Southampton Natural History Society

# Annual Report 2025

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Cover Photograph: Ivy Broomrape *Orobanche hederae Forma monochroa* at Mayflower Park 18th May 2025 Phil Budd.

Image credits: Phil Budd, Andy Collins, Terry Crow, Geoff Frampton, Bruce Larner, Jenny Mallinson, Gemma Paul, Jan Schubert, Anne & Dave Stewart.

Edited by Mr P.Budd and the committee of the Southampton Natural History Society.

# The 2025 Annual Report

Welcome to the Annual Report of the Southampton Natural History Society for 2025. As always, this annual report contains a comprehensive record of the flora and fauna of the city area, and we are pleased to continue our relationship with iRecord for our online database.

We are delighted to have been able to provide a full range of guided walks during the year. Please see the Society News (below) for more updates on the indoor talks program. As always, we would welcome your views on this and on any other aspect of the Society's work.

Please email us with any views to ***treasurer@sotonnhs.net***.

Don't forget to join our Facebook Group which has become a virtual meeting space – ***facebook.com/groups/SotonNatHistSoc***.

You can also find recordings of many of our online talks organized by Cath Corney on our YouTube channel at ***YouTube.com/@SotonNaturalHistorySociety***.

# Membership Report for 2025

## Joanne Budd, Treasurer

If you have previously agreed to Gift Aid being reclaimed on your membership payments and donations, please remember you should notify us of any changed financial circumstance – particularly if you no longer pay tax. You can contact our treasurer with any queries at ***treasurer@sotonnhs.net***.

We were pleased to welcome ten new members in 2025:

Ruth Allen; Dawn Bannatyne; Ella, Mike, and Sophie Barr;

Jane Ronewicz; Rebecca Kinge; Geoff and Mandy Parham;

& Pedro Pires

We were sorry to have received notice of the death of

Mike Creighton (see obituary) & Mary Carnegie.

The total number of memberships as of 31st December 2025 was 115.

# Society News

## Phil Budd

2025 has been a difficult year for the society. In April we suddenly lost a very valuable and capable committee member, Mike Creighton (see obituary), Mike was due to become the new Membership Secretary and was also someone who was very effective at dealing with the complexities of modern information technology. In August we suffered another loss when Jan Schubert, the partner of Mike, stepped down as secretary after a very loyal 26-year stint in the role. Jan was a very effective secretary throughout that long period, and we thank her very much for all that she has achieved over those years and wish her the best for the future. Jan first stepped in after the death of Peter Soanes in February 1999. Jan was presented with a thank you gift and with honorary membership.

At the time of writing (20th March 2026) we are managing to continue as a society but could still do with more help. Jane Smith has offered to attend our committee meetings in the role of minutes secretary and existing committee member Julian Moseley has very kindly stepped forward to take on the Membership Secretary role , Joanne had temporarily combined this role with being the treasurer. Mark Trigwell has taken on the FACEBOOK administration. Other roles within the committee remain the same and we have been fortunate that Marc Baldwin and Pedro Pires have kindly assisted the committee with the website and other technical matters. We now have a new Secretary to be elected – Felicity Irons-Smith.

Without Mike and Jan though, we had to change things. This Annual Report will only the available digitally this year, as we are unable to arrange a printed version for the time being. We will also, sadly, be ending the in-person indoor meetings for the foreseeable future after the AGM at Unity 12 Hall in April. There are various reasons for this but one of the main reasons are the low member attendances at most of these meetings since we moved from the Edmund Kell Hall. Instead, we hope to revive the on-line meetings but by using Microsoft Teams rather than ZOOM. Our Field Meetings will continue as before, and I thank Mark Trigwell for arranging these and for Cath Corney in arranging the speakers.

We are looking for more general committee support, if anyone wants to join us.

## Your Newsletter

The newsletter set up by Mike is no longer available unfortunately. However, list of events and news items are regularly sent out to you, the members via ***MemberMojo.***

## Your Membership

Our new membership system – ***MemberMojo*** was originally described in the 2024 Annual Report

We would like to remind those who have committed to gift aid that should there be any changes to your personal circumstances, particularly if you are no longer a UK tax payer, you should advise us via ***treasurer@sotonnhs.net*** or you may be liable to repay any tax benefit claimed.

## Your Connections

Our Facebook Group is a vibrant place for sharing information or asking questions. For beginners and experts alike, no question or comment is too simple or unwelcome: ***facebook.com/groups/SotonNatHistSoc***

Our website is our main portal for advertising details of Field Trips and other events: ***sotonnhs.net*** We are now regularly updating the website again.

And our YouTube Channel is our repository for recordings of talks and other information: ***youtube.com/@SotonNaturalHistorySociety.*** There have been no recent Zoom talks, so no fresh items have been added to this. We hope to be able to add any Teams talks to the YouTube Channel after these have been presented to the membership.

Right: A walk in Southampton Old Cemetery in 2022, photo taken by Bruce Larner.

# Obituary: Mike Creighton

I have the very sad duty of announcing the sad and very sudden death of Mike Creighton in 2025. Mike passed away on 3rd April having suffered a heart attack while watching The Saints at Southampton Football Club, he was a lifelong supporter of the Saints.

Mike was born and raised in Southampton and spent his whole life in the city, spending the majority of his working life serving the city and the nation, as a Labour councillor and central office staffer. He was awarded an MBE for services to politics in 2017.He loved nature and the environment and his contributions to natural history, locally and nationally, will live on through his photographs, artworks, and books.

Mike was a prominent committee member of SNHS and was very knowledgeable about all aspects of technology.

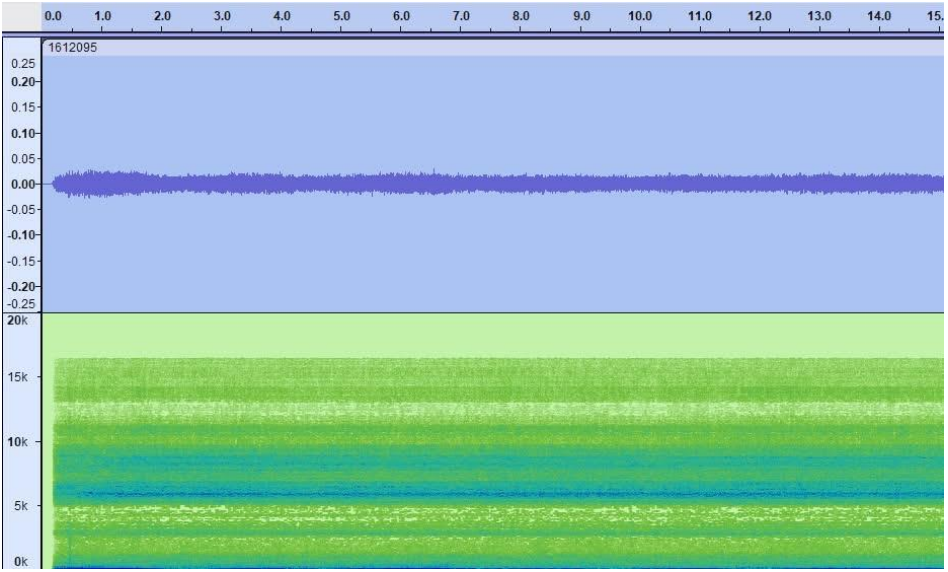
He designed, built, and maintained the website. He set up and hosted the Zoom meetings and edited and posted them on YouTube. He looked after the Facebook page and set up the PayPal and *Member mojo* accounts. He was the committee's go-to for anything technical and is sorely missed. He leaves behind his partner Jan Schubert.

**By Joanne and Phil Budd.**

# The Extraordinary Journey of a *Cicada* called *Barbara*

## Anna Stewart

In August of 2025 we and our neighbour's heard a continuous loud buzzing coming from several locations in and around St Giles Hill Graveyard. What was this sound? One person thought the nearby substation was having a problem, I thought someone was using machinery, others thought there was work done on the gas mains. The noise seemed to be coming from trees and bushes so we recorded the sound on *iNaturalist* hoping that someone might help with identity. The sound recording was posted on the FACEBOOK entomology group and the two UK entomological societies contacted. Dominic Price of the Species Recovery Trust suggested *Cicada orni* as the most likely candidate. FACEBOOK entomologist Paul Winter came up with the answer *Cicada barbara,* and he produced the characteristic sonogram of the recording – **see below.**



We were keen to get our Graveyard cicadas recognised as an official record, but how? The sonogram was put on the recording app *iRecord* as the New Forest *Cicadetta montana,* and it was picked up by UK's official Cicada Recorder Professor Alan Stewart of Sussex University who was delighted with all our cicada recordings. Yes, it was *Cicada barbara* which is a rarity, but he wanted to send the sonogram to the European cicada expert in Switzerland for verification which eventually came. We don't have the first record of this insect in the UK, but we have the record for most numerous and are probably the only Graveyard with a cicada on the species list – **see map below.**

*Cicada barbara* only lives in Southern Spain and Portugal, it loves hot weather and doesn't like a freeze. So how did it get to our Graveyard? We can't be certain, but the horticultural trade in large Olive trees might be the answer. The cicada nymphs were living in the soil around the tree and hatched out in August when the temperature was over 27C. There are a few of these rather expensive Olive trees on St Giles Hill.

Will our cicadas come back next year? Probably not as it doesn't like the cold and lifecycle is usually seven years. This is a pity as no one ever saw this very ugly insect with its very loud sound. If it does, we will be ready and entomologists from all over will be flocking to the St Giles Hill Graveyard for a cicada "Twitch." Please refer to a summary of the records below and a picture of the cicada on the flowing page.

Summary of the records of the Winchester *Cicada barbara*

| Recorders | Date | Grid Ref | Area/Site | Location |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Anna & Dave Stewart | 15/08/2025 | SU49032935 | St Giles Hill | Palm Hall Close Garden |
| Anna & Dave Stewart | 15/08/2025 | SU49052935 | St Giles Hill | Palm Hall Close Garden |
| Anna & Dave Stewart | 15/08/2025 | SU49072937 | St Giles Hill Graveyard | sycamore trees |
| Anna & Dave Stewart | 15/08/2025 | SU49072935 | St Giles Hill Graveyard | sycamore trees |
| Max Illis, Sol Illis | 15/08/2025 | SU49082933 | St Giles Hill Graveyard | sycamore trees |
| John LTB | 15/08/2025 | SU49122932 | St Giles Hill Graveyard | sycamore trees |
| C Burns | 15/08/2025 | SU48932937 | St Giles Hill Park, Winchester | Large sycamore tree |
| C Burns | 15/08/2025 | SU49032942 | St Giles Hill, Winchester | Lime tree, Baring Road |
| Anna & Dave Stewart | 17/08/2025 | SU49072937 | St Giles Hill Graveyard | sycamore trees |
| Anna & Dave Stewart | 17/08/2025 | SU49072935 | St Giles Hill Graveyard | sycamore trees |
| Max Illis, Sol Illis | 17/08/2025 | SU49082933 | St Giles Hill Graveyard | sycamore trees |
| Anna P Stewart, Jo Tallis, | 17/08/2025 | SU49072934 | St Giles Hill Graveyard | sycamore trees |
| Anna & Dave Stewart | 25/08/2025 | SU49052937 | St Giles Hill | Garden off Palm Hall Close |
| Anna & Dave Stewart | 25/08/2025 | SU49072937 | St Giles Hill Graveyard | sycamore trees |
| Max Illis, Sol Illis | 25/08/2025 | SU49082933 | St Giles Hill Graveyard | sycamore trees |

***Cicada barbara*** **photo from Almeria , Spain, taken in August 2024 by Faluke. Obtained from iNaturalist**

# 2025 to 2026 *Vespa velutina nigrithorax* – Asian Hornet

## Gerald McFadden

The Asian Hornet (*Vespa velutina nigrithorax*), is now being referred to as the Yellow-legged hornet (YLAH) by the National Bee unit (NBU), a unit of the Animal and Plant Health agency of DEFRA.

Asian Hornets are an "eco-system depressor", a threat to the local Eco- System. An Asian Hornet nest will take 12Kg of bio-catch in a season. In the summer the presence of Asian Hornets in the apiary causes colony stress. Forage paralysis ensues as bees defend their hive. Returning foraging bees are taken down by the Asian Hornet depriving the hive of information and food. Consequently, Queen reduces lay, drones are not produced in number, lifecycle impacted, resulting in colony collapse. The NBU is tasked with eradication of this non-native species. N.B. Analysis of YLAH diet shows wide range of insects consumed, not just Honeybees.

### Status 2025

2025 saw phenomenal growth across the country in yellow legged hornet sightings and nest destruction by the National Bee Unit

The Animal and Plant Health Agency's National Bee Unit (NBU) reported a total of **544 sightings in 2025**. In total, **163 confirmed nests** were found in the UK. Compare with 24 nests in 2024. Between the 1st nest in 2012 and 2022 a total of 13 nests were destroyed.

In addition, on 20 January 2026 it was reported that a large dead secondary nest belonging to a yellow-legged hornet was found near Wrexham, making it the first confirmed discovery of the insect in Wales.

Although most nests and sightings occurred in Kent and East Sussex (see 2025 Nest Risk Levels map on page 14) The insect was sighted all along the south coast as far as Tresco in the Scilly isles and for the first time in in Ireland and Wales.

**Locally in Southampton a Secondary nest discovered on Thursday 26th of September 2025 at Fremantle Park. The nest was destroyed and removed for analysis on 30/09/25. On the other side of Southampton water, Asian Hornets were detected in Hythe and Marchwood with one primary nest destroyed. There were two confirmed sightings in the Verwood area and confirmed sightings on the Jurassic coast and Chesil beach. Although the bulk of NBU activity has been around the Dover Straits.**

In Europe, they are now considered endemic in Belgium, France and Northern Spain.

### 2026 Actions

On 31st October 2025, the *enhanced contingency response* was scaled back, however, the NBU will continue to respond to credible sightings that are reported. In Future, formal updates from the NBU will be shared by exception if a nest is found rather than on a regular weekly basis. The Public Awareness campaigns will continue in the media through 2026.

The NBU will **not** be engaged in large-scale methodical trapping this Spring. They are still available via the Asian Watch app to pursue confirmed sightings of the YLAH and destroy discovered nests.

The public have been key to spotting Asian Hornets in UK and especially in Hampshire. The Asian Hornet app is the way to engage the NBU, capture a picture of the hornet on your phone, send it via the app, await confirmation and a visit from the NBU.

## *See IT, Snap IT, Send IT*

### Spring trapping / Monitoring is essential.

In Southampton we are in an area of medium risk. If you can, please be vigilant and actively monitor and help raise public awareness.

For those who have selective *Vespa velutina* traps. Spring trapping begins February until Mid-May for emerging queens. Don't set traps in an apiary if there is no history of Asian Hornets in that locality. Don't invite them in.

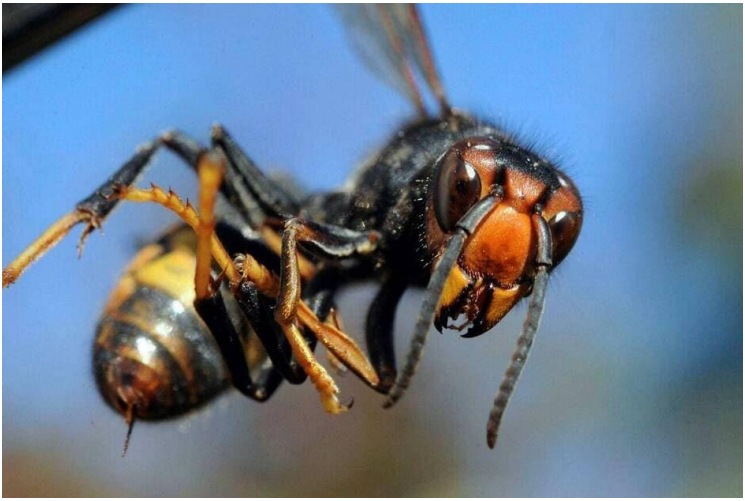
In 2026, active monitoring and spring trapping will assist the NBU in their efforts to continue the eradication phase of this non-native Hornet incursion. If you capture an Asian Hornet, Do Not release it, take a photograph and send it on the app for confirmation.

## How to spot Asian hornets

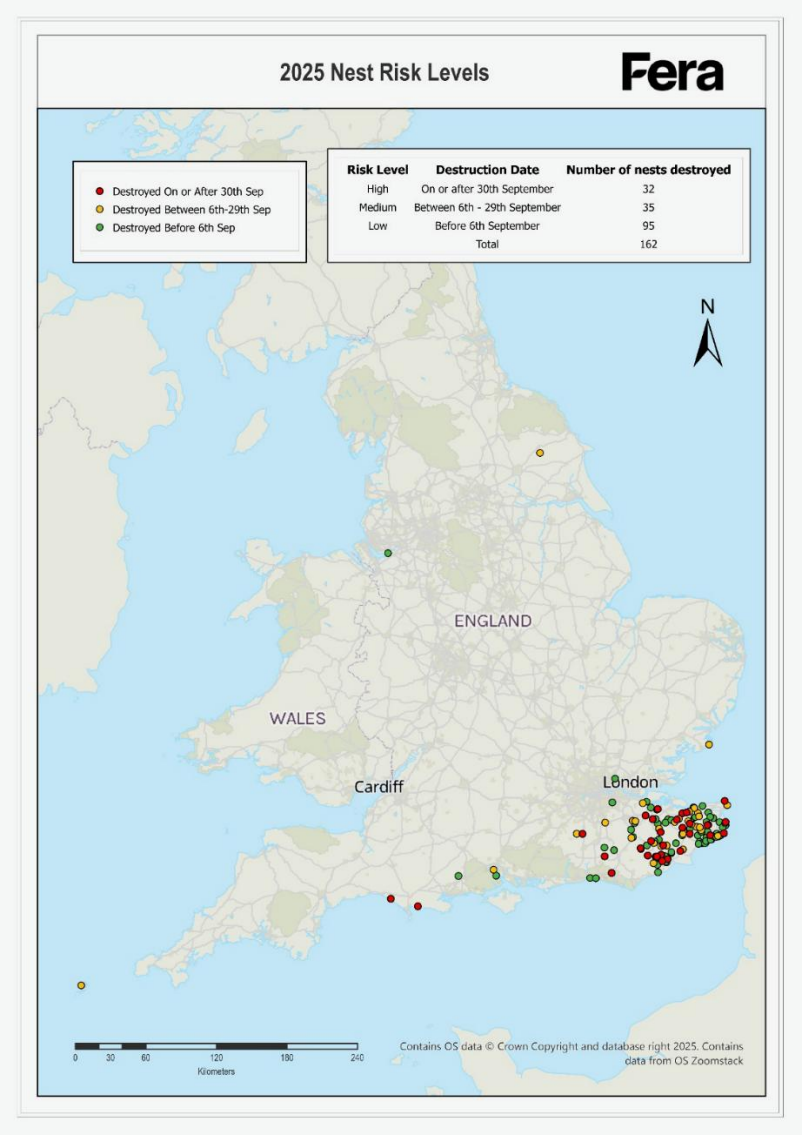
Asian hornets can appear similar to the native European hornet, but there are a few key differences:

- Asian hornets are **smaller** than European hornets.
- Asian hornets have an **orange head** when viewed from the front.
- Their bodies are almost **entirely black** with fine yellow stripes and an **orange 4th segment** near their stinger.
- Their **legs are bright yellow** like they have been 'dipped in paint'.

  A specimen is pictured below



*Vespa velutina*




I would like to thank Felicity Irons-smith for her help with the above article.

# Recording Officer's Report

## Members Records and Weather Report 2025: Phil Budd

Here is a list of some of the contributors to the records in 2025: Ian Bailey, Andy Barker, Liz Batten, Andy Binns, Zoe Birtle, Joanne Budd, Phil Budd, Nic Burns, Andy Collins, Cath Corney, Terry Crow, Jill Doubleday, Geoff Frampton, Nick Gulliver, Graham Harrison-Watts, Joydip Hazra, Mike Hill, Dave Hubble, Peter Hyde, Mac Ince, Sue Lambert, Bruce Larner, Chris Loades, Jenny Mallinson, Graham Manchip, Julian Moseley, Sam Munslow, Darren Naish, John Norton, Mark Painter, Gemma Paul, Pedro Pires, John Poland, Peter Potts, Di & Andy Sawyer, Hannah Scully-Lyall, Rod Ship, Jeremy Smallwood, James Stubbs, Margaret Ward, Ian Watts, and Paul Winter. Richard Dickson (Fareham) and John Poland (West End) assisted with insect and botanical identifications, respectively. In addition, Neil Sanderson has helped with lichen identification. Many determinations, mostly of the invertebrates, are verified by national experts.

There are several sources of records on FACEBOOK including the following: Friends of Peartree Green, Hamble Conservation Volunteers, Hampshire Flora Group, NHM UK Biodiversity, Sholing Valley Study Centre, our own Southampton Natural History Society, Southampton Wildlife, West End Nature and Diversity, Wildern Nature Friends and Wildern Nature Photographs.

The society continued to extract records for the Southampton area from *iRecord* and we thank the administrators of *iRecord* for this as this has proved to be a valuable source of information, especially for insect records. Several recorders other than those listed above participate in submitting data to *iRecord.* There are also some other smaller sources of records.

The recording area that we cover extends between the River Test and the River Hamble. In the west the recording area extends west of the Test into Totton area and then south to Hythe and Dibden Purlieu but not as far as the New Forest. The northern boundary includes Broadlands, Lee, North Baddesley, south Chandler's Ford, Eastleigh, and the roads connecting Eastleigh, Fair Oak, and Botley. On Southampton Water the southern limit of the area is a straight line across the water between the northern boundary of Fawley and the mouth of the Hamble. Hampshire records of exceptional interest are included in this report even if they are from well outside this area.

Please see our website: sotonnhs.net for on-going up to date reports during 2026.

Thank you to everybody who contributed to recording wildlife in 2025.

# Weather Report 2025

**A summary of the weather in Southampton over 2026 is as follows:**

**January:** The first eleven days of January started cold with sleet or wet snow on two days. The middle of the month was dry with variable winds and temperatures. From the 23rd onwards the month was mild but very wet and windy. A severe thunderstorm over the Isle of Wight on 27th. Dry with average temperatures overall.

**February:** A mostly dry and at times cold in the first three weeks of February. Distinctly unsettled and very mild from the 20th. Sunny last two days. Overall, it was a dry and cool winter month.

**March:** A mostly dry, sunny, and mild March. Very mild but cloudier weather occurred later in the month. Only about five days saw significant rain. Sunny with hard frosts in the first five days, apart from the 13th to 16th frost-free thereafter.

**April:** A dry, very sunny and at times very warm first twelve days, then cool, cloudy and mostly unsettled until warm and very sunny weather returned on the 27th. A dry and very warm April overall.

**May:** Up until the 20th May it was very dry, mostly sunny, and very warm or even hot at times with easterly winds. On the 21st there were evening thunderstorms and a cool and showery south-west airstream held sway later, although signs of settling down again at months end.

**June:** Another very warm, dry, and sunny month. Temperature certainly exceeded 80F at times between 16th and 23rd. There were thunderstorms or heavy showers on three days between 7th and 13th. Particularly sunny in the last four days of the month.

**July:** Very warm, but not so dry and sunny as June was. Up to the 19th, mostly dry and sunny with very warm or hot weather on most days. Exceptionally warm nights from 28th June to 2nd July. From the 20th cooler and cloudier with showers but still pleasant.

**August:** Up to the 17th I was away from the Southampton area, but I think the showery, less sunny weather with mostly average temperatures extending to around the 14th. Easterly winds then ushered a very dry, warm period until the 25th, the westerly winds then brought cool, showery weather at months end. An average month of summer weather.

**September:** September was unusually cool throughout, and the first half was wet also. In the latter half it was very dry but still cool and not particularly sunny.

**October:** October got off with early heavy rain and gales on the third due to storm Amy. From then to the 18th Easterly winds brought dry, mild, and calm weather but it was also disappointingly cloudy. From the 19th very heavy rain caused October to be a wet month overall. The weather later in the month was mild, showery, but also quite sunny.

**November:** Prior to the 17th of November it was very wet and very mild but with some dry and exceptionally mild nights. The 14th was particularly wet due to Storm Claudia. From the 17th cold, but drier, weather arrived from the north with some hard night frosts.

**December:** The mild or very mild weather on southerly or westerly winds that began on 27th November extended to the 27th. During this period, the weather was generally cloudy with showers, but there was exceptionally heavy rain on the 18th. This meant that the month was mild and wet overall despite the chilly, very dry, and variably sunny weather brought by north-east winds at Christmas time.

**In summary 2026 was another very warm year, it was also an exceptionally sunny year, and drier than most recent years with a near average rainfall.**

Below: Mackerel sky over Southampton on 18th October 2024

## Species Reports

### Fungi and Lichens

2025 was a dry year for the most part and fungi were hard to find in the spring and early summer. Even later in summer when there was more rain there didn't seem to be enough to get things going. There were more fungi around in October and November as would be expected, but with relatively few waxcaps *Hygrocybe* species this year.

There were some interesting phenological records, for example, **Fly Agaric *Amanita muscaria*** seen at Hollybrook Plantation on 9th December and **Clouded Agaric** *Clitocybe nebularis* at Millers Pond LNR on 31st December. An unusually early dated record was of **Scarlet Elf Cup** *Sarcoscypha* species at Mayfield Park on 22nd January.

A species that was found in the Southampton area for the first time was **Crimped Gill Fungus** *Plicatura crispa* on a birch log at Hamble Common in December **(pictured left). Orange Pore Fungus = Orange Ping-pong Ball Fungus** was found at a second Southampton site at Millers Pond LNR on 19th September. Scientifically this is *Flavolaschia calocera*. The **Coral Fungus** *Hericium coralloides* appeared for a second year in the Merryoak area of Bitterne and there is now a second Southampton area site for **Tiered Tooth Fungus** *Hericium cirrhatum* found independently by two observers at Lordsdale Greenway, on two dates in September. The previous record of this attractive fungus was at Telegraph Woods, West End.

**A sample of other noteworthy and interesting fungi records in 2025 are as follows:**

*Agrocybe aegerita,* **Poplar Mushroom**, Riverside Park, 3rd December – unusual on elder.
*Butyriboletus fechtneri,* **Pale Bolete**, Providence Hill, Bursledon, 16th October – a rare species.
*Calyptella campanula,* **Bell Hoodie,** Peartree Green LNR, 8th November – on dead hemlock stem.

*Cheilymenia fimicola,* **a disc fungus,** Netley Common, 29th December – on animal dung.
*Coccomyces delta,* **a leaf-spot Ascomycete,** Swaythling, 4th April.
*Dennisiella babingtonii,* **an Ascomycete fungus**, Wildern Moor, Hedge End, 22nd January.
*Erisyphe heraclei,* **Umbellifer Mildew,** Cromarty Road Field, 21st October.
*Gloeoporus sepiarium,* **Rusty-gilled Polypore,** Carey Road, Thornhill, 25th December.
*Laetiporus sulphureus,* **Chicken-of-the-Woods,** Warburton Rd, Thornhill, 5th May – on plum.
*Mycena seynii,* **a bonnetcap,** Chilworth, 9th June – on Monterey pine *Pinus radiata* cone**.**
*Phanerochaete velutina,* **a skin fungus**, Peartree Green LNR, 1st February.
*Phleogena faginea*, **Fenugreek Stalkball,** Hatch Bottom, West End, 12th December.
***Pterula sp.,*** Mayfield Park, 24th November – on a log.
*Ramularia lamiicola,* **an Ascomycete fungus**, Southampton Old Cemetery, 22nd March – on the leaves of Red Dead-nettle *Lamium purpureum*.
*Ramularia sambucina,* **a leaf-spot Ascomycete,** near Fernyhurst Pond, Rownhams, 30th September.

A lot more information on fungi can be found on certain websites such as those produced by the Hampshire Fungus Recording Group: ***hampshirefungi.org.uk***

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## There were also some lichen records of interest in 2025:

***Acarospora fuscata,*** Southampton Old Cemetery, 13th January – on granite tombstone**.**
***Caloplaca dalmatica*** Southampton Old Cemetery, 19th January – on limestone tombstone.
***Caloplaca maritima***, Dibden Bay, 8th March – on concrete on beach.
***Clauzedia monticola,*** Southampton Old Cemetery, 13th January – on limestone tombstone.
***Graphis betulina,*** Dumbleton's Copse, Thornhill, 11th April – on sweet chestnut – ID confirmed by Neil Sanderson.
***Melanohalea elegantula***, Wildern Moor, 19th March.
***Physcia aipolia,*** Southampton Old Cemetery, 19th January – on lilac bush.
***Ramalina fastigiata,*** Southampton Old Cemetery, 19th January – on lilac bush.
***Rhizocarpon reductum,*** Southampton Old Cemetery, 13th January – on granite tombstone**.**

# Vascular Flora: Flowering Plants

**Native Species**

The single spike of **Lizard Orchid** *Himantoglossum hircinum* is still at the Bursledon site and it flowered for at least the fourth year running in 2025. The annual **Pyramidal Orchid** *Anacamptis pyramidalis* count at Peartree Green LNR was conducted by Ian Watts on 16th June and there was yet another new record count there of 3,194. **Early Purple Orchid** *Orchis mascula* was recorded on 26th April at a site previously unknown to me in the Rownhams area. It is already known near Nursling, near Allington Road at West End and south of Botley, but no sites yet within the Southampton city boundary. There was a **Bee Orchid** *Ophrys apifera* rosette at a new site at Carey Road, Thornhill on 12th January, but 2025 was a poor year for flowering due to the dry April with only four at the Highfield Campus of Southampton University.

Although outside the Southampton area and not known currently closer to Southampton, it is worth mentioning here the discovery of **Yellow Bird's Nest** *Monotropa hypopitys* at Ampfield Wood, north-east of Romsey, the first record there since 1936.

*Allium trifoliatum*

## Other native flowering plants 2025 records of interest are as follows:

*Crataegus x media,* **Hybrid Hawthorn**, near 'Phil's Hill' at Peartree Green LNR, 19th July.
*Erisymum cheiranthoides,* **Treacle Mustard,** Horton Heath one near Fir Tree Lane, 6th September.
*Juncus bulbosus,* **Bulbous Rush,** Netley Common bog – surviving there, 13th July.
*Linum bienne,* **Pale Flax,** M27 junction 8 roundabout, Bursledon, 11th June – new site to me.
*Narcissus pseudonarcissus,* **Wild Daffodil,** Dumbleton's Copse (west), 23rd March – status uncertain but possibly originally planted.
*Orobanche hederae,* **Ivy Broomrape,** Bitterne – Sainsbury's car park, 2nd March – a new site. Old stems present there in 2024.
*Orobanche hederae,* **Ivy Broomrape (yellow)** var. *monochroa*..Mayfield Park, 14th May – several at a new site and the first in Southampton (cover photo).
*Rubus moylei,* **a bramble species,** Wildern LNR, 15th June.
*Rubus phaeocarpus,,* **a bramble species,** Wildern LNR, 15th June.
*Rubus tuberculatus,* **a bramble species,** Wildern LNR, 15th June.
*Saxifraga tridactyla,* **Rue-leaved Saxifrage,** Bitterne Railway Station, 20th April – a new site.
*Sedum telepium,* **Orpine,** Fir Tree Lane, Horton Heath, 6th September.
*Umbilicus rupestris,* **Wall Pennywort,** south of Tatchbury Mount, Calmore, 13th September.
*Viola reichenbachiana,* **Early Dog Violet,** Southampton Old Cemetery, 22nd March – a new site.
*Viola reichenbachiana,* **Early Dog Violet,** Kendall's Wood = Harefield Copse, 23rd March.
*X Schedolium loliaceum,* **Hybrid Fescue,** Itchen Valley Country Park water meadows, 13th August.

## Non-native flowering plants 2025 records of interest are as follows:

*Acer cappadocicum,* **Cappadocian Maple,** Hannay Rise, Thornhill, 6th October – one sapling. This appears to be the first truly self-sown specimen of this species in Southampton.
*Allium trifoliatum,* **Pink Garlic = Hirsute Garlic**, Lydgate Green, Thornhill, 22nd April. Self-sown by a wall **(pictured above)**.
*Allium tuberosum,* **Chinese Chives,** near Millbrook flyover, 27th September – status uncertain.
*Asparagus officinalis,* **Asparagus,** Riverside Park – near model railway, 15th June – two plants.
*Cordyline australis,* **Cabbage Palm,** by Dumbleton's Towers, Thornhill, 28th April – two plants.
*Coriandrum sativum,* **Coriander**, Verulam Road, Bevois Valley, 20th July – self-sown.
*Cotoneaster integrifolius,* **Entire-leaved Cotoneaster,** Wide Lane, Eastleigh - naturalised, 26th December.
*Cotoneaster sternianus,* **Stern's Cotoneaster,** Warburton Road, Thornhill, 29th December
*Cotoneaster sternianus,* **Stern's Cotoneaster,** Sea Road, Peartree Green LNR, 31st December.
*Cotoneaster x suecicus,* **Swedish Cotoneaster,** Wide Lane, Eastleigh - naturalised, 26th December.
*Dipsacus laciniatus,* **Cut-leaved Teasel,** M27 junction 7 slip road, Stoneham, 2nd August.
*Dittrichia viscosa,* **Woody Fleabane,** M271 at Nursling – at least three colonies, 12th October.
*Euonymus japonicus,* **Evergreen Spindle,** Netley Chase Wood, Thornhill, 29th December.
*Euphorbia oblongata,* **Balkan Spurge,** Sullivan Road, Sholing, 29th March – new site.
*Fraxinus pennsylvanica,* **Green Ash = Red Ash,** Hannay Rise, Thornhill, 29th December – a first for Southampton area. A native of North America.
*Fritillaria meleagris,* **Snake's Head Fritillary,** Cromarty Road Field, Lordshill, 2nd April.
*Gamochaeta purpurea,* **American (Curly) Cudweed,** Saltmarsh Road, Southampton, 30th August.
*Geranium peltatum,* **Ivy-leaved Geranium**, South Street, Hythe, 2nd August.
grassy central area where the boat show is sited in the autumn.

*Matricaria discoidea,* **Pineapple Mayweed,** Mayflower Park, 18th May – dominating the sparsely vegetated area used for the boat show in September.
*Mirabilis jalapa,* **Marvel-of-Peru,** Broadwater Road, Townhill Park, 27th September.
*Muscari neglectum,* **a Grape Hyacinth,** Utilita Bowl Bund, West End, 12th April – 3 plants.
*Nectaroscordum siculum,* **Honey Garlic,** naturalised in woodland north of Bursledon Railway Station car park, 24th May.
*Phacelia tanacetifolia,* **Scorpion Weed,** Queen's Way area, Southampton, 25th April.
*Physalis peruviana,* **Apple-of-Peru,** Peartree Green LNR near Sea Road, 11th October – 3 plants.
*Pilosella flagellaris,* **Flagellate Mouse-ear Hawkweed,** Dumbleton's Copse (east), Thornhill, 28th April – this is a new site for this species still quite widespread elsewhere in the Thornhill area.
*Potentilla indica,* **Yellow-flowered Strawberry,** Providence Hill, Bursledon, 6th April –a new site.
*Quercus x turneri,* **Turner's Oak,** Riverside Park near River Walk**,** 3rd December – sapling **(pictured below).**
*Rumex scutatus,* **French Sorrel,** Burgess Road, Swaythling, 3rd October.
*Sedum stoloniferum,* **Lesser Causasian Stonecrop,** Telegraph Woods (north), 12th April – spreading over a large area of woodland floor under oak trees near to Telegraph Heights.
*Tellima grandiflora,* **Fringe Cups,** Dumbleton's Copse near Holcroft Road, Thornhill, 5th May.
*Trifolium incarnatum ssp. incarnatum,* **Crimson Clover,** Queen's Way area, Southampton, 25th April.
*Vicia sativa ssp. segetum* **Fodder Vetch,** meadow by Quiller Vault, Town Quay area, 18th May.
*Vinca major 'oxyloba'* **Greater Periwinkle (variant**), River Walk – well naturalised, 18th April.
*Vinca minor 'atropurpurea'* **Lesser Periwinkle (variant**), River Walk – well naturalised, 18th April.
*Viola 'Jackanapes'* **Pansy (cultivar),** Lydgate Road, Thornhill car park, 3rd July.
*X Cuprocyparis leylandii,* **Leyland Cypress,** Burgess Road, 3rd October – seedling by post.

For more details of botanical sightings in Hampshire please refer to the Hampshire Flora Group: ***hwt.org.uk/pages/hampshire-flora-group***.

*Quercus x turneri*

# Fauna

## Marine Life

**Jenny Mallinson kindly provided this summary of marine life records in 2025, please read :**

I can report some interesting finds from a trawling trip in Southampton Water off Netley on 1st December last year, that I will put onto *iRecord* when they have sorted out their current problem of verifier notification. They have already gone to *Seasearch*.

The spiny seahorse, *Hippocampus guttulatus* differs from the one we usually find there, the short snouted *H. hippocampus.* Numbers of seahorses spotted are about half what they were last year but that could be partly down to reduced opportunities to look out for them.

The football jersey (nemertine) worm, *Tubulanus* ?*annulatus* is striking but I've not seen it before and am not familiar with how to ID to species.

The American file shell, *Yoldia limatula* was first found in June 2024 off the container dock at the top of the estuary where it is increasing in numbers. This time it was off Netley, so it's spreading.

The other notable feature of this trip was the lack of slipper limpets, *Crepidula fornicata*, which used to dominate and change a soft mud seabed to a hard surface for settlement. It has been declining since 2019 and this time, I didn't see any alive. Remember the American passenger pigeon? So common nobody bothered to record it till it was gone! As an introduced species, some may not regret the loss of slipper limpets, but they are certainly eco-engineers that provide additional habitat – hard substrate with things living on it from soft substrate with things living in it.

Keep encouraging SNHS members to record so we can keep up with changes.

**Jenny also provided some pictures of three of these species:**

Below left: *Hippocampus guttulatus*
Below right: *Yoldia limatula*
Bottom: *Tubulanus* species

## Platyhelminthes (Flatworms)

Flatworms continued to be reported in the Southampton area in 2025 with a new first known record of **Obama Flatworm** *Obama nungara* at West End Road on 19th July. The **Southampton Flatworm** *Caenoplana variegata* was found at Orchard Way, Highfield on 20th September and the flatworm ***Dendrocoleum lacteum*** seen under a submerged log at Wildern Moor on 6th January.

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## Other non-insect invertebrates

A **Signal Crayfish** *Pacifastacus lentiusculus* was identified in Tanner's Brook just north of Lordswood Way in Lordswood Greenway on 9th July and **Pfeiffer's Amber Snail** *Oxyloma elegans* was new to Wildern LNR on 4th April – it was seen at Gully Mead.

Of myriapods, the millipede ***Cylindroiulus londinensis*** was identified in a garden close to West End Copse on 18th February. There were also two centipede records of note, ***Geophilus electricus*** at the same West End site as above on 10th March and ***Geophilus flavus*** at Wildern Moor on 9th March.

There was an unusual record of a sheep tick ***Ixodes ricinus*** close to Cromarty Pond at Lordshill on 11th December. Several records of Acari mites in 2025 and these are summarised below:

*Aceria tenella* -gall mines on hornbeam leaves at two sites in Rownhams and Lordshill in late autumn
*Euzetes globulus* – seen for the first time at Peartree Green LNR on 16th November.
*Leptus trimaculatus* at Wildern LNR on 30th January and Peartree Green LNR on 23rd August.
*Phyllocoptes goniothorax,* gall mines on hawthorn near Cromarty Pond, Lordshill, 7th October.

A list of interesting spider records in 2025 are as follows:

*Amourobius similis,* Deacon Road, Bitterne, 23rd January.
*Araneus sturmii/triguttatus,* Peartree LNR, 26th May.
*Ballus depressus,* Shirley Pond Park, 20th July.
*Drapetisca socialis,* Woodland Walk, Wildern LNR, 2nd November.
*Euophrys (Telavera) petrensis,* Peartree LNR, 23rd August – an uncommon species
*Euophrys frontalis,* Hogsty Corner at Wildern LNR, 5th March
*Ozyptila praticola,* Peartree LNR, 23rd August.
*Pardosa nigriceps,* Wildern Moor, Hedge End, 15th January.

*Philodromus buxi,* Riverside Park, 6th May – an increasing species.
*Pseudouophrys lanigera,* Harlyn Road, Millbrook, 19th September.
*Scytodes thoracica,* Harlyn Road, Millbrook, 7th July.
*Zoropsis spinimana,* near South Stoneham Cemetery, 19th September.

### Collembola (Springtails)

Springtails continued to be well recorded in 2025 with several new species found in the Southampton area. Some records at Wildern LNR were confirmed by Stuart Bevan, a springtail expert on Facebook. A selection of the springtail records is as follows:

*Deuterosminthurus pallidus,* Peartree Green LNR, 16th November.
*Dicyrtomina minuta,* Home Covert, Nursling, 4th December.
*Entomobrya multifasciata,* Peartree Green LNR, 16th November.
*Entomobrya nivalis,* Home Covert, Nursling, 4th December.
*Isotomurus graminis,* Fen Meadow, Wildern LNR, 30th January.
*Isotomurus maculatus,* Home Covert, Nursling, 4th December.
*Isotomurus palustris,* Fen Meadow, Wildern LNR, 6th February
*Isotomurus plumosus,* Fen Meadow, Wildern LNR, 30th January.
*Isotomurus unifasciatus,* Millers Pond LNR, 3rd January.
*Jordanathrix* near *superba,* Wildern Moor, 10th February – a recent UK colonist.
*Kalaphorura burmeisteri,* Hogsty Corner, Wildern LNR, 2nd February.
*Monobella grassei,* near Cromarty Road Pond, 11th December.
*Sminthurides aquaticus,* Fen Meadow Pond, Wildern LNR, 11th January.
*Sminthurides malmgreni,* Millers Pond LNR, 3rd January.
*Sminthurus nigromaculatus* Peartree Green LNR, 23rd August.
*Vertagopus arboreus,* Cromarty Road, Lords Hill, 22nd December.
*Vertagopus arboreus* Wildern LNR, 9th January.
*Willowsia platani,* Wildern Moor, 10th January.

# Insects

## Odonata: Dragonflies and damselflies

### Some records of earliest dates for selected Odonata species in 2025 include the following:

**Blue-tailed Damselfly,** Wildern LNR, 26th April.
**Broad-bodied Chaser,** Wildern LNR, 17th April.
**Golden-ringed Dragonfly,** Wildern LNR, 31st May
– also, the first evidence of breeding at Wildern LNR in 2025.
**Large Red Damselfly,** Wildern LNR, 5th April.
**Red-eyed Damselfly,** Boating Lake, Southampton Common, 30th April.
**Scarce Blue-tailed Damselfly,** Wildern LNR, 2nd May.
**Small Red-eyed Damselfly,** Ornamental Lake, Southampton Common, 18th June.
**Southern Hawker,** Wildern LNR, 31st May.
**Willow Emerald,** Wildern LNR, 23rd June.

### Some records of latest dates for selected Odonata species in 2025 include the following:

**Blue-tailed Damselfly**, Wildern LNR, 19th September.
**Common Darter,** Ornamental Lake, Southampton Common, 17th November.
**Migrant Hawker,** West Wood, Netley, 30th October.
**Southern Hawker,** Cromarty Road Field, 12th November.
**Willow Emerald,** Wildern Moor, 1st November.

### Some other records of Odonata species of interest in 2025 include the following:

**Brown Hawker,** Coltsfoot Pond, Wildern LNR, 8th July – unusual here.
**Four-spotted Chaser,** Miller's Pond, 7th May – new to site.
**Hairy Dragonfly,** Broadleaf Park Balancing Pond, Rownhams, 11th May
**Lesser Emperor Dragonfly,** Coltsfoot Pond, Wildern LNR, 21st July – new to site.
**Scarce Blue-tailed Damselfly,** Broadleaf Park Balancing Pond, Rownhams, 11th May
**Scarce Chaser, Ornamental Pond, Southampton Common, 16th May – new site.**
**Small Red Damselfly,** Coltsfoot Pond, Wildern LNR, 26th July.
**Southern Migrant Hawker,** Clam's Pond and ditch, Rownhams, 10th August.
**Vagrant Emperor,** Wildern LNR, 6th October – new to site.
**Willow Emerald Damselfly,** Coltsfoot Pond, Wildern LNR, 22nd August – 40+.

## Hemiptera (Bugs)

A ground-bug (family Lygaeidae) that has suddenly become common around Southampton in flowery grassland is ***Trapezonotus ullrichii.*** This bug is often seen on the heads of oxeye (moon) daisy and was recorded at Peartree Green LNR on 10th May and 26th May, at Broadleaf Farm Park (formerly Parker's Farm) at Rownhams on 28th May and 19th July, and at Southampton Old Cemetery on 31st May. A Leatherbug (family Coreidae) that has become an increasingly common autumn feature of urban Southampton in recent years was recorded three times in 2025. This is the large **Western Conifer Seedbug** *Leptoglossus occidentalis* and it was seen at Rownhams House on 13th October, at Southampton General Hospital on 1st October, and near Thorold Road at Bitterne Park on 2nd October.

**There were many records of leafhoppers and related insects (sub-order *Auchenorrhyncha*) in 2025 as follows:**

At Cromarty Road Field on 18th May came the first known Southampton record of ***Balclutha punctata*** and at the same site on 12th November and 26th October two more leafhoppers ***Errastunus ocellaris*** and ***Tremulicerus tremulae*** were identified. Not far away from the above the leaf-hopper ***Ulopa reticulata*** was found in central Lords Wood on 17th October. On 26th July, the leaf-hopper ***Lamprotettix nitidulus*** was identified at Southampton Old Cemetery. At Deacon Road, Bitterne the **Bay Leafhopper** *Synophropsis lauri* was an interesting discovery on 5th August. The first known Southampton record of the leaf-hopper ***Mocydia crocea*** was made at West Wood, Netley on 6th October. There were three additions to the Peartree Green LNR biodiversity list with three leaf-hopper records, these were ***Doratura stylata*** on 23rd August, ***Lindbergina aurovittata*** beaten off of holm oak on 1st February, and ***Macropsis scotii*** off of brambles on 26th May. There were a number of leaf-hopper records from Wildern LNR, Hedge End, including ***Arboridia ribauti*** beaten off of ivy on 18th March, ***Conomelus anceps*** on 30th November, ***Megamelodes quadrimaculatus*** (actually a froghopper) on 30th November. The tree-hopper ***Centrotus cornutus*** was new to Wildern LNR on 17th May and the first known Southampton record of the tree-hopper ***Florodelphax leptosoma*** there on 14th April.

**Other Hemiptera records of interest in 2025 included the following:**

**Cinnamon Bug,** *Corizus hyoscyami,* near Taunton's College, Shirley, 25th April.
***Empicoris rubromaculatus,*** a stilt-bug, Miller's Pond LNR – at moth light, 10th October.
***Empicoris vagabundus,*** Southampton Old Cemetery -off cypress and giant redwood, 26th July.
***Megalocoleus molliculus,*** a Mirid bug, Utilita Bowl Bund, West End, 30th June.

**Marsh Damselbug**, *Nabis limbatus*, Netley Common bog – abundant, 13th July.
**Southern Green Shieldbug,** *Nezara viridula,* Monk's Way, Swaythling – nymphs, 7th October.
***Orthocephalus saltator*,** a Mirid bug, Utilita Bowl Bund, West End, 30th June.
**Vernal Shieldbug,** *Peribalus strictus,* Peartree Green LNR, 10th May – 2nd record here.
***Rhyparochromus vulgaris,*** a ground -bug, Miller's Pond LNR meadow, 17th May.

**There were also two records of aphids of interest:**

**Rufous Willow-bark Aphid,** *Pterocomma rufipes,* Wildern LNR, 22nd April.
**Large willow Aphid,** *Tuberolachnus salignus,* Harlyn Road, Millbrook, 10th October.

The website ***micropics.org.uk*** is very useful in the determination of adult Hemiptera. Another useful site which provides abundant, up-to-date information on Hemiptera is the site ***britishbugs.org.uk***

## Minor Insect Orders

Again, there was some study of bark-flies (Order Psocoptera). Both ***Ectopsocus briggsi*** and ***Trichopsocus dalii*** were beaten off ivy at Wildern LNR on 18th March. A common, yellow bark-fly ***Valenzuela flavidus*** was recorded beaten off limes at Peartree Green LNR on 26th May and was also found at Netley Common Bog, Thornhill on 13th July.

A seldom recorded lacewing (Order Neuroptera) was found at Peartree Green LNR on 26th May. It was identified by Richard Dickson as ***Hemerobius micans.***

Caddisflies (Order Trichoptera) are often recorded at lights used to attract moths. Two such records were of ***Stenophylax permistus*** in a Bitterne Park garden on 10th May and ***Limnephilus marmoratus*** at Millers Pond LNR on 10th October. The caddis-fly ***Limnephilus rhombicus*** was identified from its distinctive case at Fen Meadow Pond, Wildern LNR on 12th April.

## Coleoptera (Beetles)

The earliest of many **Stag Beetle** *Lucanus cervus* records was at an unspecified site in Southampton on 13th May. The first **Malachite Beetle** *Malachius bipustulatus* to be reported was at Cromarty Road Field on 24th April – this beetle doesn't usually appear until well into May. There was a very late **Bronze Beetle** *Chrysolina banksii* at West End on 8th December.
A new ladybird appeared in Southampton in 2025. The **Jersey Ladybird** *Calvia decemguttata* is intermediate in colour between the Orange and Cream-spot Ladybirds with similar white-spotting. See a picture of a Jersey Ladybird by Andy

Collins (pictured below). The first records were in a Hedge End garden close to Wildern LNR on 14th June and 20th June., these were followed by one in a garden adjacent to West End Copse with the first record there on 1st July, then at Kathleen Road, Sholing on 19th July, and finally at Oaktree Road, Bitterne Park on 14th August. Most of these records were at nocturnal moth lamps.

*Calvia decempunctata*

Following on from its appearance in Chandler's Ford Garden in 2024 when fifty individuals were seen (see 2024 Annual Report), the **Flame-shouldered Beetle** *Sitaris muralis* was found in a Lower Shirley garden on 6th August. There were 10 dead specimens here. There was a slightly earlier report in a garden at Reynolds Road, Upper Shirley on 3rd August, so about the same time and not far away from the other record.

## Other beetle records of interest in 2025 included the following:

***Acilius sulcatus,*** a water beetle, Foundry Lane, Shirley, 5th June – larva.
***Aculpalpus dubius***, a ground beetle, garden near West End Copse, 21st June – at moth lamp – determined by Richard Dickson.
***Astenus lyonessius***, a rove beetle, Wildern LNR, 2nd February – new to the reserve.
***Callicerus obscurus***, a rove beetle, garden near Wildern LNR, 3rd March.
***Chaetocnema subcoerulea,*** a leaf beetle, Wildern Moor, 2nd February – nationally scarce.
*Coccinella undecimpunctata,* **11-spot ladybird,** Harlyn Road, Millbrook, 19th July.
***Cryptocephalus pusillus***, a pot beetle, Netley Common bog, 13th July – beaten off of oak trees.
***Dendroxena quadrimaculata***, a carrion beetle, Wildern LNR (Hogsty Corner), 17th June – larva.
***Donacia vulgaris***, a reed beetle, Utilita Bowl Bund, West End, 17th June – confirmed by Richard Dickson.
***Dorytomus tortrix,*** a weevil, Peartree Green LNR, 30th June – confirmed by Richard Dickson.
***Laccobius bipunctatus***, a water beetle, Utilita Bowl Bund, 30th June – confirmed by Richard Dickson.
*Oxythyrea funestra*, **Mediterranean Spotted Chafer**, Haskins Garden Centre, West End, 6th June – the first confirmed Southampton record of this chafer that appeared in the 2024 Annual report.
*Pachytodes cerambyciformis,* **Speckled Longhorn,** Broadleaf Farm Park, Rownhams, 28th May.
***Paedurus fuscipes***, a rove beetle, Haskins Garden Centre, West End, 6th June**.**
***Plateumaris discolor***, a reed beetle, Coltsfoot Pond, Wildern LNR, 26th April.
***Polystichus connexus,*** a ground beetle, in a Sholing garden, 15th August – an uncommon species.
***Rugilus erichsonii,*** a rove beetle, Wildern LNR, 30th January.
*Saprinus semistriatus*, **Clown Beetle,** Hogsty Mire, Wildern LNR, 18th May, - first Southampton areas record and only the 2nd record for Hampshire – photo by Terry Crow **(pictured below).**
***Scymnus interruptus,*** a micro-ladybird, Wildern LNR, 18th March – beaten off of ivy. This species appears to be new to Southampton.
***Stenus fulvicornis***, a rove-beetle, Wildern LNR, 30th January.
***Stenus similis,*** a rove-beetle, Wildern Moor, 22nd January – confirmed by Roy Anderson.
***Synapion ebeninum***, a weevil, Wildern LNR, 2nd February.

*Saprinus semistriatus*

## Diptera (Two-winged Flies)

### Earliest dates for selected Diptera species in 2025 are as follows:

*Bombylius discolor*, **Spotted Bee-fly,** Cromarty Road Field, Lordshill, 26th March - on 11th April this species was recorded near to Netley Common bog – the first record east of the river.Itchen.
*Bombylius major,* **Dark-edged Bee-fly**, Banbury Avenue area, Sholing, 22nd February – this appears to be the earliest ever recorded date in the Southampton area.
*Episyrphus balteatus,* **Marmalade Hoverfly**, Wildern LNR, 30th January.
*Helophilus pendulus,* **Footballer Hoverfly,** Wildern Moor, 30th March.
*Myathropa florea,* **Batman Hoverfly,** Dumbleton's Copse, Thornhill, 11th April
*Volucella zonaria,* **Hornet Hoverfly**, Cromarty Pond area, 9th June.

### Latest dates for a selected Diptera species in 2025 are as follows:

***Syrphus torvus,*** a hoverfly, Peartree Green LNR, 15th November.

*Eriozona syrphoides*

## A selection of the other interesting Diptera records from 2025 are as follows:

***Anasimyia transfuga****,* a hoverfly, Coltsfoot Pond, Wildern LNR, 23rd July – picture by Terry Crow above.
***Asteia amoena,*** Hedge End garden near to Wildern LNR, 25th October.
*Brachypalpus laphriformis ,* **Forest Hoverfly,** Netley Common bog, 28th April – first Southampton record.
***Cacoxenus indagator,*** Bevois Valley, 8th April.
***Coenosia agromyzina***, Wildern LNR, 12th June.
***Coenosia tigrina,*** Southampton Old Cemetery, 26th July.
***Dicranomya morio,*** a cranefly, Coltsfoot Pond, Wildern LNR, 3rd April.
*Dorycera graminum,* **Phoenix Fly,** Peartree Green LNR. 10th May – a mating pair.
***Drosophila susuki,*** Southampton Old Cemetery, 19th January – beaten off of evergreens.
***Ecccoptomera microps,*** Wildern Moor, 22nd January – confirmed by Ian Andrews.
*Eriozona syrphoides,* **Bear Syrph (hoverfly)**, Wildern LNR, 10th July – an impressive 2,000th species on the site list. **(Pictured above).**
***Gymnopternus cupreus,*** Coltsfoot Pond, Wildern LNR, 14th May.
***Hebecnema nigra,*** Coltsfoot Pond, Wildern LNR, 23rd July.
***Limonia nubeculosa,*** a cranefly, Millbrook Estate (Wimpson), 10th June.
***Liriomyza amoena,*** Riverside Park, 22nd October – mines in elder leaves.
***Lophosia fasciata,*** a Tachinid fly, Utilita Bowl Bund, West End, 30th June.
***Melangyna cincta,*** a hoverfly, Cromarty Road Field, 16th April.
***Neomyia cornicina,*** Bitterne Park garden, 22nd February.
***Nyctia halterata,*** Southampton Old Cemetery, 26th July.
***Opomyza petrei,*** Coltsfoot Pond, Wildern LNR, 1st August.
*Oxycera rara****,*** **Four-barred Major**, near Mill Lane, Nursling, 8th June.
***Phaonia valida,*** Bitterne Park garden, 14th August.
***Philosepedon humeralis,*** a moth-fly, Hedge End garden near Wildern LNR, 25th October.
***Phytomyza astrantiae,*** Cromarty Road, Lordshill, 18th May – leaf-mines on masterwort *Astrantia* – a garden umbelliferous plant.
***Phytomyza conyzae,*** near Cromarty Road, 8th September– leaf-mines on fleabane.
***Platycheiris peltatus agg.,*** Wildern LNR, 26th May – a first site record.
***Protocalliphora azurea,*** a blow-fly, Bitterne Park garden, 10th August.
***Psychoda stigma****,* a moth-fly, Upper Deacon Road, Bitterne, 10th December.
***Sciapus platypterus,*** Wildern LNR, 12th June.
***Sphaerophoria taeniata,*** Wildern Moor, 4th July.
***Sphenella marginata,*** Bitterne Park garden, 22nd June.
*Stratiomys singularia,* **Flecked General,** Broadleaf Farm Park, Rownhams (formerly Parker's Farm), 28th May – second known Southampton area record.
***Tephritis ruralis,*** Southampton Old Cemetery, 26th July.
***Terellia serratulae,*** Bitterne Park garden, 28th June.
***Tipula pierrei,*** a cranefly, Coltsfoot Pond, Wildern LNR, 20th August – a Nationally Scarce species in the UK.
***Tricholauxinia praeusta,*** Bitterne Park garden, 24th May – expert confirmation.
***Trypeta zoe,*** a leaf-mining fly, near Cromarty Pond, 7th May.
*Volucella inflata,* **Orange-banded Plumehorn (hoverfly),** Dumbleton's Copse, 14th June – first record for the Thornhill area.

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## Hymenoptera (Bees, Wasps, Ants etc.)

There was an illustrated report by Geoff Frampton and originally posted on FACEBOOK of an interesting Hymenoptera parasite of ladybirds – this record appears in the systematic list below:

The Harlequin ladybird is not native to the UK but does have a handful of natural enemies. One of these is a parasitic wasp called *Dinocampus coccinellae.*

The wasp larva attacks the adult ladybird then builds a cocoon underneath the ladybird between its legs where it is protected from predators by the shielding and warning colours of the semi-paralysed ladybird. The wasp is rarely noticed - you're more likely to spot a ladybird with a cocoon underneath it than see the parasite that made it. And the wasp is more likely to attack other ladybird species than the Harlequin.

On 18th May I saw what looked vaguely like one such cocoon in the garden, although it was bizarrely sticking out of the ladybird's body rather than underneath it **(see right picture below).** I put it in a container to see if anything would emerge. Nearly 3 weeks later (6th June) a *Dinocampus coccinellae* wasp appeared **(see left picture below).**

*Dinocampus coccinellae* wasp with cocoon on ladybird (right picture)

## The earliest dates in 2025 for selected Hymenoptera species are as follows:

*Andrena cineraria,* **Ashy Mining Mining Bee,** Peartree Green LNR, 7th April.
*Andrena flavipes,* **Yellow-legged Mining Bee,** Thornhill Park Wood, 23rd March.
*Andrena nigroaenea*, **Buffish Mining Bee,** Southampton Old Cemetery, 25th March.
*Anthidium manicatum*, **Wool Carder Bee,** Town Quay Park, Southampton, 18th May.
*Anthophora plumipes,* **Hairy-legged Flower Bee, MALE,** Vespasian Road, Bitterne Manor, 8th March.
*Anthophora plumipes,* **Hairy-legged Flower Bee, FEMALE,** Wildern LNR, 18th March.

*Bombus pascuorum,* **Common Carder Bee,** Wildern Moor, 21st March.
*Bombus terrestris*, **Buff-tailed Bumblebee**, Wildern Moor, 15th January.
*Osmia bicornis,* **Red Mason Bee,** Netley Common, 11th April.
*Vespa crabro,* **Hornet,** Wildern LNR, 16th April.

## A selected list of the other Hymenoptera records received for 2025 are as follows:

***Achaius oratorius,*** an ichneumon, Goodall's Meadow, Wildern LNR, 10th June.
*Aglaostigma fulvipes,* **Pale-vented Bedstraw Sawfly,** Cromarty Road Field, 24th April.
***Andrena similis,*** a burrowing bee, Peartree Green LNR, 26th May – first site record.
*Andricus quercusramuli,* **Cotton-wool Gall,** Peartree Green LNR, 10th May – gall on small oak and the first known Southampton area record.
***Anoplius fuscatus,*** a spider-hunting wasp, Weston Shore, 16th July.
***Anoplius nigerrimus,*** a spider-hunting wasp, Hollybrook Cemetery, 22nd July.
*Coelioxys rufescens,* **Rufescent Sharp-tailed Bee,** Swift Road , Woolston, 2nd May.
*Dasypoda hirtipes,* **Pantaloon Bee,** Weston Shore, 26th June.
*Dolichovespula media,* **Median Wasp,** Bitterne Park garden, 15th June – a nest.
*Epeolus variegatus,* **Black-kneed Epeolus,** Weston Shore, 26th June.
***Gastracanthus pulcherrimus,*** a Chalcid wasp, Coltsfoot Pond, Wildern LNR, 5th September.
***Gorytes laticinctus,*** a digger wasp, Bitterne Park, 24th & Swift Road, Woolston, 24th/25th June.
***Harpactus tumidus,*** a digger wasp, Weston Shore, 21st July.
***Hedychrum nobile,*** a cuckoo wasp, Weston Shore, 16th July.
***Heterarthus flora,*** a mining sawfly, Mayfield Park, 7th September.
*Hylaeus cornutus,* **Spined Yellow-faced Bee,** Wildern Moor, 24th June.
***Lindenius albilabris,*** a digger wasp, The Conkerfield, Netley, 7th August.
***Macrophya annulata,*** a sawfly, Peartree Green LNR, 26th May.
*Melitta leporina,* **Clover Blunt-tailed Bee,** Haskins Garden Centre, West End, 6th June.
***Microterys nietneri,*** an encytid wasp, Wildern LNR, 18th March – beaten off of ivy.
***Ormyrus nitidulus,*** a micro-wasp, Cromarty Pond area, 7th October.
*Osmia cornuta*, **White-faced Mason Bee,** Thornhill Road, Bassett, 8th March – second Southampton record.
***Polistes dominula,*** a paper wasp, Freemantle Lake Park, 26th July- expertly determined.
***Pseudoneuroteris saliens,*** a Hymenoptera gall, near Cromarty Road Pond, 26th October.
***Stigmus pendula,*** a digger wasp, a garden near Wildern LNR, 12th June.
***Stigmus solskyi,*** a digger wasp, Southampton Old Cemetery, 26th July.
***Tenthredo livida,*** a sawfly, Mill Lane, Nursling, 8th June.
***Tenthredopsis nassata,*** a sawfly, Peartree Green LNR, 26th May.
***Torymus bedgeguaris,*** Wildern LNR, 12th July – hatched from a robin's pin-cushion gall.

**Above: the shieldbug-hunting digger wasp *Astata boops* photographed in a Bitterne Park garden in July 2025 by Geoff Frampton.**

## Lepidoptera: Butterflies

2025 was a very much better year for butterfly numbers than 2024 and better too for several species. There were no records of **Long-tailed Blue** *Lampides boeticus.* in Southampton Old Cemetery again for the second year so it appears that there will have to be another surge of migrants to get them back there, however there was one report of this species in the Dibden area (no further details) on 20th October. There were again very few records of **Small Tortoiseshell**.

There was a significant influx of **Clouded Yellow** especially in September and early October, but the first record was in June – see below. **White-letter Hairstreaks** continue to flourish at the sites in the Daisy Lane area of Nursling and along Sea Road at Peartree Green LNR. There were records of this species elsewhere though, such as at Cromarty Road Field on 22nd June and 4th July and at Millers Pond LNR, also on 4th July. A remarkable feature of the autumn of 2025 was the late records of **Holly Blue** that appeared to indicate a third brood. There were seven records between 8th November and 21st November at several sites including Lower Test Marshes, a garden at Rownhams, Six Dials at Northam, Southampton Old Cemetery, Chessel Bay

LNR, and the Donkey Common area at Thornhill.

## The earliest records of selected butterfly species in 2025 are as follows:

**Brimstone** at Thornhill Road, Bassett on 15th February.
**Brown Argus** at Wildern Moor on 4th May.
**Clouded Yellow** at Cromarty Road Field on 13th June.
**Comma** at Bitterne and Peartree Green LNR on 1st March.
**Common Blue** at Barnfield Way, Weston on 1st May.
**Gatekeeper** at Miller's Pond LNR on 23rd June – the same date as in 2024.
**Green-veined White** near Cromarty Road Field, Lordshill on 23rd March.
**Holly Blue** at Vespasian Road, Bitterne Manor on 5th April.
**Large Skipper** at Rownhams on 19th May
– the earliest known Southampton date.
**Large White,** at Hum Hole, Bitterne on 2nd April.
**Marbled White** at Miller's Pond LNR on 29th May.
**Meadow Brown** at Peartree Green LNR on 25th May.
**Orange Tip** at Wildern Moor on 30th March – the same date as in 2024.
**Painted Lady** at Wildern Moor on 8th May.
**Peacock** at Eling Cemetery on 2nd February.
**Red Admiral** at Bassett on 2nd January**.**
**Silver-washed Fritillary** at Rownhams Plantation on 15th June.
**Small Copper** at Miller's Pond LNR on 9th April.
**Small Heath** at Netley Grange Fields on 28th April
– the earliest known Southampton date.
**Small Skipper** in the Mansbridge area of the Itchen valley on 28th May
– the earliest known Southampton date.
**Small Tortoiseshell** at Southampton City Centre on 2nd March.
**Small White** at Donkey Common , Thornhill on 18th March.
**Speckled Wood** at Wildern LNR on 4th March
**White Admiral** at Hut Wood on 13th June**.**

## The latest dates of selected butterfly species in 2025 are as follows:

**Brimstone** at Wildern LNR on 13th December – the latest known Southampton date.
**Clouded Yellow** at Peartree Green LNR on 16th October.
**Comma** at Cromarty Road Field on 1st November.
**Common Blue** at Wildern LNR on 6th October.
**Gatekeeper** at Miller's Pond LNR on 28th September
**Green-veined White** at Miller's Pond LNR on 24th August.
**Holly Blue** at Bursledon Road near to Donkey Common on
21st November – the latest known Southampton date/
**Large White** at Wildern LNR on 6th October.
**Painted Lady** at Bursledon Road near to Donkey Common on
10th December – the latest known Southampton date.
**Peacock** at Wildern LNR on 27th December – the latest known Southampton date.
**Red Admiral** at Mayfield Park and at Miller's Pond LNR on 19th December.
**Small Copper** at Peartree Green LNR on 29th October.

**Small White** at Woodmill Lane at Riverside Park on 22nd October.
**Speckled Wood,** near to Cromarty Road Pond on 8th November.

### A selection of the few other interesting butterfly records of interest in 2025 were as follows:

**Brown Argus,** Hannay Rise, Thornhill, 22nd August – a male on heather and the first record here.
**Dark Green Fritillary**, Cromarty Road area, Lordshill, 10th August.
**Grayling,** Cromarty Road area, Lordshill, 22nd August – a reliable recorder so the butterfly perhaps wandered from the New Forest**.**
**Marbled White,** Weston Meadows, 21st June – 75 seen!
**Silver-studded Blue,** Miller-s Pond LNR, Testwood Park and Lower Test Marshes, 23rd June – yes, all the same date, I think!
**Swallowtail (Continental race) –** a possible migrant on Buddleia in a Bursledon garden on 7th September.

## Lepidoptera: Moths

Luckily 2025 was a better year for moths than 2024 was.

### Macro (larger) Moths

The **Jersey Tiger** moth continues to increase, the caterpillar of which is less familiar than the adult but is easily recognized and photographed by Gemma Paul – see picture to the right. The earliest adult was in a Swaythling garden on 28th June and the latest in the same garden and at Bitterne Park on 23rd August. The first **Scarlet Tiger** of the year was at Bitterne Park on 29th May. The **Five-spot Burnet** is also increasing with the earliest date at Wildern Moor, Hedge End on 14th May and a first record for Hum Hole, Bitterne on 31st May. The first of four records of **Vestal** was at Bitterne Park on 14th August. There was a FACEBOOK report on **Crimson-speckled Footman** in Southampton in November, but I have no further details of this record. A **Radford's Flame Shoulder** at light at Utilita Bowl Bund, West End on 15th November may also have been a migrant.

### A selection of other interesting macro moth records from 2025 are as follows:

**Barred Red,** Bitterne Park garden, 20th June - a declining species.
**Blackneck,** Wildern LNR, 25th June – scarce in Southampton.
**Blair's Mocha**, several records – now a common moth
**Clifden Nonpareil (Blue Underwing),** West End Garden, 30th September.
**Dark Crimson Underwing,** Sholing garden, 25th July.
**Dark Umber,** Utilita Bowl Bund, 30th June.
**Dewick's Plusia,** Sholing garden, 18th June & 8th September.

**Fen wainscot,** Sholing garden, 30th June.
**Grass Rivulet,** Sholing garden, 18th June.
**Gypsy Moth,** Sholing garden, 3rd August.
**Green Brindled Crescent,** Millers Pond LNR, Sholing, 10th October.
**Juniper Pug,** Utilita Bowl Bund, 30th June – several seen.
**Langmaid's Yellow Underwing,** Swaythling garden, 25th August.
**Light Crimson Underwing,** Wildern LNR, 25th June & Sholing garden, on 3 July dates.
**Lunar Hornet Moth,** Braeside Road, Peartree, 25th June -a mating pair seen.
**Lunar Hornet Moth,** Bitterne Park & Sholing gardens, 30th June & 11th July.
**Maple Pug,** Swaythling garden, 11th July.
**Old Lady Moth,** Millbrook Tesco′s Store, 1st July.
**Orange Sallow,** Barnfield Way, Weston, 30th September.
**Orange-tailed Clearwing,** Sholing garden, 24th May.
**Plumed Fan-foot**, Bitterne Park garden, 19th September – a recent arrival in the area.
**Portland Ribbon Wave,** Swaythling, 11th June & Sholing, 16th August – another new arrival.
**Reed Dagger,** Sholing garden, 13th July – a surprising record.
**Satellite Moth,** Riverside Park, 24th April – three larvae on field maple.
**Small Marbled,** Bitterne Park, 17th June & Sholing, 12th July.
**Southern Chestnut,** Sholing garden, 8th October – maybe from Netley Common.
**Tawny Pinion,** West End garden, 12th April **(pictured below).**
**The Streak,** Utilita Bowl Bund, 15th November.
**Yarrow Pug,** Sholing garden, 30th June – a recent colonist.
**Yellow-legged Clearwing,** Sholing garden, 31st May.

*Jersey Tiger Moth caterpillar*

## Micro (smaller) Moths

The number of species of micro-moths are far greater than that of macro moths and they are now being much better studies due to the recent improvement of identification sources.

In 2025 certain species have suddenly become much commoner, these include *Ethmia quadrillella,* the **Comfrey Ermil.** This attractive black and white moth was found at Glebe Copse, Highfield on 12th July and in a Swaythling garden on 16th July. *Musotima nitidalis*

, the **Marbled Fern,** is pyralid that is becoming increasingly common, in 2025 there were records at Netley Common bog on 6th May (2 seen there), two more in a Sholing garden on 6th July, and seen in central Lord's Wood on 17th October. The delicate **Olive-tree Pearl** *Palpita vitrealis* is becoming established. There were four records in a Sholing garden between 20th June and 27th November for example. 2025 was a bumper year for **Willow Ermine** *Yponomeuta rorella,* although I have mostly seen this moth away from the Southampton area they were described as abundant at Lower Test Reserve on 24th July.

There was a series of interesting records of moth leaf mines in the area near Cromarty Pond in Lordshill. On 8th November here mines of ***Phyllonorycter tenerella*** were found in hornbeam leaves on 8th November. Later, on 23rd November, mines of ***Ectoedemia argyropeza*** were found in aspen leaves and mines of both ***Ectoedemia albifasciella*** and ***E. quinquella*** were found in oak leaves.

### Other selected micro-moth records of interest in 2025 are as follows:

*Achroia grisella,* **Lesser Wax Moth,** Swaythling, 9th August.
*Acleris literana,* **Lichen Button,** Swaythling, 3rd April.
*Acleris shalleriana,* **Viburnum Button,** Sholing, 12th November.
*Acleris umbrana,* **Dark-streaked Button,** Swaythling, 24th January & Sports Centre, 27th December.
*Acrobasis tumidana,* **Scarce Oak Knot-horn,** Sholing, 13th August.
*Agriphila selasella,* **Pale-streak Grass Veneer,** Swaythling, 22nd & 25th August.
*Argolamprotes micella,* **Bright Neb,** Cromarty Pond area, 9th June.
***Aristotelia ericinella,*** Sholing, 16th July – probably wandering from Netley Common.
***Calybites phasianipenella,*** Utilita Bowl Bund, 30th June.
*Cauchas rufimitrella,* **Meadow Longhorn,** Gully Mead, Wildern LNR, 9th May.
*Choreutis nemorana,* **Fig-leaf Skeletonizer,** Bitterne Park, 13th July.
*Cydia servillana,* **Sallow Gall Moth,** Wildern Moor, 9th May.
***Donacaula forficula,*** Utilita Bowl Bund, 30th June.
***Epiblema cirsiana,*** Utilita Bowl Bund, 30th June.

*Epiblema foenella,* **White-foot Bell,** Swaythling, 16th July.
*Eudonia delunella,* **Pied Grey,** Utilita Bowl Bund, 30th June & Bitterne Park, 20th June.
*Eudonia pallida,* **Marsh Grey,** Swaythling, 28th August.
*Helcystogramma rufescens,* **Orange Crest**, Sholing, 24th July.
*Lobesia occidentis,* **Spurge Marble,** Highfield garden, 5th May.
*Mirificarma mulinella,* **Gorse Groundling,** Sholing, 16th August.
*Mompha bradleyi,* **Dusky Hourglass Mompha,** Utilita Bowl Bund, 15th November.
*Mompha propinquella,* **Marbled Cosmet,** Swaythling, 11th July.
*Neocochylis molliculana,* **Ox-tongue Conch,** Utilita Bowl Bund, 30th June.
*Neofaculta ericetella,* **Heather Slender,** Swaythling, 28th June.
*Paraswammerdamia albicapitella,* **White-headed Ermel,** Swaythling, 28th June.
*Psychoides filicivora,* **Common Fern Moth,** Bitterne Park, 5th May.
***Syncopacma taeniolella,*** Utilita Bowl Bund, 30th June.

A very good website for more information about both macro moths and micro moths is ***ukmoths.org.uk*** and for up-to-date and more local information ***hantsmoths.org.uk*** is a very good site.

*Tawny Pinion Moth*

# Vertebrates

## Fish, Amphibians and Reptiles

There were no records of freshwater fish in 2025 but there were two marine fish records cast up dead on Weston Shore. The first was **Conger Eel** on 21st July and the second was **Lesser Spotted Dogfish** on 13th November.

The first report of **Common Frog** spawn was once again at Wildern LNR on the later than usual date of 14th February, this was followed by the first reports at Mayfield Park on 17th February and at Mansel Park Pond on 24th February. At least six **Common Toad** were counted at the Sports Centre boating lake (which is now undergoing redevelopment) on 9th March. **Palmate Newts** were found in Chilworth Manor Pond on 2nd May. Good populations of **Smooth Newt** are still to be found in the Sports Centre.

**Alpine Newt** was seen again in one of the ponds in that area.

**Common Lizard** were already active at Wildern Moor, Hedge End on the very early date of 2nd February. An **Adder** seen at Hightown Primary School on 24th June was surely a wanderer from the known site at Netley Common.

## Birds

The below list is a summary of bird records in Southampton in 2025 and there are plenty of other sources of information on birds seen in the Southampton area, including the annual Hampshire Bird Report and the Kingfisher magazine produced regularly by the Hampshire Ornithological Society: ***hos.org.uk***. There are also a lot of up-to-date sightings on the web, including our own site: ***sotonnhs.net*** site and, particularly, the very good Hampshire Going Birding site: ***goingbirding.co.uk/hants*** as well as ***havantnature.net*** for the Portsmouth area. The Southampton Wildlife FACEBOOK page is particularly useful for detailed and up-to-date reports. In fact, a considerable proportion of our reports come from this source.

It must be emphasised that there are very many people looking at and recording birds, in this area, this summary merely reflects what I personally know about. Whereas I hope that there are not too many errors, but there will inevitably be inaccuracies due to missing information and some important records left out altogether. Please refer to the sources mentioned above for the fuller picture.

Of the native bird's certain raptors are increasingly being seen such as Red Kite, Goshawk and the re-introduced White-tailed Eagle. **Red Kite** was widely seen and there were records of **Goshawk** over Cromarty Road Field on 19th June and over Weston Shore/Dock Head on 21st October. Among **White-tailed Eagle** records were one over Lower Test Marshes on 6th February and a juvenile over Peartree Green on 5th September

Of non-native birds Egyptian Goose, Black Swan, and Ring-necked Parakeet continue to flourish in the area. **Egyptian Goose** continues to be most often seen in the Test valley/waterside area but there were records in 2025 over the eastern side of town, at Boorley Green where there were two on a new waterbody there on 23rd February and four flew low over Wildern LNR on 13th December. The **Black Swan** continues to be seen constantly in the River Itchen valley down as far as Chessel Bay, but there were sightings in the Eling Great Marsh and Goatee Shore area on 15th July. **Ring-necked Parakeets** mostly continue to stay in the more built-up areas where there is also park land such as the south of Southampton Common and around Woodmill, but there were a pair near to the salmon leap at Testwood on 25th September and a record from Home Covert, Nursling on 4th December.

There were more records of escapees than usual in 2025. For example, the Test valley **Scarlet Ibis** was regular in the area between Redbridge Causeway and Testwood Lane from at least 15th August to 21st October, perhaps on other dates too. The source of this bird now appears to be known. Other records of escapees include **Alexandrine Parakeet** (like a large Ring-necked Parakeet with a larger beak) reported on Southampton Common on 3rd January; a **Cockatiel Parakeet** at Ensign Way, Hamble on 5th April; a **Cuban Grassquit** in a Woolston garden in April – this bird may have been ship-assisted or else was a cage-bird escape, and a **Zebra Finch** (a common cage bird) at Weston Shore on 5th September.

## A selection of unusually high numbers of birds:

**Cattle Egret,** 12 at Lower Test Reserve on 12th May**.**
**Cattle Egret,** 7 over Weston Shore to Dock Head, 30th August.
**Chiffchaff,** 57 counted in Lower Test Valley, 3rd April.
**Common Sandpiper,** 13 at Lower Test Marshes, 13th September.
**Gadwall,** 31 near Redbridge Flyover, 22nd August – a record**.**
**Great White Egret,** four by M27 at Nursling, 22nd December.
**Greenfinch,** 70 at Peartree Green LNR, 7th January.
**Hawfinch**, 7 at Southampton Old Cemetery, 4th February – highest ever count here, 4 there on 2nd February 2 on other dates.
**Hobby,** 4 over Lords Wood, 4th September.
**Linnet,** 160 at Peartree Green LNR, 10th January.
**Little Egret,** 40 by M27 at Nursling, 24th December.
**Mediterranean Gull,** 28 at Dibden Bay, 24th February.
**Teal,** 1,300 approximately at Dibden Bay, 16th January.

## A selection of other bird reports in 2025:

**Arctic Tern,** 4 off Weston Sailing Club, 4th September. **Avocet**, Weston Shore, 3rd and 12th April.
**Bearded Tit,** 3 at Hamble Common near creek, 19th March.
**Black Redstart**, juvenile seen at Woolston Sewage Works, 3rd July.
**Black-throated Diver,** off Dock Head, 20th June – it is unusual see this bird locally in the summer.
**Crossbill,** 19 over at Bell Crossing, Lower Test, 24th July.
**Cuckoo**, St Monica Road, Sholing, 16th April – seen and heard.
**Goldeneye**, Weston Shore, 24th December -male bird offshore.
**Goosander**, Weston Shore – at least 3 birds, 16th January to 16th February
**Goosander**, Dibden Bay, 5th December – two female birds.
**Grasshopper Warbler,** Weston Meadows, 25th September.
**Great Northern Diver,** Chessel Bay, 21st December and into 2026, up to 3 birds. (this species was seen more regularly off Weston Shore in January, February, November and December – up to 4 birds maximum.)
**Green Sandpiper,** Cemetery Lake, Southampton Common, 29th June – unusual here.
**Grey Plover,** Weston Shore, 12th June – unusual here in the summer.
**Hoopoe**, Peartree Green LNR, 22nd April – first record here.
**House Martin**, Lower Test Marshes, 19th March – a very early date.
**Kingfisher**, Peartree Green burnt areas, 7th August – third site record.
**Linnet,** Hollybrook Cemetery, 30th March – an unusual bird here,
**Little Grebe,** Miller's Pond, Sholing, 1st & 2nd July, adult and 3 young – an unusual bird to see here.
**Little Owl,** Mayfield Park, 4th March – a rarely seen bird in urban parks.
**Little Ringed Plover,** recorded at Eastleigh on 24th March and at Boorley Green on 10th April,
**Marsh Tit,** Woolston garden on 4th January & Cromarty Road Field on 30th September.
**Nightjar,** Southampton (eastern) Docks, 1st May – a most unusual location for this bird.
**Puffin,** off of Weston Shore, 15th to 25th September – rarely seen in the Southampton area.
**Red-necked Grebe,** Southampton Water off of Weston Shore, from 2024 to at least 1st March – gone by 16th
**Red-necked Grebe,** possibly the same bird as above off Weston Shore on 16th November**.**
**Reed Warbler,** Lower Test Marshes – first on 8th April and the last on 29th September. and on the River Test – possibly the same individual, 13th March.

**Scaup,** off Weston Shore and on River Test, 13th March – possibly the same bird.
**Sedge Warbler**, Five Acres, Lordshill, 4th April – a singing male bird.
**Shag,** two off Hamble Shore, 17th April. One at Hythe Pier on 18th January.
**Siskin,** pair in a Rownhams garden, 17th June – an unusual date.
**Slavonian Grebe,** from Dibden Bay to Redbridge, 1st January to 1st February.
**Spotted Redshank**, Hamble Shore, 2nd January – unusual here.
**Spotted Redshank**, Hook Spit, .River Hamble, 12th April – summer plumage.
**Swift**, Shirley – first of the year, 24th April.
**Velvet Scoter,** up to 3 off Weston Shore, 29th November to at least 2nd December.
**White-fronted Goose,** 8 in the Dibden Bay area, 24th December.
**Wigeon**, Lower Test Nature Reserve, 28th August – an early arrival date.
**Wigeon**, Chessel Bay LNR, 21st December – unusual here,
**Willow Warbler**, Southampton Common & Lower Test Marshes, both 28th March – first arrivals
**Wood Sandpiper**, Testwood Lakes, 26th April – spring record for a second year.
**Woodcock**, Southampton Common near Ornamental Lake , 2nd June.
**Wood Warbler,** Hamble Common, 23rd April – I know of no other spring record of this bird in the Southampton area since 2014.
**Wryneck,** Lower Test Marshes near to Two Bridges, 29th September.
**Yellow-browed Warbler**, Eastleigh Sewage Works, 7th January.

## Mammals

**Common (Harbour) Seals** and **Grey Seals** continue to be regularly reported in the Southampton area but more noteworthy, although sad, was a cast up and long dead **Harbour Porpoise** at Hamble Point on 27th March.

2025 was a good year for carnivorous mammal records. An **Otter** was seen in broad daylight at Riverside Park on 2nd March, another seen on a night vision camera in a Highfield garden on 8th March. Sadly, a roadkill Otter was found at Abbey Hill, Netley on 2nd September. A **Polecat** or **Polecat/Ferret hybrid** (there is some opinion that all polecats in the Southampton area are hybrids) was reported as seen live in a Nursling garden on 7th January. Topping all that was the discovery of suspected **Pine Martin** droppings in Lords Wood on an unspecified date later in the year.

There was early **bat species** activity at Roselands Gardens, Highfield on 19th February. **Rabbits** were confirmed as present at Weston Meadows on 9th June, although this is a rather urban site it is close to West Wood Woodland Park. Insectivore mammal records included **Hedgehog** at Vespasian Road, Bitterne Manor on 15th September and **Pigmy Shrew** at Weston Meadows on 2nd August.

# Field Trips in and around Southampton in 2025

There now follows a summary of our walks in 2025

## Lichen foray at Boldre Church 05 April 2025

We were most grateful that lichen specialists Duncan Wright and Peter Bissett showed us the many varied lichens of Boldre Churchyard in the south of the New Forest, on what proved to be a sunny day just about as warm as summer. Interesting lichens seen on trees included *Lecanora argentata* (a silvery white species as suggested by its name), the powdery *Leproloma* (*Lepraria*) *vouaxii*, and the distinctive oak bark species *Pyrrhospora quernia*. *Caloplaca holocarpa* with its orange discs was found on the actual church and many common species on the stones including *Buellia* species and *Cliostomum griffithi*.

Given the weather it was no surprise that Brimstone butterflies were and that Swallows were passing over. One Swallow doesn't make a summer, but I saw two. The spring flower Barren Strawberry was common there and the Anomalous Bristle-moss *Orthotrichum anomalum* **(pictured left)** was identified on some tombstones.

We thanked Duncan and Peter for their expert guidance on this walk. They have previously (in 2023) arranged a lichen walk for us at Petersfield Heath.

**Philip Budd**

## Pig Bush dawn Chorus meet 04 May 2025

A cool and dark morning greeted us as we prepared to trudge through the very dry woodland to the observation point. The first species to be heard clearly was Snipe followed by Tawny Owl on the other side of the wood. Robins and the inevitable Wren started to call followed by a distant Mistle Thrush. An early Blackcap made itself heard followed by a vigorous Song Thrush, Woodlark was the next to chime in some half hour or so later and one of our group witnessed a Nightjar flying a short distance across the heath to disappear only a few yards distant in the *Molinia*. By now a couple of hours after the start, Redstart called from the deeper woodland and a bubbling call from a semi distant female Cuckoo indicated that a beleaguered pair of Meadow Pipits would soon have a fledgling which would keep them very busy indeed! Robins, Meadow Pipit, Blackbird, Skylark, Woodpigeon and the inevitable corvids added to the soundscape as we meandered back to the car park.

**Julian Moseley**

## Durlston (Dorset) Walk 24 May 2025
## (joint with Hampshire Ornithological Society)

Gathering in the car park we wandered down to the cliff edge path to peer over the glass covered wall at the seabird assembly bobbing on the water. Guillemots galore, with a few Razorbills eventually detected closer to the cliff face. An optimistic member of the party mentioned the possibility of Cirl Bunting reputedly nesting in the immediate area but unfortunately, we could not confirm this rumour. A selection of gulls included Great Black Backed, Herring and Black Headed closer to the Coastguard look out and, rounding off the seabirds a couple of Fulmars gliding to and from their nest site. In the bushes Whitethroat was heard, Chiffchaff were in evidence, Rock Pipit were eventually detected above the waves and Stonechat made an appearance on the landward side with Meadow Pipit fluttering in the brisk breeze. On the top route along the cliff, we picked up the unmistakable 'song' of a Grasshopper warbler. It was in the brambles which were wrapping a drystone wall which ran down to the cliff top path – a very unexpected place (and bird). A few Swallows swept past on the breeze, Blackbirds, Robins and Jackdaws could be seen and heard and a Kestrel hovering on the uplift was a welcome sight before we turned round for the

return half of the walk meandering back to the study centre.

**Julian Moseley**

## Martin Down Walk 25 May 2025

This walk was kindly led by Mark Trigwell as one of his, and our, favourite reserves on the western boundary of Hampshire. A small bank of seven undertook a clockwise circuit from the eastern car park. The weather was cool and windy in the morning, but it gradually brightened up through the day. We found the usual range of small birds including two singing Corn Bunting and the expected Yellowhammer, Whitethroat, Linnet, Stonechat etc. We found 18 butterfly species including 23 Small Blue, 10+ Adonis Blue, and a fresh Marsh Fritillary up on Bockerley Dyke. There were eight day-flying moth species plus a resting Shark Moth **(pictured left)** and numerous larval cocoons of Small Eggar, a specialty of the site. There were numerous other insects, and the Ladybird Fly was a particular highlight. We didn't find any Burnt-tip Orchid on the dyke but there was a good show of Greater Butterfly Orchid instead.

**Philip Budd**

## Wilverley Inclosure fern workshop 21 September 2025

Several of us visited Wilverley for the fern workshop, not averse to deviate from a planned itinerary when other noteworthy interests are nearby, we walked over the plain where we marvelled at the abundant Lady's Autumn Tresses *Spiranthes spiralis,* in the tightly grazed sward along with flowering Chamomile *Chamaemelum nobile,* a welcome touch of colour to the parched grassland.

The main purpose of the day was of course to look at the fern communities, so we entered the inclosure and headed for a particularly well-known hotspot to look at the Dryopteris genus. There we encountered Broad Buckler Fern

*Dryopteris dilatata,* Male Fern *D. filix-mas,* Golden Scaly Fern *D. affinis ssp. affinis,* and Borrer's Male Fern *D. borreri.* We looked at the distinguishing features of each species, examining frond divisions, pinnae and pinnule arrangements, stipe length and colour, sori shapes, and overall growth form. A target species was Hay-scented Buckler Fern *D. aemula,* with its distinctive crinkled fronds, and we were fortunate to discover a single plant in an area which formerly harboured a somewhat larger population.

For lunch, we settled within a small damp valley glade, it was here we got to enjoy a rather splendid population of Lemon-scented Fern *Oreopteris limbosperma,* interspersed with Lady Fern *Athyrium filix-femina.* We tried crushing a small piece of frond and could easily discern the faint lemon scent. Walking on we encountered several other species to add to our list, including Hard Fern *Blechnum spicant,* and Common Polypody *Polypodium vulgare.*

On the return trip to the car park, we opted to exit the inclosure via the Station Road underpass to visit the mire communities adjacent to the Avon Water. Another highlight was a small patch of flowering Saw-wort, *Serratula tinctoria,* and several small stands of Royal Fern, *Osmunda regalis* **(pictured below).**

A great day was had by all with a good total of 13 fern species encountered.

**Mark Trigwell**

## Pagham Harbour Walk 25 October 2025
## (joint with Hampshire Ornithological Society)

A small but select group of intrepid birders gathered under slightly grey skies to see what the reserve had to offer. Sparrows, and a few Goldfinches competed with Dunnock contents of the feeders. Across the road, the Ferry Pool was obviously in the process of being redesigned and resculpted. The left-hand bank was bare of vegetation, and the diggers were parked up for the weekend. Ducks were represented by Mallard, Pintail, and Shoveler whilst Bar tailed Godwit, Little Grebe and Redshank flew the flag for the waders. A motley taggle of corvids scattered across the fields and Black Headed gulls completed the introduction.

Circumventing the reconstruction work on the outlet and following the path to the harbour, an unmistakable piggy squeal was heard from a point in the reeds which could only have been Water Rail, but the bird remained hidden. Shelduck was seen on the exposed mud and Curlew in the further distance as the mudflat broadened out. Mallard, Black Headed gull, Chiffchaff, Kestrel, Long Tailed Tit were joined by a female Blackcap, a Great White Egret lifted off in the distance on the eastern bank but the flocks of waders which were such an attraction for raptors during the breeding season were gone. Pied Wagtail flicked across the shingle, Oystercatcher, Redshank, were joined by a solitary Sandwich Tern, Greater Black backed gull, Cormorant and a scattering of Swallows fluttering overhead. Grey Plover, Grey Heron and a solitary Whitethroat were accompanied by a few Brent geese sifting mud for invertebrates and songbirds were represented by Robins, a background Blackbird and Chaffinch in the churchyard.

**Julian Moseley**

## Hayling Oysterbeds walk 17 November 2025
## (joint with Hampshire Ornithological Society)

Assembling in unexpected but welcome sunshine, a small group of birders wandered off along the paths with a flock of Dunlin wheeling just offshore. Curlews were seen largely as singles, dotted the banks totaling about ten, Brent geese paddled along the shoreline, and Oystercatchers were noisily evident throughout the morning. Grey Plovers could be discerned as single birds, whilst

on the landward side Robins, Goldfinch, Dunnock , Wren, Blackbird and Great Tits represented the terrestrial species. Cetti's Warblers were voluble but a glimpse of Marsh Harrier gliding over the wooded areas was a bonus. The shoreline then presented Redshank, plus a solitary Greenshank probing the creek banks. Shelduck shared the shingle banks, Cormorant were diving in the open water, Grey Heron stood statuesque whilst a solitary Kestrel hovered on the breeze for prey. A solitary Buzzard alarmed some of the smaller birds, but it drifted off presumably seeking more substantial prey.

**Julian Moseley**

## Keyhaven walk 6th December 2025 (joint with Hampshire Ornithological Society)

Moving from the car park we approached the hide used by the Milford Conservation Group. As the gate was open we ventured in. The gentlemen who ran the hide had arrived some time earlier and the list was impressive. It was pleasing to see a congregation of House Sparrows albeit on the feeders and they were accompanied by Chaffinch, Robins, Dunnock – out on the water were Shelduck, Shoveler, Redshank, Lapwing, Pintail, Teal, Wigeon, Black Headed and Herring gulls. Floating above the semi distant reedbed was a total of four Marsh Harriers and Kingfisher put in an expected appearance. Saying goodbye to our hosts, Fishtail Lagoon was the next stop with Greater Black backed gull, Wigeon, Teal, Grey Plover plus a scattering of Golden Plover on the smaller islands. Mute Swan, Pintail, Little Egret, Grey Herons with Great Crested Grebe, Cormorant with a small flotilla of Brent Geese and Little Grebe were also present.

Feeding on Pennington fields were three Spoonbill, plus Mallard, Tufted Duck, Coot, and Oystercatcher, Dunlin, Curlew and more Redshank. A couple of Turnstone were sifting the shoreline. Woodpigeon, Pied Wagtail and Cetti's warbler were also heard. A solitary female Stonechat appeared on a bramble spike alongside the ancient highway on the return journey.

**Julian Moseley**

## Southampton Old Cemetery Walks – Philip Budd

Through the year 2025 I have led a series of walks at Southampton's splendid old

Victorian cemetery at the south end of Southampton Common. These walks are arranged with F.O.S.O.C., the Friends of Southampton Old Cemetery, but are included in the Society events list. The inspiration for these walks is the former wildflower walks run by the late John Vetterlein and they are additional to the many and various historical talks run by the friends group.

The walks began on the chilly and overcast **19th January** with a guided educational tour of the lichens seen on the tombstones and on the bark of certain trees and shrubs such as lilac and hawthorn. On the lilac an attractive lichen *Physcia aipolia* was found on the limestone stones the orange *Caloplaca dalmatica* was new to the site. There were a few invertebrates seen too like the springtail *Zygina* species, the common birch seed bug, and a small fruit fly identified as *Drosophila suzuki.* On **15th February** the walk subject was the identification of coniferous trees as well as the broad-leaved evergreens, there are plenty of both in the cemetery. The weather was again chilly and dull. Attendees were shown the differences between Lawson's, Sawara, and Nootka cypresses and some species such as Japanese Red Cedar were almost in bloom. Several flowers such as primrose, winter heliotrope **(pictured below),** early crocus, and alpine squill were showing.

On the mild side but again dull **22nd March** at Southampton Old Cemetery I followed in John Vetterlein's footsteps and looked at the flora available including daffodil varieties and early dog violet, identified for the first time there. Another flower seen was red deadnettle and one attendee identified the fungus

*Ramularia lamiicola* on the leaves of this plant. Other wildlife included Firecrest, which is now a common bird in the cemetery. I then ventured out at dawn (5am) for bird song walk on the clear, cool morning of **27th April.** 18 bird species were recorded within the cemetery and 9 more at the nearby lake. Both Goldcrest and Firecrest were picked up as well as Chiffchaff and two singing Chaffinch. Other wildlife included a Fox and a bat, thought to be a Long-eared Bat. A summer wildflower walk followed on **29th June.** The weather was very warm, and the sun came out after a cloudy start. We mainly observed the usual list of flowers there, but it appeared that the broad-leaved everlasting pea has increased in the cemetery. Later I saw 89 butterflies of 13 species, including silver-washed fritillary when I carried the transect there. Other insects present included the mason bee *Osmia* species **(an *Osmia* bee, probably *O.leaiana*, taken by Gemma Paul pictured above),** the grass-moth *Crambus pascuella*, and Tree Bumblebee *Bombus hypnorum*.

The morning of **26th July** was warm but damp with rain later, nevertheless I proceeded with an insect walk in the old cemetery. It was a productive morning. The spider *Platnickina tincta*, the bug *Empicoris vagabundus* (off Wellingtonia) and leafhopper *Lamprotettix nitidulus* were among the less well recorded species. Flies included *Coenosia tigrina, Nyctia halterata* and *Stomorhina lunata*. A small digger wasp *Stigmus solskyi* and a fly *Tephritis ruralis* were identified by Richard Dickson after. Another chance to brush up on conifer tree identification skills was presented on **28th September.** The weather was bright, calm and warm. At this time of year, the *Cedrus* cedars are in flower and differences appreciated and there was the usual pilgrimage to the monkey-puzzle tree. Yellow meadow ants were swarming and Peacock and Brimstone butterflies were seen. A few fungi had begun, including the very large Giant Funnelcap *Leucopaxillus giganteus.* The proper fungus

foray took place on the mild but cloudy **18th October.** Only 17 fungi species were seen but some were spectacular such as the fine shaggy scaly-cap *Pholiota squarrosa* on a white poplar on the east side of the cemetery and giant polypore *Meripilus giganteus* on an oak by Cemetery Road. One attendee was able to identify some powdery mildews for us too, including *Podosphaera aphanis* on wood avens **(pictured above).**

Finally on the cloudy but very mild **6th December** the 'traditional' end of year bird walk included a visit to Cemetery Lake. The usual range of common birds within the cemetery but a flock of Greenfinches was slightly unusual and there were close views of one of two pairs of Stock Dove seen and of Goldcrest. Birds on the lake included 4 Shoveler, 3 Tufted Duck, and a Little Grebe.

We usually attract about five to twelve people at these walks, and several people have joined the Society after attending one. If you have not attended one of my cemetery walks, please consider coming along.

## Peartree Green Local Nature Reserve Walks – Philip Budd

Peartree Green LNR on the eastern side of Southampton has been a Local Nature Reserve it's designation as such over 8 years ago. Geoff Frampton and I are managing a total species list for the reserve which at the time of writing (18th February 2026) has reached 1,583 species. Nature walks are regularly held there throughout the year.

In 2025 nine walks were carried run there for the Friends of Peartree Green group and the Society. On the dry and calm, but cloudy, **1st February** winter fungi such as Velvet-stemmed Agaric

*Flammulina velutipes* and flora like Summer Snowflake (a misnomer) *Leucojum aestivum* were on show. The tree bark lichen *Fuscidea lighfootii* was new to the reserve and invertebrates coaxed out of the evergreens included the springtail *Entomobrya intermedia* and a leafhopper *Lindbergina aurovittata* off holm oaks. On the sunny **15th March** there was an early spring flora and insect walk on the Green. Abundant cowslips in bloom in one area and a Bee Orchid rosette at a new site. Musk Stork's-bill already in flower. A few common early insects such as ladybirds and bumble bees. There were two walks on **10th May,** the first was the annual dawn chorus starting at 4.30am sharp, and it was sharp as it was a cold and clear morning. Three of us braved the chill. 14 bird species were singing but nothing seen that was unexpected, there were several blackcap, chiffchaff and whitethroat – also both woodpigeon and collared dove seen in display flight**. In the afternoon of the same day** there was unfortunately a low turn out again for the insect walk. Six butterfly species were out in the warm sunshine plus the likes of Thick-legged Flower Beetle, Vernal Shieldbug **(pictured above left),** and Ladybird Fly. Two Cottonwool Galls *Andricus quercusramuli* on an oak on The Heath were the first that I have ever seen **(pictured above right).** One flower, the Shining Crane's-bill was a new one for the reserve list.

On the sunny but not too hot **6th July** and following overnight rain, the flowers of Peartree Green were showing well for this well attended walk. Some of over 2,000 Pyramidal Orchids counted on the Green this year were still out and a new colonist, the flower-loving Tachinid fly *Ectophasia crassipennis* was in good numbers. An unusually good view of a Purple Hairstreak butterfly was enjoyed at the end of the walk. In the rather arid conditions of the insect walk on **19th July** there were only a few brown butterflies, so it was good that the Jersey Tigers were flying. Some of the flowers attracted several attractive flies including *Cistogaster globosa* and a ground-bug associated with daisies, *Trapezonotus ulrichii.* **23rd August** was warm and partly sunny for a general nature walk, that turned into an invertebrate hunt. At least a dozen new invertebrates were added to the list and many of these, including leafhoppers, springtails, spiders and mites, appear in the systematic records above. A wild cockroach, the Tawny Cockroach, was new to some.

On **12th October** there was a fungus walk on the Green in cloudy and cool, but dry weather conditions. Due to recent dryness, there were only 21 fungi species identified but 8 were new to the Green. Of these new species 8 were powdery mildews identified by someone interested in them and attending the walk,

another new fungus for the site was the Chestnut Bolete *Gyroporus castaneus*. Speckled Wood butterfly numerous and a Clouded Yellow was seen. There was finally a late autumn nature stroll on **15th November**. At least 18 flowers were still in bloom, such as agrimony, broom, wild parsnip, and goldenrod. There were some more interesting invertebrate records such as the hoverfly *Syrphus torvus* and the leafhopper *Ribautiana ulmi.*

**More pictures below, supplied by Mark Trigwell, from the Wilverley, New Forest Fern Workshop:**

**To the left Lemon-scented Fern *Oreopteris limbosperma* and to the right two members of the group.**

## Southampton Natural History Society

**President:** Chris Packham

**Chair:** Philip Budd

**Secretary:** Felicity Irons-Smith (to be elected)

**Treasurer:** Joanne Budd

**Recording Officer:** Philip Budd

**Membership (co-opted):** Julian Moseley

**Events Officer:** Mark Trigwell

**Committee Members:** Cath Corney

Nick Smith

We also thank Marc Baldwin and Pedro Pires for their technical advice and Jane Smith who has kindly acted as minutes' secretary in 2025/26.

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