JC). **Green Woodpecker:** one calling at Lanercost on 28 January was unusual for the north of the county (DC, GB). **Firecrest:** a juvenile male was found in the tall hedge by Longtown Sewage Works on 4 January by CA and still present at the end of February (see cover image). **Willow Tit:** four of the eight colour-ringed birds, two at Glasson North and two at Bowness Gravel pits have survived the winter to date and a single unringed bird was on SW corner of Glasson Moss on 28 November (CA & FJM). **Swallow:** three were reported to JC at Allonby on 27 November. **House Martin:** 20 at Low Hesket on 7 October was a high count (AE). **Chiffchaff:** determining first and last records of this warbler is increasingly difficult, with regular sightings through the winter. NF reported one from Acorn Bank on 6 November but later in the month found three with a **Firecrest** at Longtown – see cover and article on p. 24). **Blackcap:** one in a garden at Low Hesket on 14 September (AE). **Cetti's Warbler:** two females were ringed at Watchtree, 14 October (FJM) and 12 November (JC).

**Waxwing:** were very sparse this year, with singles at Silloth on 26 November (CT) and at Ambleside on 28 November (MR). DJ saw two along Kingstown Road, Carlisle on 10 January and SW saw two along Gelt Road in Brampton 13 January. **Starling:** murmurations were variously reported from Watchtree Nature Reserve – *c.* 20,000 on 3 November (PK), Irthington 13 December (GB), Longtown from 10 December up

to 17 January (KC); also seen at Silloth and Waverton. **Ring Ouzel:** one at Jockey Shield on 5 September (JM) and three at Cumrew, 15 September (GB). **Fieldfare:** the first of many records of large numbers this autumn and winter were on 21 October, with 40 at Low Hesket (AE) and 1,000 or more at Bewcastle (RJ). **Redwing:** the first of numerous records was from JM at Jockey Shield on 2 October. It has been a remarkable winter for reports of these two thrush species. **Mistle Thrush:** *c.* 20 at Wetheral Pasture on 6 September (FJR) and a singing male at Jockey Shield on 12 January (JM). **Wheatear:** three assessed as northern race and four as the Greenland race were at Grune Point, 16 September (AMo and GB); a late bird was at Watchtree on 9 October (PK).

**Tree Sparrow:** FJM had over 60 in the garden at Kirkbride during February. Other notable large numbers were on feeders at Watchtree Nature Reserve and at least 80 were on a wild-bird food crop at Red Hall Farm near Wigton in December. **Rock Pipit:** JC noted two on Flimby beach on 21 January. This species is also regularly seen flitting along the creeks on Calvo Marsh on WeBs counts (FJM). **Brambling:** the first record was of six at Talkin Tarn on 3 November (AA). FJR reported *c.* 100 with fewer Chaffinches under beeches at Tarn Hows on 7 February. 50+ were at Gilsland Gorge on 3 January (DI) and a flock of at least 40 were reported from Hallbankgate on 30 January (NF), with many still there at the end of February. **Greenfinch:** now a rather scarce bird at garden feeders. 40 at Blue Dial near Allonby was a pleasant surprise for JC on 1 September. **Twite:** the regular flock on Calvo/Border Marshes was first encountered on the WeBs count on 19 December when an estimated 250 were present and were still there on 17 January (FJM); a larger flock of *c.* 300 was seen by NF at Old Anthorn on 17 November. **Crossbill:** singles seen at Cliburn Moss on 17 January (CA) and flying over Tarn Hows on 7 February (FJR). 15 or more were at Spadeadam on 7 February (GB). On 24 December RH heard at least three singing males at a site in northeast Cumbria.

### *Mammals*

**Otter:** increasingly recorded: road casualties were at Ivegill, 15 October (RD) and Kirklington (KC), 27 October. Live sightings included two at south end of Derwent Water, 26 December (AA), one on trail-cam Gelt, 20 January (GB), one fishing at Port Carlisle on 12 February (NF; photo p. 8) two juveniles in the Eden at Wetheral 16

February (FJR). Filmed by DS (14 January) and RO (20 January) on the Eden at Carlisle – the latter showed two individuals ‘playing’. Spraints and feeding signs by Pond Wood pond at Watchtree 19 February and at Thornhill Meadows on 28 February (FJM & GB) showed the attraction was frogs. **Polecat-Ferret**: a road casualty was noted near Langwathby on 10 September (NF), and one on a trail-cam, Eden Valley 1st November (GB). A true **Polecat** was trapped in a Cumwhitton garden 29 September (RSh) and released in nearby woodland. Jonny Birks verified the identification. **Hedgehog**: three young were seen 15 September at Dalston (DH). A half-grown one was foraging in daytime at Cumwhitton on 15 November and 5 December (DC). **Brown Hare**: singles reported from Walby 26 November (RH) and Cumwhitton 27 February (DC). **Field Vole**: four at Geltsdale on 4 November (AMo) – this species seems to be recovering from the ‘crash’ over the last two years. **Red Squirrel**: one found dead from sarcoma infection, Hawkshead (per GB). One at Jockey Shield, 19 February (JM). **Brown Long-eared Bat**: imaged on a trail-cam at Kershopefoot, 22 October (GB). **Red Deer**: SH had a mixed-sex herd of 60 above Dock Tarn, Watendlath on 23 January.

### Amphibians

**Common Frog**: SR noted spawn at Kingmoor, Carlisle on 8 February. Other spawning dates in February were on 14th at Dalston Nursery (DH), Watchtree on 18th, Finglandrigg Wood on 21st (CM) and Burgh-by-Sands nature-area on 25th (RG).

### Lepidoptera and other invertebrates

Late-season butterflies: **Painted Lady** had been extensively recorded in summer 2019. About 10 (with Commas, Red Admiral, Wall Brown and whites) were present at Cumwhitton on 1 October (DC). The



Red Underwing Burgh-by-Sands

Russell Gomm

last record of Painted Lady was at Arthuret, Longtown, 2 October (DJ), who also noted **Small Tortoiseshell** and **Red Admiral** on that day. A **Comma** at Cumwhitton on 31 October appeared at 9 a.m. after early frost (DC). Last records of the now widely-reported **Speckled Wood** were on 21 September at Cumrew (GB) and Finglandrigg Wood (AA). A **Clouded Yellow** at Bassenthwaite on 22 September (SD) appears to be the only Cumbrian record in a year that has seen the species quite widely reported.

Amongst moths, **Vine's Rustic** (*Hoplodrina ambigua*) was a first record for Cumbria at Arnside on 8 September (GB). A **Red Underwing** (*Catocala nupta*), presumably attracted by house lights, at Burgh-by-Sands on 5 September (RG) was at the northern edge of its UK range.



Greater Thorn-tipped Longhorn Beetle Bowness-on-Solway

Robin Hodgson

Also very rarely recorded was the diminutive **Greater Thorn-tipped Longhorn Beetle** (*Pogonocherus hispidulus*), above, which shows supposed bird-dropping camouflage, at Bowness-on-Solway, 30 September (KH) – on a bench seat close to the marshes, having presumably flown there. VR posted images of a queen **Northern White-tailed Bumblebee** (*Bombus magnus*) from Mawbray Banks, Silloth, 10 September. This ‘moorland’ bee is member of the *B. lucorum* species complex, identifiable from its queens, but not often reported.

### Recorders

AA: Anne Abbs, CA: Colin Auld, DB: Dave Blackledge, GB: Guy Broome, JC: John Callion, KC: Keith Clark, DC: David Clarke, RD: Richard Dixon, SD: Steve Doyle, AE: Anita Evans, NF: Nick Franklin, NG: Nigel Gilligan, RG: Russell Gomm, BH: Betty Hamer, SH: Stephen Hewitt, DH: David Hickson, CH: Chris Hind, RH: Robin Hodgson, KH: Karen Hodgson, DI: Dorothy Iveson, David Johnston, RJ: Robert Jones, PK: Paul Kerrison, AM: Alan Marshall, CM: Chris Mawby, FJM: Frank Mawby, JM: John Miles, AMo: Adam Moan, SM: Stephen Mott, JO: Jane Orgee, RO: Rachel Owen, MR: Mo Richards, FJR: Jeremy Roberts, SR: Steve Routledge, VR: Vivian Russell, RS: Robin Sellers, DS: Dave Shackleton, RSh: Rob Shaw, CT: Chris Turner, SW: Stephen Westerberg, TW: Tony Williams.

Frank Mawby/Guy Broome



### Notes & Records

#### A species of vascular plant new to Westmorland: Tufted Loosestrife (*Lysimachia thyrsiflora*)

Whilst undertaking a survey on 31st May 2019 of sections of the shoreline of Lake Windermere commissioned by the South Cumbria Rivers Trust (SCRT), I happened upon an unusual plant, which I identified as Tufted Loosestrife (*Lysimachia thyrsiflora*) (Streeter, 2010). It is a hydrophytic species native to the UK, and thus the inundated zone of the lakeshore provides a suitable habitat. About 10–15 flowering stems were present within a small stand of wet woodland comprising willows *Salix* spp. with an understorey of Reed Canary-grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*), Yellow Iris (*Iris pseudacorus*), Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*) and Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*). The specimen was shown to my fellow surveyors Matt Carroll (SCRT) and Judy Clavey (Lake District National Park Authority) who were also intrigued.



The vernacular name is likely to refer to the closely-massed (tufted) flowers in the racemes. The scientific epithet *thyrsiflora* also makes reference to these structures, a 'thyrs' being a compact branching inflorescence. It is a species with an interesting

UK distribution; it is regarded as native in a large area across central Scotland – the origin of the majority of records – and in a few sites in East Yorkshire, with a very few scattered records from elsewhere regarded as introductions (NBN online atlas). For Westmorland (VC69), this new find by Lake Windermere appears to be the only record of the species. This occurrence is similarly likely to have arisen by human agency, either deliberately or by accident. In Cumberland (VC70), Tufted Loosestrife was reported by Baker (1885) to be present in Sellafield Tarn (NY00), a likely introduction (Halliday, 1997). The plant is no longer extant on this site. The BSBI Distribution Database also has a recent VC70 record from Thackthwaite (NY4225), derived from a known planting (F.J. Roberts pers. comm.).

Interestingly, Lake Windermere is also home to another unusual loosestrife in the genus *Lysimachia*, namely the Lake Loosestrife (*Lysimachia terrestris*), an introduced species from North America. This was also found during the survey, at a different section of the shoreline. According to Stace (*op. cit.*) it has been recorded in the UK since 1885 from Lake Windermere.

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Tullie House Museum, Carlisle CA3 8TP

### Records of the bumblebees *Bombus rupestris* and *Bombus muscorum* from south Cumbria

In September 2019, whilst (successfully) searching for Mottled Grasshoppers (*Myrmeleotettix maculatus*) in a disused limestone quarry on Hutton Roof (SD57), a large red-tailed bumblebee flew in and commenced to forage on a small patch of red clover. A closer look showed it not to be the common Red-tailed Bumblebee (*Bombus lapidarius*) but its closely similar brood parasite, a cuckoo bumblebee, *Bombus rupestris*.

This was the first I had knowingly seen and so it was quite a coincidence when, later the same day, I saw another one a few miles away just over the county border at Silverdale. *Bombus rupestris* can be distinguished from its host (see photo) by its dark wings, sparse body hair such that the black chitin below shines through, and the absence of a pollen basket on the hind leg. The species appears to be locally scarce, although possibly overlooked.

In June 2019, on North Walney (SD17), whilst attempting to verify an earlier record for *Bombus humilis* (a mainly southern species), a friend and I came across a large pale



*Bombus rupestris* Hutton Roof



*Bombus muscorum* North Walney

queen bumblebee which we readily identified as *Bombus muscorum*. This species is of conservation interest as it appears to be decreasing nationally, although it may have been over-recorded in the past owing to its similarity to the very frequent *B. pascuorum*. It is known on the north-west

Photographs by Michael Foley

Cumbrian coast but I am unaware of recent records in the south-west of the county other than at Sandscale Haws.

*Michael Foley, 87 Ribchester Road, Clayton-le-Dale, Blackburn, BB1 9HT*

### **The rare sawfly *Pseudohemitaxonus sharpi* (Hymenoptera, Symphyta) new to Cumbria from Miltonrigg Wood**

During a recent visit of the European sawfly expert, Andrew Liston, to the National Museums of Scotland Collections Centre, I took the opportunity to show him some unidentified sawflies that I have collected over the years. Among the specimens that Andrew kindly identified was a single female of *Pseudohemitaxonus sharpi* (Cameron, 1879) which I had collected on 25th May 2013, during Carlisle Natural History Society's survey of Miltonrigg Wood (NY5661) (Anon., 2016). This rare transpalaeartic species is known from only a handful of locations in Britain, Finland, Latvia, Czech Republic and Japan (Vikberg, 2010).

*P. sharpi* belongs to a group of sawflies associated with ferns and a study in Finland (Vikberg, *op. cit.*) has demonstrated that Lady Fern (*Athyrium filix-femina*) is the larval foodplant of *P. sharpi*, with eggs inserted at the apex of the fronds and the larvae feeding externally on the fronds.

There are only three confirmed British locations for *P. sharpi* previous to the record provided here. The species was first described from a single female collected by D. Sharp at Crickhope Linn, Thornhill, Dumfries & Galloway, in June 1879. Subsequent British reports came from Ruffside near Hexham where a single female was found in 1914 and again in 1922 (Benson, 1952) and from Bewdley, Worcester-shire where four males and one female were reared from a birch log in 1961 (Benson, 1963). There are two other records on the NBN Atlas (NBN, 2019) which are not featured in the review by Vikberg (*op. cit.*). These are an unconfirmed record from Natural England's Invertebrate Site Register for the Wyre Forest (SO77) in 1984 and a record from Norfolk Biodiversity Information Service for the hectad TG30 (Wheatfen [TG3205]) in 1937. However, without specimens to confirm them, these records are likely to remain unresolved.

I am grateful to Andrew Liston of Senckenberg German Entomological Institute,

Müncheberg for identifying my specimen and to Ashleigh Whiffin, Assistant Curator of Entomology at National Museums Scotland for supplying me with a reference in relation to this note. My thanks also to Lizzy Oddy, Assistant Biodiversity Officer at Norfolk Biodiversity Information Service for promptly providing details of the Wheatfen record.

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### **The parasitic fungus *Squamanita paradoxa* new to Cumbria and north-west England**

On 15th October 2019 I went looking for waxcap fungi in their ideal unimproved grassland habitat surrounding Beacon Tarn (SD2080, etc) on Torver Common, Coniston. I was curious as to what I'd see given the extraordinarily hot and dry year previously. I was pleased to note strong numbers of the common waxcap species and *Cystoderma amianthinum*, Earthy Powder-cap (see illustration overleaf).

Due to the latter being the host for a particularly interesting and rare parasitic fungus, and it being one of those years in which interesting things show up, I spent a bit of time looking at the Powder-cap colonies and it wasn't long before my adrenaline

Mo Richards



surged as I spotted three fruiting bodies of *Squamanita paradoxa*, appropriately given the English name of 'Powdercap Strangler'.

It can be seen in the photograph (below) where the *Squamanita*'s lilac cap emerges from the Powder-cap's stipe to effectively replace the spore-bearing structure of the host with that of its own.

Nationally this appears to be an extremely scarce species and there appear to be no previous records for Cumbria, or indeed for north-west England. Including this one, there are only 23 records nationally of this species in the Fungus Conservation Trust's Cate2 database (<https://cate.abfg.org/records/>).

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Torben Fogh



### *Lactarius picinus*: a species of velvety milkcap fungus new to Cumbria

The fungus genus *Lactarius*, often better known as milkcaps, is an important and pretty much universal part of the mycorrhizal mycota of temperate woodlands. Forming symbiotic associations with the roots of trees and some shrubs, the mechanics and importance of mycorrhizas in the woodland ecosystem is only now to any extent being understood.

When studying woodland fungi during the autumn months it is very often the milkcaps that stand out, arising from the leaf litter as fairly substantial fungi. It also becomes clear that some woodlands seem to contain a greater number and often diversity of these ectomycorrhizal species than others. Not all trees are ectomycorrhizal: some form relationships with unseen endomycorrhizal species of fungi that do not produce above-ground fruiting bodies, with Ash, elms and Sycamore being notable examples. Hence woodlands with a preponderance of these trees are unlikely to harbour many milkcap species. However, woodlands containing oak, birch, beech, pine and spruce often have a rich diversity. It is apparent that some milkcaps are generalists and occur with a range of trees, while others associate only with a particular family, some even only with a particular species, of tree.

It is always very useful for field mycologists to have some skills in tree identification since knowing the tree can suggest an identification, particularly when 'look-alikes'



Paul Nichol

are encountered. This became apparent on a Cumbria Fungi Group Foray on 12th September 2019 to Sunderland Ghyll wood, a private woodland near the village of Sunderland, Cockermouth, which is partly broadleaf and partly a coniferous plantation.

Dark brown milkcaps with velvety caps are unusual and belong to the subgenus *Plintogalus*. It was a surprise to find one growing in the needles under a Norway Spruce (*Picea abies*). The fruit body had a dark brown velvety cap, brown stipe and white milk that turned pink/red on the gills. There is a small number of milkcaps that display these characteristics and go by the English name of velvety milkcaps, the best known and probably the most widespread of which is the Sooty Milkcap (*Lactarius fuliginosus*), a fairly widespread fungus nationally, with fifteen records in Cumbria. Most of the velvety milkcaps are recorded from broadleaved woodlands, but this find was in a plantation of Norway Spruce. In 2004 a similar fungus was recorded at Kindrogan Field Centre in Perthshire (Burnham, 2006), growing under spruce and identified as *Lactarius picinus*. Apparently, this species is frequently found in the spruce forests of Scandinavia but was little known in this country at that time. To date there are fourteen records on national databases. Examination of our find fitted well with *L. picinus*, having a finely hairy cap rather than the smooth cap of some species and lacking the wrinkled cap and stipe shown by some other velvety milkcaps. Microscopic features also fitted well.

We have extensive plantations of Norway Spruce in Cumbria, so for those who foray in these woodlands it is a rare species to look out for. Unfortunately, it is not in current field-guides.

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## Some data from nesting *Phylloscopus* warblers in the Keswick area in 2019

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All three British species of *Phylloscopus* (leaf warblers) are relatively common and widespread in suitable habitat in Cumbria. Of these, the Wood Warbler (*P. sibilatrix*) is declining both nationally and locally (Callion *et al.*, 2019). It is now mainly restricted to the deciduous wooded valleys of the south-central Lake District National Park; it is also on the Red List of the most recent version of 'Birds of Conservation Concern' (Eaton *et al.*, 2015). The Willow Warbler (*P. trochilus*) remains common and ubiquitous, but is listed as Amber on the BoCC list, due to serious declines in southern England. Chiffchaff (*P. collybita*) is on the Green List and not considered under threat. In some areas it may be increasing (JC pers. obs.).

Each species builds a dome-shaped nest and lays eggs that are red-spotted on a white background. Willow Warblers and Chiffchaffs line their nests with feathers, Wood Warblers line with fine grasses and hairs (see illustrations p. 23). The nests are ingeniously disguised and hidden, and incubating females sit extremely tightly. They are all summer visitors, with Chiffchaffs starting to arrive from mid-March, Willow Warblers from early April and Wood Warblers from late April. Both Wood and Willow Warblers are trans-Saharan migrants, whereas most Chiffchaffs over-winter in the western Mediterranean basin. This allows the Chiffchaff to be an earlier-arriving and later-departing migrant than the other two, giving time for the production of two broods, albeit from a slightly smaller clutch size. Wood and Willow Warbler are normally single-brooded, laying six or seven eggs but will lay smaller replacement clutches for predated nests if time allows.

In all three species, males generally arrive a week to ten days earlier than females, establishing nesting territories. As in many small passerines, the males are about 10% heavier in body weight and have a wing length about 6 mm longer than females (JC, pers. obs.). The three species are superficially similar, both in shape, size and colouration, with sexes identically plumaged. They are best identified by their



### Plate 1

Examples of leaf-warbler nesting habitats in the present study

- (a) Wood Warbler (Brandlehow)
- (b) Willow Warbler (Latrigg)
- (c) Chiffchaff (near Keswick Rugby Club)

photos by Rhys Findlay-Robinson

diagnostic song and alarm calls; for all three species only the male sings, though both parents alarm. Only the female incubates though both parents feed the chicks.

### *Nesting habitat*

For Wood Warbler, this consists primarily of native broadleaf woodland with sparse understory (Plate 1a), typified by oak (*Quercus* spp.), Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) and birch (*Betula* spp.). Their nests are on the ground, often built into a sloping bank or on flatter ground in last year's leaf-litter. Chiffchaffs are basically a lowland species, rarely nesting above 200 m above sea level. They have a different requirement as they nest off the ground often in low bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*) or small conifers, preferring a 'scrubby' environment with extensive low understory (Plate 1c). Even when in the same wood as Wood Warblers and Willow Warblers, they will be nesting in different habitats within the woodland. Willow Warblers are less dependent on true woodland and seldom nest in closed canopy, favouring clearings and rides (Plate 1b). They can also often be found nesting on open fellsides, sometimes singing from an isolated rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*) or hawthorn (*Crataegus* spp.) and often nesting below gorse (*Ulex* spp.) or under rank heather (*Calluna vulgaris*) or bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*).

Wood Warblers have been observed in Borrowdale as part of a long-standing interest by JC, primarily to ring the chicks as part of the British Trust for Ornithology's interest in the species and its migration strategy, so that its historic territories were familiar. However, there is no comparable information for Chiffchaff and Willow Warbler. In the Borrowdale Valley, selected woods were searched opportunistically for Wood Warblers, based on recent and historic information. The woods of Brandlehow, Castle Crag and the woodland close to Lodore provided all but one of the nests. The area on the fringe of Brandlehow and above Hawes End and at Derwent Meadows on the edge of Keswick had the majority of Willow Warblers. The lower slopes of Latrigg held both Chiffchaff and Willow Warbler. In some cases, all three species could be found within a few metres of each other. This is not unusual, since *Phylloscopus* warblers are among a group of small passerines that establish and defend a nesting territory but not a feeding territory. They forage and range hundreds of metres away from the nest when supplying nestlings.

**Breeding outcomes**

Most of the nests were found by RFR. Apart from those of Wood Warblers (where we had historic site information), they were found randomly by looking in the right habitat at the right time. In many cases, the parental alarm calls were the first evidence of breeding. We have analysed the data from nests found in May and June 2019 (which may be considered to give a snapshot of any given year). These consisted of eight nests of Wood Warbler, fifteen of Willow Warbler and three of Chiffchaff. The site locations are shown in Figure 1 (opposite).

Nests were found with either eggs or chicks. For every nest, the date of the first egg date was established either during clutch production, or by calculating back based on established egg-laying information (one egg per day), and the known incubation period: fourteen days for all species. Where nests were found with chicks, the age of chick in days was calculated from experience; this figure was then added to egg-laying and incubation time to establish the date of the first egg (Table 1, below). Where possible, we established hatching success from number of eggs laid, and fledging success for all nests. Our criteria for the outcome of each nest were as follows:

*Successful:*

- 1) Agitated parents or young seen near nest
- 2) Condition of nest (feather scale and flattening of nesting cup), indicating fledging

*Unsuccessful:*

- 1) Nest predated at either egg or young stage
- 2) Chicks dead in nest
- 3) Nest empty before predicted fledging date. (One nest had been pulled out.)

Table 1				
	No. of nests	No. successful	% success	
Willow Warbler	15	12–14	80–93	
Wood Warbler	8	5	62.5	
Chiffchaff	3	3	100	

Based on these criteria, we either know or are confident that all three Chiffchaff nests fledged. In two of the Wood Warbler nests chicks were dead in the nest, one nest

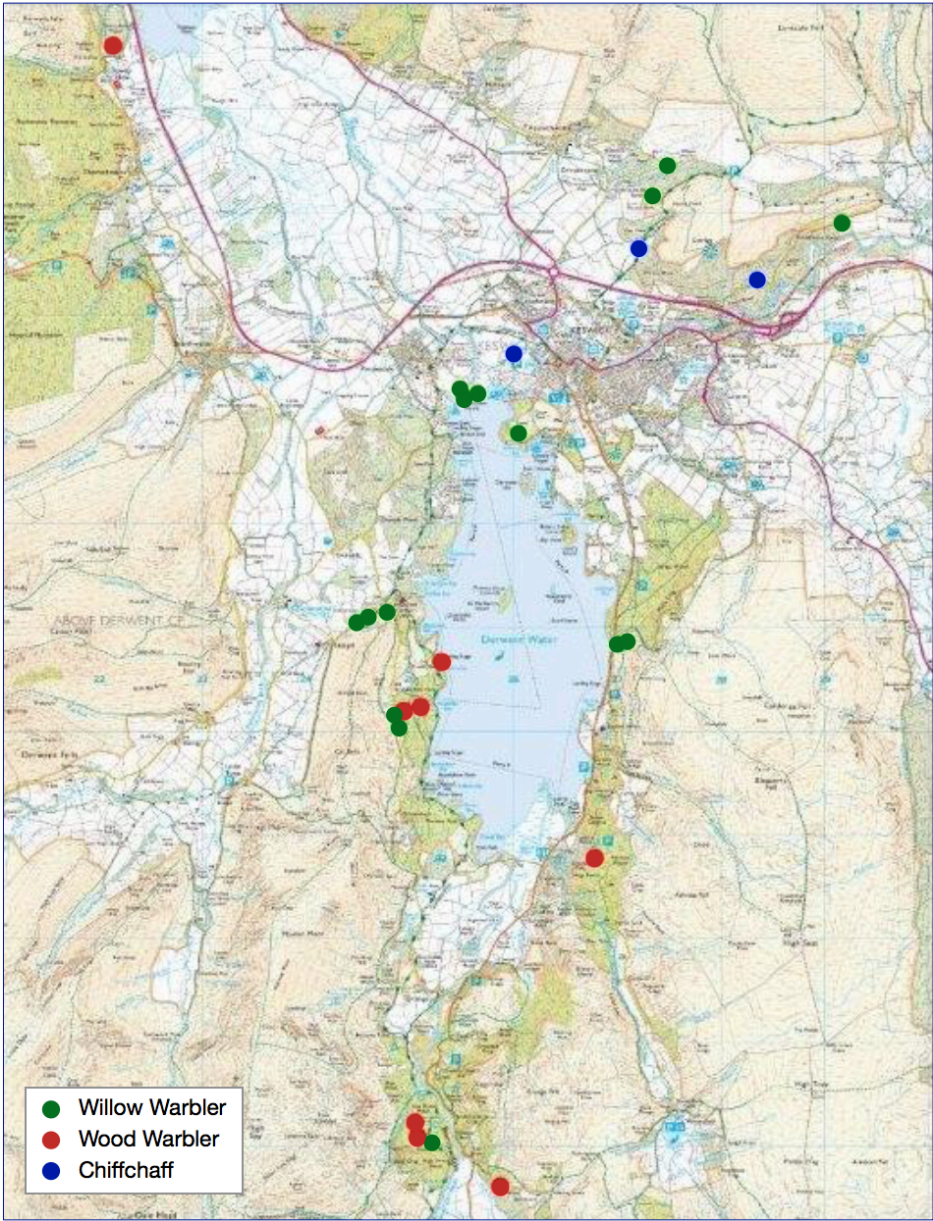


Figure 1. Sites of nests of three *Phylloscopus* species in the present survey.  
Map created by RSPB under licence 100021787. Permit no: 60271.  
Contains OS data © Crown copyright & database rights 2018.

was predated and the remainder fledged successfully. Twelve of the Willow Warblers nests definitely fledged, one was definitely predated and the other two probably fledged, but the outcome was uncertain.

Based on this information, it seems that this was a good year for Willow Warbler recruitment, with at least 80% fledging success, and even Wood Warblers had a good year with 62.5% fledging success.

The data show Chiffchaff had 100% success, but this was from a very small sample.

### *Summary and conclusions*

Our data indicate two distinct waves of nesting for Willow Warbler, the first separated from the second by about eleven days. Possibly the latter could represent birds bred in the previous year making their first return migration. A third phase throughout June, with reduced clutch sizes, most likely consisted of replacement nests.

The observations of all three species suggest that the birds arrived early and in good condition, which is reflected in first egg dates, clutch size and hatching and fledging success. For Wood Warbler, a nest with the first egg date of 1st May was, by four days, the earliest we have known in forty years of records of Wood Warbler nesting in the western Cumbrian valleys of Loweswater, Borrowdale, Brundholme Wood and Powter How. From over 150 nests pre-2019, the average first egg date from JC's personal data is 15th May. He has no similar historical data for Willow Warbler to make comparisons. The Chiffchaff data is not sufficient to formulate any opinion.

2019 was also a productive year for Pied Flycatcher (*Ficedula hypoleuca*), which has comparable migratory timings and wintering areas, and occupies the same habitat as Wood Warbler (T. Sparke; M. Weir, pers. comm.).

A single year of data such as ours will only reveal part of the picture: for example, many species that have had unsuccessful breeding seasons can have an ecological 'bounce back' from low population levels, in which there may temporarily be less competition for food. Only future comparable analyses of the same territories will show how different scenarios play out.



Nests of three *Phylloscopus* warblers (see p. 17)

- (a) Chiffchaff
- (b) Willow Warbler
- (c) Wood Warbler

photos by Rhys Findlay-Robinson

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## Firecrest and Siberian Chiffchaffs at Longtown

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I visited Longtown on 4th January 2019 with the hope of finding a Green Sandpiper or Greenshank along the Esk, both of which wintered on this stretch of the river in 2019. After a fruitless search I wandered south of the bridge to a water treatment works where there had been a report of a Chiffchaff a few weeks earlier suggesting that it might be the Siberian race *Phylloscopus collybita tristis*.

Eventually a bird appeared close to the gates which appeared Chiffchaff-like in shape but on lifting binoculars I was greeted by a fine male Firecrest about five metres away. Not what I'd expected! – see cover image.

Water treatment works seem to have an amazing magnet-like attraction to wintering warblers and 'crests, attracted to an abundance of invertebrates, with such locations in the southwest of the UK regularly being home to wintering Chiffchaffs, Firecrests and occasional Yellow-browed Warblers.

The winter distribution for Firecrest is concentrated into southern Britain and associated with coastal or lowland inland locations (Balmer *et al.*, 2013). It is classed as a 'Scarce Passage Migrant' in Cumbria, with a total of seventeen having been recorded over the period 2007–17\*:

2007	2	Armathwaite and Barrow-in-Furness
2008	5	Walney (3rd April), Barrow (March), St Bees (October), Cavendish Dock, Barrow (October), Ulverston (December)
2009	1	Millom (October)
2011	2	Walney (March), Calder Bridge (March)
2013	1	North Walney (October)
2015	2	Walney (November), Ulpha Meadows (December)
2016	3	Dalton (Jan–Feb for four days), Haweswater (September), South Walney (October)
2017	1	Siddick Pond, Workington (January)

\*Annual bird reports in *Birds & Wildlife in Cumbria*  
Cumbria Naturalists Union: ISSN 1363-5700



Siberian race Chiffchaffs,  
two individuals, Longtown  
photos by Nick Franklin



Hence, most records have been in the far south and west of the county on single days only. The presence of one in the north of the county for a prolonged period is therefore of interest. It was regularly reported up to the time of writing (2nd March).

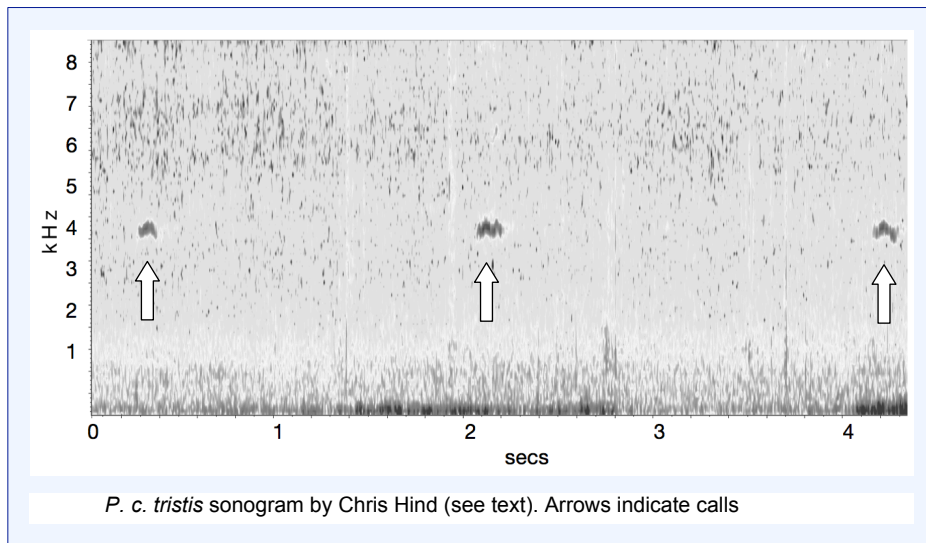
In much the same period as my record, Roy Atkins came across a Chiffchaff on 8th January 2019, which showed characteristics of the Siberian race, *P. c. tristis*. Nick Franklin and I saw this bird again on 10th – it was noticeably pallid showing cold greyish-brown upperparts and striking white underparts, with greenish fringes to its secondary feathers, lacking the typically richer brown and olive tones of the usual *P. c. collybita*. It transpired that both races were present and that the contrast between them was very apparent. Christine Nuttall later confirmed that there were two *tristis* and one *collybita*. Nick was able to obtain good images of the two *tristis* birds on 27th February, reproduced here.

The debate about the subspecies of wintering Chiffchaffs in the UK and their identification features has raged for many years, with an abundance of literature in the birding press. This bird seems identical to one at Pilling Water Treatment Works in Lancashire in winter 2020 [Web ref1] and also identical to Chiffchaffs which wintered

at Dalston Water Treatment Works in 2006 and 2014.

Recent DNA studies of wintering Chiffchaffs in the Netherlands, Cornwall and Scotland have yielded interesting results. Somewhat surprisingly, Scandinavian subspecies *abietinus* seems to be the much rarer of the two subspecies occurring in winter in Europe [Web ref 2].

Siberian Chiffchaff breeds from the Urals east to northeast Siberia and south to northern Mongolia. It is primarily an autumn migrant with the main passage occurring through the Northern Isles in mid-October to mid-November, a proportion of which overwinter, predominantly in the southwest.



Ideally, to clinch the identification either DNA analysis is required or a recording or a good description of the call. Nick was lucky to hear it call a couple of times: 'a weak, sad 'peep', rather flat in tone and nothing like the classic Chiffchaff call'. On 29th February I recorded one of the 'tristis' birds calling using my mobile phone. Chris Hind converted this recording to a .wav file-format and generated a sonogram (above), using freely-available software. He comments: 'comparing it with the sonogram in The Sound Approach website [Web ref 3], the pitch is identical, as is the duration of the call and the shape of the trace'.

There is a lack of consistency between different County Records Panels about how

such birds are assessed, with some counties accepting non-calling birds, some lumping birds as *abietinus/tristis*, and others only accepting birds which have been trapped or confirmed by DNA analysis. There are a few accepted records in Cumbria, although it is not clear what criteria were used to assess them.

Between 2008–16 it was recorded in 61 counties (White & Kehoe, 2018) although no records from Cumbria were accepted nationally. Cumbria records can be traced to much earlier dates. For example, a bird seen at Dalston in December 2000 and discussed in detail (Roberts, 2001) was at the time the latest of a series stretching back to 1956. I suspect that this interesting subspecies is under-recorded. Any wintering Chiffchaffs are worthy of further attention and ideally a series of photographs or sound recordings may help to ascertain its true status in the county in coming years.

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## Dr M E Bradshaw's Upper Teesdale Special Flora Research and Conservation Project

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Dr Margaret Bradshaw set up and funded a major botanical recording and conservation project in Upper Teesdale in 2017. Here we report on the background to the project, some of the initial results and our plans for the future.

Upper Teesdale is considered one of the top five 'botanical hotspots' in Britain and Ireland due to the unusually large number of rare plant species found here and the fact that plants with very different geographical distributions grow together here.



Spring Gentian Widdybank Fell

There are roughly 100 plant species of conservation interest here, including 18 Nationally Rare and 35 Nationally Scarce species. We have three species that grow nowhere else in Britain: Spring Gentian (*Gentiana verna*), Teesdale (Bog) Sandwort (*Sabulina stricta*) and Alpine Bladder-fern (*Cystopteris alpina*), although the latter is probably extinct here now. A further four grow in Scotland, but nowhere else in England: False Sedge (*Carex* (*Kobresia*) *simpliciuscula*), Alpine Forget-me-not (*Myosotis alpestris*), Alpine Cat's-tail (*Phleum alpinum*) and Scottish Asphodel

(*Tofieldia pusilla*). The Teesdale population of False Sedge far exceeds the sum of the populations in Scotland.

Many of Teesdale's special plants are northern or montane species at the southern edge of their range. The populations on Widdybank and Cronkley Fells of several of these are at unusually low altitudes. Perhaps even more remarkable is the presence here of four continental southern species at their most northern and highest stations in Britain: Rare Spring-sedge (*Carex ericetorum*), Dwarf Milkwort (*Polygala amarella*), Hoary Rockrose (*Helianthemum oelandicum*) and Horseshoe Vetch (*Hippocrepis comosa*).

Today, it is generally agreed that the majority of this special 'Teesdale Assemblage' of plants have survived here continuously since the early post-glacial, around 10–12,000 years ago. Many of these plants would have been widespread in the early post-glacial landscape, but such a unique combination of plants has not persisted anywhere else in Britain.

Teesdale's unique Sugar Limestone grassland and flush habitats support open vegetation suitable for several of the special plants. Other habitats in the dale that support populations of this assemblage include Whin Sill (dolerite) cliffs, together with land above the tree line and sparsely vegetated habitats along the banks of the River Tees.

Dr Margaret Bradshaw has studied the special flora in Upper Teesdale since the 1950s. Margaret is nationally renowned for her botanical and conservation work in that area. She was a member of the Teesdale Defence Committee that opposed the construction of the Cow Green Reservoir because of the damage it would cause to the rare plant populations. She was awarded a MBE for Services to Conservation in 1977. Now 94, she continues to work tirelessly studying and raising awareness of the special plants here and enthusing others to carry on with the work she has started.

Margaret's long-term plant monitoring studies on Widdybank and Cronkley Fells have demonstrated worrying declines in several of the rare species in recent decades. Three years ago, frustrated at Natural England's lack of funds (its core grant has halved since 2010) and the consequent low focus and action on the conservation of the rare species of the Dale, she created the *Upper Teesdale Special Flora Research and Conservation Trust*.

The two main aims of the project are to map the distributions of roughly 100 rare

species in detail and to make recommendations to Natural England where any conservation action was needed. Also, it was hoped that the project could encourage more interest in the Teesdale Flora leading to a 'Friends of the Teesdale Special Flora' group that could continue the work in the longer-term.

The project area includes all of Teesdale west of Eggleston Burn, overlapping with parts of four vice-counties: VCs 65 (NW Yorkshire), 66 (Co Durham), 69 (Westmorland) and 70 (Cumberland). Our main survey method involves systematically



Dr Margaret Bradshaw  
examines an  
*Alchemilla* patch,  
Teesdale

recording pre-defined sites known to support significant populations of special plants. We carefully search each 10 m × 10 m square in the site and list all of the special plants in each square. The rarest species are recorded in each 1 m × 1 m square we find them in. This is slow, labour-intensive work requiring excellent plant identification skills and an ability to concentrate on a repetitive task for long periods.

So far, we have surveyed over six thousand 10 m × 10 m squares and made over twelve thousand botanical records. In the first three years we have concentrated much of our survey effort on Widdybank Fell. We have completed the survey in 24 of 41 sites on the fell and made additional records from over 80 other sites in Teesdale. We work closely with Natural England, letting them know where more active conservation measures are needed when we find populations of special plants that are struggling or vulnerable. Up to 2016, the number of botanical records of the rare species in the BSBI database or held by Natural England was surprisingly small. Also, most of the records were not precise enough to be useful for conservation, giving only a rough idea of where the species occurred.

In our first three years we have substantially increased the number of records for many of the rare species. For instance, we have increased the number of records of False Sedge from 200 prior to the survey to 2,419. The equivalent numbers for Alpine Rush (*Juncus alpinoarticulatus*) were 46 before our survey and 1,000 records now. We can now map the extent of the populations much more thoroughly and accurately than has been done before. We also have a clear record of which areas have been surveyed and which have not.

An unexpected highlight of the survey was finding a new species for the area in 2019. This was Ostenfeld's Eyebright (*Euphrasia ostenfeldii*), which we found in short limestone grassland above 700m on both Little Fell and Mickel Fell. This is a Nationally Scarce species which had not previously been confirmed from anywhere in the Pennines.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s Margaret and teams of volunteers mapped roughly 25 species of conservation interest in detail on parts of Widdybank Fell. As part of the current project, we have recorded and mapped every 10 m × 10 m OS grid square that we found 19 of those species in within the main band of sugar limestone along and to the north of Red Sike.

By overlaying the results of both surveys on a GIS it was possible to define areas

Table 1. Grid squares occupied by 'Teesdale Assemblage' species in two surveys

Species	1978–1982	2017–2019	Decline
Hoary Whitlowgrass	22	0	100%
Alpine Cinquefoil	97	2	98%
Three-flowered Rush	128	19	85%
Mountain Everlasting	829	154	81%
Yellow Saxifrage	28	7	75%
Thrift	9	3	67%
Rare Spring-sedge	64	24	63%
Northern Bedstraw	605	230	62%
Variegated Horsetail	95	44	54%
Sea Plantain	362	174	52%
Alpine Meadow-rue	454	225	50%
Alpine Bistort	829	427	48%
Spring Gentian	638	349	45%
Teesdale Sandwort	62	35	44%
Scottish Asphodel	278	163	41%
Bird's-eye Primrose	607	363	40%
Common Dog-violet × Teesdale Violet	48	32	33%
Dwarf Milkwort	24	18	25%
Teesdale Violet	353	295	16%
<b>Average (median) decline</b>			<b>52%</b>

of search common to both surveys for these 19 species. Within the common areas of search, both surveys were essentially a census, *i.e.* every grid square within the common area of search was searched both times. Therefore, a comparison of the results (number of grid squares occupied) was likely to give an accurate impression of how much change in population extent (at the 10 m square scale) had occurred in the last four decades.

The extent of the populations of all 19 species has declined. Table 1 (above) displays the results, listed in descending order of the magnitude of the decline. The average decline was 52%, *i.e.* on average these species are now present in fewer than half of the areas they occurred in 40 years ago.

Hoary Whitlowgrass (*Draba incana*) has disappeared completely from all of the

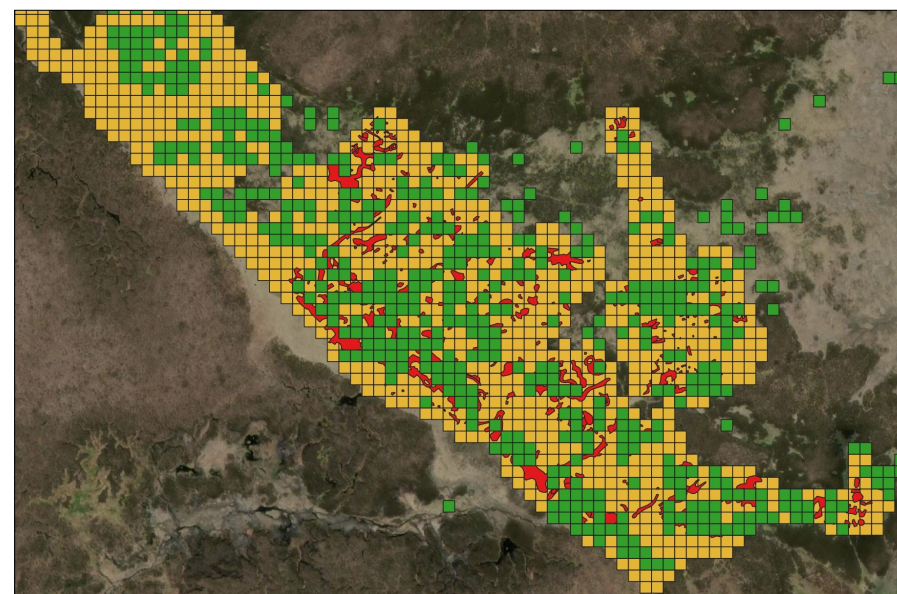


Figure 1. Spring Gentian (red = original survey, green = recent survey) on part of Widdybank Fell (see explanation below)

22 grid squares it was found in during the original survey. Other species to show very large declines in extent include Alpine Cinquefoil (*Potentilla crantzii*) (98% decline), Three-flowered Rush (*Juncus triglumis*) (85%), Mountain Everlasting (*Antennaria dioica*) (81%) and Yellow Saxifrage (*Saxifraga aizoides*) (75%).

Even the iconic Spring Gentian, which can still appear to be plentiful on the fell, has declined in extent by 45%. Figure 1 (above) shows where Spring Gentian was found in both surveys in the southern part of the main area of sugar limestone habitat. The yellow squares represent the areas searched in both surveys. The red polygons show the extent of its populations in the original survey. The green squares are the 10 m grid squares in which it was recorded in the last three years. The green squares lie on top of the red polygons, so that any red polygons that are visible show areas that the species has been lost from. The species was not surveyed in the yellow area towards the top left of Figure 1 in the original survey.

These initial findings emphasise how vital on-going survey work is to discover what is happening to the special flora in all parts of Upper Teesdale. The initial phase of the

project began in April 2017. So far, the project has been entirely privately funded by Margaret, but this funding is now exhausted. This phase has demonstrated the need for establishing more detailed baseline information on species distribution and population sizes, so that we can monitor how they are doing going forward.

The next phase is planned to extend coverage over a wider geographical area within Upper Teesdale and to focus on other scarce/rare species. We aim to survey a further 12,500 ten metre by ten metre squares in the most important areas. We estimate that it will take another five years of similar survey effort to complete this. We need a professional botanist to work for 120 days per year to complete the scheduled tasks. Around £25,000 is needed each year from 2020 to 2024: a total of £125,000. This works out at £10 per square surveyed and will support field work, data entry and analysis, dissemination of results and training volunteers.

The progress of the project over the next few years can be followed on the Project's website <https://teesdalespecialflora.uk>

### **Errata: Spiders at Scaleby Moss SSSI, Cumbria (Merritt, 2019, in *Lakeland Naturalist* 7 (2) 47–60)**

The following minor corrections are regrettably necessary to the above article:

1. Contrary to the statement on page 47 (and on page 50 under Red List spiders), two, not three, IUCN Red-listed spiders have been recorded at Scaleby Moss, i.e. *Glyphesis cottonae* and *Heliophanus dampfi*.
2. *Xysticus sabulosus* has been wrongly included in the Red List section (pages 50–51). It is categorized as Near Threatened by IUCN and, because the Red List comprises only those species which are currently considered to be under threat of extinction in the wild in Britain (i.e. categorized as Critically Endangered, Endangered or Vulnerable), it does not warrant inclusion in the Red List. The species account of *X. sabulosus* on page 51 should, therefore, have appeared on page 54 at the end of the section on nationally rare/scarc spiders.
3. The IUCN category of 'Least Concern' has been inadvertently missed out of the categories detailed in paragraph 2 of page 50 and should have appeared after 'Near Threatened' and before 'Data Deficient'.
4. Contrary to the statement on page 50, *Glyphesis cottonae* has not (yet) been recorded in Dumfries & Galloway.

*Robert Merritt, 46 Dalbeattie Road, Dumfries, DG2 7PL*



**Carlisle Natural  
History Society**

## **CNHS News and Announcements**

### **From the 2020 AGM:**

*Officers and Council for 2020/21:* our Secretary of the past eight years, Marie Saag has had to resign for personal reasons. We thank her profusely for the excellent work she has done in this role, most notably in the quality of the meetings programme. Mike Abbs

now takes on the Secretary role, with Sam Griffin acting as programme organiser. Simon Jackson has left Tullie House and we await his replacement, who hopefully will join the Council. We are pleased to welcome Steve Trotter, CEO of Cumbria Wildlife Trust, as a new Council member. Other officers and Council members continue as in 2019/2020.

*Finances:* balances remain healthy, so subscriptions for the year 2020/21 remain the same as last year. Copies of the accounts are available on request from the Treasurer.

*Membership* in 2019/20 has grown to some 190 individuals, an indication of the continuing health of the Society. Membership cards: these will be reduced in size and the programme information previously on them issued on A4 sheets, enabling more effective communication of detail.

*Meetings:* The 2020/21 indoor meetings will commence on Wednesday 7 October 2020.

*Lakeland Naturalist:* It is intended to move to colour throughout the coming and future issues, which will mean abandoning the centre spread. The increased cost will be minimal. The Editor, David Clarke, has announced his intention to 'retire' after volume 10.2 at the end of 2022 and will be looking for a suitably qualified replacement. Anyone interested in getting involved should contact David.

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**Records reminder: if posting sightings on our Facebook site, please remember to add date seen, locality name and preferably grid ref. They may not otherwise be included in the Society's records.**