

Berwick Wildlife Group

www.berwickwildlifegroup.org.uk

Monthly Review October 2009



WILDLIFE REPORTS.

Weather. The month has been unseasonably calm and mild, without the expected autumnal gales. It was relatively frost-free, with ground frost only occurring on the 7th and 18th. The rest of the month temperatures were above average. The warmest days were 15th and 16th with 18°C (64°F) and the coldest night was on the 18th with 1°C (34°F). Rainfall was light, except for a wet day on 21st with 6mm (0.24 ins) and overnight heavy rain on the 31st with 10mm (0.39 ins). Total rainfall for the month was 76.5mm (3.01 ins).

Birds. With quiet weather being the main feature of the month, many of the usual migrants seem to have passed over us, with winter thrushes and late warblers being scarce. The exception has been very visible migration of Geese through the month and Starlings during the last week. Notable birds include a **Yellow-browed Warbler** at Pier House (11th), seven **Brent Geese** in the Estuary (14th), a **Raven** soaring with Common Gulls over East Ord (16th) and 26 **Twite** on Cheswick dunes (29th).

Butterflies. A good month for **Red Admiral**, with a few still around at the end of the month. A garden in Hiveacres saw 14 on the 4th, with an early flying specimen on the cliff path at Spittal (29th) at 8.30a.m. The last 2 **Painted Ladies** seen were at Hiveacres on the 19th. Other late dates include **Large White** (11th) at Pier House, with **Small White** there (18th) along with a **Small Tortoiseshell**. A **Comma** was at New Road (5th) and a **Green-veined White** was seen in east Ord (23rd). **Silver Y Moths** have been seen in several gardens up to the month's end.

Mammals. The 'fresh' corpse of a **Water Shrew** was found on New Road (5th) by the Rowing Clubhouse, and 4 **Roe Deer** were in 'the empty plot' on Castle Terrace on 24th. A 'pod' of 8 **Bottle nosed Dolphins** were enjoyed by many on the 28th as they were leaping about catching quite large fish on the high tide, at the mouth of the Tweed.

THE RECORDS.

Date	Species	No.	Location	Grid Ref	Comment
	Birds				
01/10/2009	Gannet	12	Carr Rock	NU000521	12 immatures feeding in Estuary.
04/10/2009	Pink-ft. Goose	52	East Ord	NT979514	Flying south
05/10/2009	Pink-ft. Goose	380	Cocklawburn	NU0348	Flying S, in several skeins. 9.30 a.m.
05/10/2009	Whooper Swan	6	Cocklawburn	NU0348	Flying north! 9.30 a.m.
05/10/2009	Little Grebe	3	Cocklawburn Pond	NU036475	Late brood. Adult feeding juvenile
05/10/2009	Mallard	121	Cocklawburn Pond	NU036475	
05/10/2009	Long-tailed Tit	6	Berwick Castle	NT9953	
06/10/2009	Stonechat	2	Little Beach	NU006528	Pair
06/10/2009	Rock Pipit	10	Little Beach	NU006528	
07/10/2009	Whooper Swan	3	Beal	NU0742	In field, p.m. Bright and sunny.
07/10/2009	Peregrine	1	Cocklawburn	NU0347	Male

07/10/2009	Pink-ft/ Goose	356	Cocklawburn	NU0347	Flying off sea and W. along River
08/10/2009	Greylag Goose	9	Foulden New Mains	NT915564	On pond. Warm and sunny.
08/10/2009	Buzzard	1	Hutton Mill Bridge	NT921547	3.30 p.m.
08/10/2009	Goosander	5	Hutton Mill Bridge	NT921547	3.30 p.m.
08/10/2009	Goosander	26	East Ord	NT979514	Flying in off the sea
08/10/2009	Gannet	6+	Tweed Estuary	NT9952	Following herring into the estuary.
08/10/2009	Grey Heron	45	Tweed Estuary	NT9952	WeBS count
08/10/2009	Lapwing	1,380	Tweed Estuary	NT9952	WeBS count
08/10/2009	Goosander	29	Tweed Estuary	NT9952	WeBS count
08/10/2009	Teal	4	Tweed Estuary	NT9952	WeBS count
08/10/2009	Barnacle Goose	3	Tweed Estuary	NT9952	WeBS count
08/10/2009	Grey-lag Goose	116	Tweed Estuary	NT9952	WeBS count
09/10/2009	Dunlin	196	Little Beach	NU006528	
09/10/2009	Ringed Plover	30	Little Beach	NU006528	
09/10/2009	Turnstone	68	Little Beach	NU006528	
09/10/2009	Bar-tailed Godwit	8	Little Beach	NU006528	
09/10/2009	Stonechat	2	Sharper's Head	NT982525	Pair
10/10/2009	Barnacle Goose	3	New Water Haugh	NT978525	Feeding on bank. Fine.
11/10/2009	Chiff-chaff	1	Pier House	NU005528	At N end of tree line.
11/10/2009	Yellow-browed Warbler	1	Pier House	NU005528	In small hawthorn at N end of tree line. Rare migrant from Siberia
11/10/2009	Oystercatcher	46	Golf Course	NT9355	
11/10/2009	Mallard	70	Middle Ord Pond	NT969506	
11/10/2009	Teal	22	Middle Ord Pond	NT969506	
11/10/2009	Redwing	2	Middle Ord Pond	NT969506	
12/10/2009	Lapwing	110	Cocklawburn	NU0347	
12/10/2009	Oystercatcher	108	Cocklawburn	NU0347	
12/10/2009	Merlin	1	Cheswick	NU0346	Female. Chasing a Skylark
12/10/2009	Grey Wagtail	1	Cocklawburn Pond	NU036475	Male
12/10/2009	Bar-tailed Godwit	11	Little Beach	NU006528	
13/10/2009	Cormorant	42	Sandstell Point	NU005521	Roosting on sand-bank
14/10/2009	Wigeon	8	Spittal Bay	NU0051	3.00 p.m.
14/10/2009	Goldeneye	1	Spittal Bay	NU0051	3.00 p.m. Drake.
14/10/2009	Gt Crested Grebe	2	Spittal Bay	NU0051	3.00 p.m.
14/10/2009	Red-thr. Diver	18	Spittal Bay	NU0051	3.00 p.m. 14 in flock.
14/10/2009	Brent Goose	7	Tweed Estuary	NT9853	Dark bellied race, with Mute Swans.
14/10/2009	Redwing	2	Pier House	NU005528	Quiet conditions.
14/10/2009	Chiff-chaff	1	Pier House	NU005528	Quiet conditions.
14/10/2009	Shag	26	Meadow Haven	NU012526	Roost
14/10/2009	Cormorant	44	Meadow Haven	NU012526	Roost
14/10/2009	Common Snipe	2	Little Beach	NU006528	migrants
14/10/2009	Gannet	1	Tweed Estuary	NT9952	Immature
14/10/2009	Guillemot	4	Spittal Bay	NU009517	
15/10/2009	Sparrowhawk	1	Kentstone	NU039414	In garden.
16/10/2009	Whooper Swan	10	BRC Boathouse	NT996529	
16/10/2009	Raven	1	East Ord	NT9851	Spiralling overhead with Common Gulls.
16/10/2009	Purple Sandpiper	3	Little Beach	NU006528	
17/10/2009	Pink-ft. Goose	130	Berwick	NT9953	Flying south
17/10/2009	Mistle Thrush	2	Pier House	NU008525	Migrants
18/10/2009	Wigeon	6	Middle Ord Pond	NT969506	
18/10/2009	Grey Partridge	3	Horncliffe	NT9249	
18/10/2009	Dunlin	24	Tweed Estuary	NT9952	
23/10/2009	Guillemot	3	Spittal Bay	NU009517	
23/10/2009	Shag	7	Spittal Bay	NU009517	
23/10/2009	Teal	3	Spittal Bay	NU009517	

25/10/2009	Nuthatch	1	Castle Terrace	NT988538	(Approx. date)
25/10/2009	Peregrine	1	Tweed Estuary	NT9952	Immature
26/10/2009	Fieldfare	50+	Cot Hill	NT762499	The first this autumn.
26/10/2009	Pochard	1	Cocklawburn Pond	NU036475	Duck
26/10/2009	Ringed Plover	10	Cheswick Blk Rks	NU0346	
26/10/2009	Lapwing	170	Cocklawburn	NU0347	
26/10/2009	Linnet	24	Cocklawburn	NU0347	
26/10/2009	Stonechat	2	Cocklawburn	NU0347	Pair
27/10/2009	Fieldfare	3	East Ord	NT979514	
27/10/2009	Dunlin	56	Little Beach	NU006528	
27/10/2009	Ringed Plover	12	Little Beach	NU006528	
27/10/2009	Sanderling	8	Little Beach	NU006528	
27/10/2009	Bar-tailed Godwit	11	Little Beach	NU006528	
27/10/2009	Goldeneye	3	Meadow Haven	NU012526	
28/10/2009	Yellowhammer	4	Cot Hill	NT762499	
28/10/2009	Twite	26	Cheswick Dunes	NU0348	10.30 a.m.
28/10/2009	Teal	2	Cocklawburn Pond	NU036475	
28/10/2009	Goldeneye	1	Cocklawburn Pond	NU036475	Duck
28/10/2009	Lapwing	220	Cocklawburn	NU0347	
28/10/2009	Red-thr. Diver	4	Cocklawburn	NU0347	
28/10/2009	Red-br. Merganser	2	Cocklawburn	NU0347	
28/10/2009	Greylag Goose	54	Cocklawburn	NU0347	Flying south over the sea
28/10/2009	Eider	180	Cheswick	NU0346	
28/10/2009	Common Scoter	86	Cheswick	NU0346	
28/10/2009	Goldeneye	3	Cheswick	NU0346	With the Eider
28/10/2009	Red-thr. Diver	4	Cheswick	NU0346	
29/10/2009	Starling	2,000	Tweedmouth	NT9952	Visible migration at dawn, coming off the sea
29/10/2009	Pink-ft. Goose	180	East Ord	NT979514	Flying north!
29/10/2009	Stonechat	2	Spittal (Cow Road)	NT9952	Pair
31/10/2009	Peregrine	1	Berwick	NT992536	Over bank and garden. Mobbed by rooks.
31/10/2009	Little Gull	1	Yarrow Slake	NT983528	With black-headed gulls. 8.30 a.m.
	<u>Mammals</u>				
05/10/2009	Water Shrew	1	New Road	NT996530	Dead at side of path by boathouse. 2.30 p.m.
07/10/2009	Roe Deer	4	Castle Hills Cottage	NT989535	
14/10/2009	Grey Squirrel	4	Galashiels Policies	NT4736	
14/10/2009	Grey Squirrel	2	Newton Don, Kelso	NT714367	
24/10/2009	Roe Deer	4	Castle Terrace	NT991537	In "empty plot". 9.00 a.m.
25/10/2009	Muntjac	1	Charterhall	NT74	Crossing road into woodland. 17.00.
28/10/2009	Grey Squirrel	4	Old Cemetery, Kelso	NT730339	
	<u>Amphibians</u>				
14/10/2009	Palmate Newt	1	Holy Island	NU126435	3.00 p.m. Juvenile. Bright orange.
	<u>Lepidoptera</u>				
03/10/2009	Red Admiral	1	Berwick	NT999529	By St Aidan's Church
04/10/2009	Red Admiral	1	Castle Drive	NT992538	
04/10/2009	Painted Lady	1	Castle Drive	NT992538	
05/10/2009	Red Admiral	1	Tweedside Villa	NT993530	
05/10/2009	Small White	2	New Road	NT9953	p.m.
05/10/2009	Comma	1	New Road	NT9953	p.m.
05/10/2009	Tortoiseshell	1	New Road	NT9953	p.m.

05/10/2009	Red Admiral	7	New Road	NT9953	p.m.
08/10/2009	Red Admiral	3	Hutton Mill Bridge	NT921547	On Scots Pine. 3.30 p.m.
12/10/2009	Red Admiral.	1	Berwick	NT999527	In Palace Street.
14/10/2009	Painted Lady	3	Cornwall Avenue	NT984516	On Buddleja.
14/10/2009	Red Admiral	5	Cornwall Avenue	NT984516	On Buddleja.
18/10/2009	Red Admiral	1	Berwick	NT9953	Flying past Station.
18/10/2009	Comma	3	Chirnside	NT862556	By R. Whiteadder, v. fresh, - autumn brood?
18/10/2009	Red Admiral	30	Chirnside	NT862556	By R. Whiteadder nr Chirnside Mill.
18/10/2009	Silver Y moth	1	Chirnside	NT862556	By R. Whiteadder nr Chirnside Mill.
19/10/2009	Red Admiral	1	Cot Hill	NT762499	In garden.
23/10/2009	Green-ve. White	1	East Ord	NT981512	In garden.
28/10/2009	Red Admiral	1	Cot Hill	NT762499	In garden.
31/10/2009	Red Admiral	4	East Ord	NT984516	12.30 p.m. Feeding on Wallflower & Buddleja
	Ladybirds				
15/10/2009	7-spot Ladybird	1	Kyloe Wood	NU0338	In woodland.
18/10/2009	10-spot Ladybird	1	New Road	NT9953	On moss.
20/10/2009	2-spot Ladybird	1	Berwick	NT991537	In garden.
28/10/2009	7-spot ladybird	2	Cot Hill	NT762499	In garden.
	Plants				
23/10/2009	Marsh Marigold	1	Castle Drive	NT993539	In flower.

With many thanks to Malcolm Hutcheson and the other recorders. Please send us your records for November, and photos (digital or prints/slides to be scanned). Use our form on the website, phone 01289 309046 or e-mail mail3@berwickwildlifegroup.org.uk.

BUTTERFLIES NORTH OF THE BORDER

Iain Cowe, a major contributor of moth and butterfly records in the Borders, sends us records and also takes marvellous photographs, such as these. This is his amazing account of 2009.

My butterfly year began as early as mid March this year with good numbers of Small Tortoiseshell on the river Whiteadder banks near Chirnside. On the 20th March I saw the first of the courting Small Tortoiseshells again by the river. On the 21st the Peacocks were up and about at Oldcastles.



Wall Brown at Blaikie Heugh
Brown female at Chirnside early May....no evidence since of any more inland Wall Brown....I think it will only be a matter of time.

On the 20th March I saw the first of the courting Small Tortoiseshells again by the river. On the 21st the Peacocks were up and about at Oldcastles.

By April Spring was in full swing, lots of Small Torts and Peacocks in their usual areas around Chirnside. Orange Tip emerged 3rd April (very early) and Comma by the river Whiteadder. A few Green veined White had by now appeared in low numbers. Small White on the 4th of April at Chirnside. 9th April saw more Peacock and Small Torts and a mini surge in Comma numbers on the riverbank. The remainder of April was spent chasing Orange Tip around, and trying to find new Comma areas. I failed though to find any Speckled Wood, early and late. However I did see a Wall



Orange Tip at Whiteadder Bank

On a visit to Duns Castle Woods on May 13th I saw my first Small Heath and Small Copper of the season above Duns Quarry. It was about this time that the season really kicked off....on a very speculative trip to the coast at Lamberton and Burnmouth on the 24th May to see if maybe the Small Blue had also caught the early bug....and lo and behold they had!! The colony this year was a sight to behold. I saw maybe 20 that day, and 50+ on the 29th, a very spectacular site. I met Barry Prater then and he was going to attempt a timed count....his total was an astonishing 67, when you consider the most we have counted in previous years was 6. Wall Brown also had an extraordinary leap in numbers this year on the Berwickshire coast....On the 25th May from Coldingham to Eyemouth I counted 12-16. On August 6th from Burnmouth to Blaikie Heugh a count of 24...all new fresh and certainly colonising rapidly.



The season had turned up other unexpected sightings, such as Blackneck moth at Catcairn on the 1st and 24th....this is a very rare moth this far north. And a Northern Brown Argus at Chirside old railway line on the 2nd June...no nearby colony...so....I have no idea where it could have come from....I believe it shows the ability of these small butterflies to colonise further afield.

Up to mid June NBA, Common Blue, Small Copper and Painted Lady as well as Small Heath all very common on the coast and having an impact inland as well as I found

Northern Brown Argus at Partahall out at Greenlaw Dean on the 12th June. I had up until then never seen NBA away from the coast....so this was a treat. A very beautiful area it is...wild flower heaven...and thankfully Butterfly heaven....lots of Northern Brown and Small Heath, Common Blue, Meadow Brown, Ringlet and Large White, Peacock, Small Tortoiseshell, Green Veined White, Small White, Dark Green Fritillary, Painted Lady, Red Admiral. I visited on 3 occasions throughout the summer...and I will be back next summer...no question.

On 13th June I was at Gordon Moss....this time the target species was a very ambitious Small Pearl Bordered Fritillary...after much huffing and puffing...I eventually tracked some down...I was amazed,,,to say the least...I had no idea we had SPBF in Berwickshire....such a beautiful butterfly...I was very lucky to see this....I will be back again next year to monitor this wee colony as it is so precious....it leaves you wondering...what else is out there? I visited twice more, 19th June and 8th July....by the latter date the colony had dispersed to surrounding open wetland, nectaring on Cross-leaved Heath. Also at Gordon Moss a Small Skipper on the 8th July.



Small Pearl Bordered Fritillary, Gordon Moss

On the 9th July I set off for Dogden Moss as Large Heath were on the list of under recorded species.....and again...they are amazingly there....5, I counted on a less than ideal day. 10th of July at Pipers Knowe Small Skipper were up to speed and having a great season...twos and threes in aerial pursuit, nectaring and sunbathing...a marvellous sight...along with the Common Blue, Small Copper, and Meadow Brown and Ringlet Pipers Knowe was in good form throughout the season.

I have been following your (BWG's) sightings as the season went by....very excited at the prospect of Small Skipper at Needles Eye and Speckled Wood on the New Road...a perfect area for them....look out for them again in spring.

Iain Cowe, October 2009.

MAMMAL RECORDS REQUIRED

The Northumbria Mammal Group is presently working towards producing a publication on the Mammals of the North East, a project that is likely to take another 2-3 years to complete. They are at the stage of gathering and collating sightings of all mammals in Northumberland and observations from Berwick and the north of the county are particularly sparse, so if we can record any mammals that we see it would increase their mammal records very significantly. They are interested in all mammals (moles, deer, badgers, hares, rabbits, mice, voles and shrews.)

If you would like to help, can you send in your sightings of any mammals that you see, together with the date and location, or ideally a 6 figure map reference, to John Rae, 01289 381218, john_rae@dsl.pipex.com , or to Fiona, faungier777.freeseve.co.uk . We will collate the sightings and forward them to the Northumbria Mammal Group.

Alternatively, see wild mammals close up and learn new survey skills while taking part in a worthwhile project! The Mammal Society is beginning a National Small Mammal Monitoring Scheme, and BWG will be taking part. Our first season's recording takes place this coming fortnight (beginning Monday 9th November). Thereafter we continue the monitoring in spring and autumn for several years, the idea being to play a small part in recording changes in the small mammal population on a national scale. If you would like to help please contact John or Fiona as above - soon.



A bank vole, by John Rae

FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

Wednesday 11th November 7.30pm. Aisling Lannin. Talk on Marine Pollution. Marine life around the coast of the British Isles is as colourful and fascinating as that anywhere in the world's oceans, but it is under threat, particularly from pollution and over-fishing. Berwick United Reformed Church, Main Street, SPITTAL.

Thursday 19th Nov. 7.30 Maltings. *North Northumberland Bird Club special Silver Anniversary Event : "TAKING STOCK: MY LIFE IN PHOTOGRAPHY" - an evening with Laurie Campbell at The Maltings, Berwick-upon-Tweed.*

No events arranged for December.

Wednesday 13th January, 7.30 pm. "Life, but not as we know it. The underwater world of St Abbs." A talk on the St Abbs and Eymouth Voluntary Marine Reserve by the Marine Ranger, Liza Cole. This was the first reserve of its kind in the UK, with spectacular underwater scenery and a fantastic abundance and diversity of marine life. Berwick United Reformed Church, Main Street, Spittal. Members £2.00, non-members £3.00, accompanied children free.

If you want more information on any of the above events, or would like to know more about the Group see our website (www.berwickwildlifegroup.org.uk), phone 01289 330591, e-mail mail3@berwickwildlifegroup.org.uk or just come to an event. Everyone is welcome – there may be a small charge (no charge for children, but they must come with an adult).