



Thorpe Marshes Wildlife Report 2018-19

This is the seventh wildlife report for Norfolk Wildlife Trust's Thorpe St Andrew Marshes nature reserve, NWT Thorpe Marshes for short in this report and elsewhere. The six previous reports (2012 to 2017) relate to those years, whereas this covers two years. That is partly as the early reports were to help put the reserve 'on the map', though also on account of a lack of time to complete a report for 2018.

The report summarises some of the observations of wildlife during 2018 and 2019, including records from the monthly wildlife walks, observations made by the author or provided by other naturalists (see acknowledgements). It's not a complete record and mostly doesn't include aquatic life, though it gives a flavour of highlights and, in some cases, information gaps. It is collated with a view to publishing a record and encouraging further interest in the nature reserve.

As usual, plants are largely excluded, partly for reasons of space, and partly as they vary less from year to year. As in 2017, there are highlights for birds in the review of the year. More bird records are on www.honeyguide.co.uk/thorpemarshes.htm and included in James Emerson's *The Birds of Whitlingham and Thorpe* for 2018 and 2019.

The group covered most thoroughly is Odonata (damselflies and dragonflies); a section on hoverflies is a credit to increased recording effort. Mammals, reptiles and amphibians are casual records.

It's possible that other visitors to Thorpe Marshes have seen additional species, or what are noted as 'new' here have been seen by others before. We'll be glad to have records, to chris@honeyguide.co.uk. We hope this report may encourage more recording, especially of under-recorded groups.

Chris Durdin, February 2020



Brimstone, 29th March 2019 (DL); migrant hawkers, 13th Sept 2018; early marsh orchid, 5th June 2018.

Acknowledgements

Records from Jim Boulter, Mike Burrows, Chris Durdin, James Emerson, Roger & Jenny Jones, Justin Lansdell, Derek Longe and Susan Weeks. Photos and records by Chris Durdin if they are not otherwise attributed.

Initials used in this report:

BDS: British Dragonfly Society. BTO: British Trust for Ornithology. CP: Country Park (Whitlingham). NWT: Norfolk Wildlife Trust. RSPB: The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. UEA: University of East Anglia.

Websites for NWT Thorpe Marshes

NWT: www.norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk/wildlife-in-norfolk/nature-reserves/reserves/thorpe-marshes

Honeyguide (Chris Durdin): www.honeyguide.co.uk/thorpemarshes.htm from where there are links to photos on Facebook, and previous Thorpe Marshes wildlife reports.

James Emerson: <http://jamesbirdsandbeer.blogspot.com/> has several years of reports of *The Birds of Whitlingham and Thorpe*. There are also several guides & checklists to species usually with records and photographs from Whitlingham Country Park and Thorpe Marshes. These cover a range of groups, invertebrates especially,

References

Durbin, Chris (January 2013-2017). *Thorpe Marshes Wildlife Reports 2012-2016*.

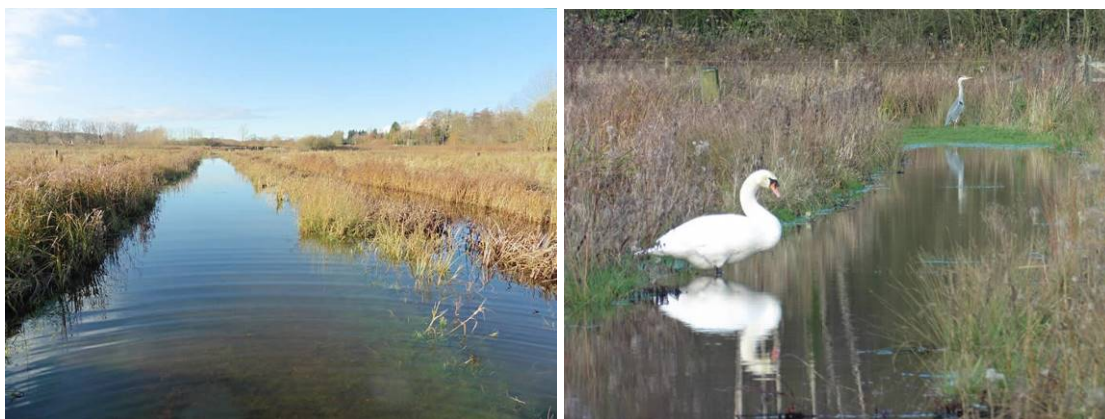
Emerson, James (January 2014-2019). *The Birds of Whitlingham and Thorpe 2013-2019*.

Emerson, James (various dates, 2015 to 2019). *Whitlingham Species Guides* (various).

Key habitats and access

Key habitats at NWT Thorpe Marshes are the **gravel pit**, known as St Andrew's Broad, **grazed marshes** grading into grazed fen, **ungrazed marsh** of ranker vegetation and scrub around the broad, and **ditches**. One marsh has the '**flood**', originally created by subsidence during gravel extraction but extended and deepened by management. These are described in more detail in previous reports.

Access: the reserve went under water in late November 2019 and remained inundated to a greater or lesser extent throughout the month and into January 2020. This was unusual: there was no serious inundation in the winter of 2018/19 and in previous years flood water has drained away quickly. That apart, the main path through the marshes remains in good condition, though the riverside footpath is prone to being muddy in winter. The railway bridge was open all year.



1st December 2019: flooded paths through the marshes, this path with a mute swan and heron.

Management notes and wildlife's response

Scrub clearance as part of the management plan was carried out on several occasions, much by the NWT reserves team based at Upton team with additional contributions from the monthly work parties, now run by Lucy Seeley. The work parties also did some ditch clearance by hand including creating small habitat piles of ditch vegetation, as suggested by the coleopterists who surveyed in December 2018. There was no mechanical ditch clearance in 2018 or 2019, though one stretch of ditch was opened to the light by scrub clearance. Work parties also did some clearance of the shingle bank on the edge of the gravel pit.

A local grazer provided a good-sized group of livestock on the marshes in 2018. In 2019 we saw the return of British white cattle, part of NWT's own livestock resource, between July and November. As in 2017, their size seemed to make up for the relative lack of numbers.

There was just one early marsh orchid in flower in early June 2019. This was disappointing given that livestock grazing had been at a good level in 2018, suggesting that other reasons – perhaps the wetness of the key marsh – are as much a factor as the grazing.

The dry spring of 2019 led to the flood drying out. The bare ground attracted a pair of nesting lapwings for the first time since the reserve was established but, unfortunately, they were flooded out after heavy rain.

Guided walks, activities and publicity

Monthly NWT **guided walks** were led by Chris Durbin. These were promoted mainly through NWT events leaflets, websites and newspaper 'what's ons'. There were also four additional walks. In 2018 these were for the Bure Valley Conservation Group, a German group involved with social care and as part of induction for NWT's education team. In 2019 the additional walk was for South Yare Wildlife Group.

There were 226 people on guided walks in 2018 and 186 in 2019. This gives a running total of 1372 people on walks over eight years. As well as many regulars, monthly guided walks continued to attract new people on most occasions, the exceptions generally being when the weather was poor.

CD gave **talks** about NWT Thorpe Marshes to Aylsham Wildlife Society (Jan 2018), NWT's West Norfolk Local Group (Jan 2019), Thorpe History Group (Feb 2019) and Frettenham & Hainford Garden Club (Nov 2019). The additional walks and talks also attracted donations to NWT, £165 between them.

Public **pond-dipping** sessions on the pond-dipping platform behind the education area gate ran in both years between April and October. These attracted a 124 people in 2018 (that includes an additional Brownie group in October); pond-dipping was cancelled on the open day in July 2018 because of toxic blue-green algae. There were 37 on five stand-alone pond dipping sessions in 2019, plus uncounted 'dozens' on the **Family Fun Day** on 30th June. Attendance for this Family Fun Day was 107, helped by better weather than on the Family Fun Day on 29th July 2018, which did well to attract 49 people.

Media/social media: as in previous years, there were articles in the Broads Society's *Harnser* in both years, appearing in January, April, July and October. There were 13 blogs about Thorpe Marshes (10 on the NWT's blog, three on the Honeyguide blog). These covered a range of subjects at various times of the year, with blogs detailing Thorpe Marshes in the 1960s adding an historical dimension. There is a full blog list on www.honeyguide.co.uk/thorpemarshes.htm.



August 2018: a guided walk group watches a willow emerald damselfly in Bungalow Lane (DL); a willow emerald (on a different day) on an usual perch for a willow emerald, a wire fence, 27th September 2018.

Review of the year, 2018

The bearded tit found late in 2017 was seen again in **January**, as was the now regular wintering stonechat. Several hundred ducks found St Andrews Broad was relatively sheltered on 24th January. Scrub management around the ponds took place in **February** and late in the month there was heavy snow.



Tufted ducks (mostly), pochards and gadwalls on St Andrews Broad, 24th January 2018 (DL); digiscoped smew, 6th March 2018 (JE).

A prolonged cold spell continued into **March**, bringing a redhead smew on the gravel pit on 5/6 March. Wigeons and especially shovelers were regularly with the usual tufted ducks, pochards and gadwalls. Milder weather later encouraged a chiffchaff and small tortoiseshell on the late March guided walk. Many ducks lingered well into **April**; it was good to hear Cetti's warbler and to know that some had survived the cold snap. Grasshopper warblers started to reel in late April and continued, off and on, until July.

Twenty male orange-tips on 5th **May** was one of several good counts though this may be more weather than habitat related as their larval food plant, lady's smock, is getting scarcer. An orange-tip egg and caterpillar were found on wintercress, which may help this butterfly hang on. Water vole sightings and droppings were good signs. Though the first Norfolk hawk emerged in late May, **June** is their best month and a count by Derek Longe of 73 on 20th June was a record. Five early marsh orchids bloomed in the meadow by the railway line, tucked away out of sight in an area not yet taken over by dense sedges. Broad-bodied chasers

were more regular than usual and a female was seen egg-laying into the 'flood', though that was a bad option as the flood dried out during a sustained hot and dry spell in the latter half of the month.

The heatwave continued into **July** though the marshes stayed lush and green in comparison with countryside elsewhere. With unhelpful timing, the weather broke just before the Family Fun Day on 29th July. Red bartsia bee, a species spreading north, was a good find in **August**, along with lots of summer dragonflies and emerging willow emerald damselflies.

The willow emeralds were in good number throughout **September**, with a peak count of 30 seen on 26th. A sign of autumn was a stonechat on 30th September and a pair was seen regularly for the rest of the year. Another bee spreading north, ivy bee, was discovered on **October's** guided walk. The warm weather then waned, and a wintry sign was a visit by three goldeneyes on St Andrews Broad on 28th October, then around off and on for much of the autumn. **November** started mild with some nice bugs found on the guided walk. Generally, duck numbers in autumn were fairly low, but building up towards the end of the month with 185 tufted ducks on 30th. **December's** highlight was the visit on the 12th of the month by two beetle and invertebrate experts, Martin Collier and Steve Lane. Finds included pseudoscorpions, mole fleas (the largest species of flea in Great Britain), various ramshorn snails and various beetles. A spreadsheet of records was supplied to NWT.

Review of the year, 2019

Mild weather in **January** was illustrated by hogweed, angelica, shepherd's purse and white dead-nettle in flower on the guided walk in 16th. Nonetheless there were seven duck species present that day: goldeneye, tufted duck, pochard, gadwall, mallard, teal and 3 shovelers, the last regular this winter, as last year. In **February**, seeing 4 little egrets on 9th and 10th was notable; long-tailed duck and red kite were other interesting birds reported this month. 122 tufted ducks on 23rd illustrated the value of the gravel pit for wintering ducks. On **March** 8th a red-crested pochard was reported, origin unknown, though there would be no such doubts about the origins of the little gull reported on 23rd/24th. By the month's end, marsh marigolds were flowering and chiffchaffs singing, and sunshine brought out three butterfly species and common carder bee on the guided walk on 29th.

A pair of garganeys was reported on 14th **April**; they didn't linger, there was no sign of them on the following day. By now (15th) sedge and willow warblers and swallows were in and the first orange tip was on 17th. Grasshopper warbler was heard on the guided walk on 18th. Susan Weeks found and photographed variable damselfly on 1st **May**, the 21st species of Odonata for the nature reserve. Happily, this wasn't a one-off: they were seen and photographed in the same areas on two later dates in June and early July. A garden warbler sang from tall scrub on 31st. A surprise on an evening guided walk on 3rd **June** was a pair of lapwings at the 'flood', for now rather bare and dry, with mobbing jackdaws strongly suggesting breeding, the first time for the nature reserve. That continued and mobbing a marsh harrier was also noted, until they were flooded by downpours – they had gone on 12th June. One and only one single early marsh orchid was in flower in 5th June, which was disappointing given that livestock grazing had been at a good level in 2018. Norfolk hawkers were numerous, as usual, in June and July, and showed well on the Family Fun Day on 30th June, the event well-attended this year in good weather.

3rd **July** was an early date for a teneral (recently-emerged) willow emerald damselfly. The marshes continued to look lush and colourful despite this summer's heatwave. On 29th a small red-eyed damselfly confirmed the fourth year in a row for this species, with two further sightings in early **August**. A large elephant hawk-moth caterpillar was a surprise on the guided walk on 12th, when red bartsia bee was found for a second year. Seven of NWT's British white cattle arrived on 18th **September**: one had to leave early but the rest did a good job grazing the marsh until 15th November. Near the end of the month a stonechat returned to overwinter, with three seen for the first time on the **October** guided walk on 18th. Two discoveries that day were a toad, the first we can remember for the reserve, and three small spindle bushes with fruit which, somehow, we'd overlooked before.



Spindle berries, October 2019; elephant hawkmoth caterpillar, 6th August 2019.

November was a particularly wet month; given widespread floods elsewhere in the UK it was surprising that the reserve escaped going under water until very late in the month. Three goldeneyes, including two

males, were regular throughout the month despite generally low duck numbers. When the reserve has flooded before, usually the water has drained quickly away, but high river levels slowed that and both marshes and parts of paths remained under water through **December**, another wet month, though generally mild. Five little egrets perched in a row were a record count on 4th December (similar numbers at Whitlingham on the other side of the river is more routine); one lucky observer saw two red kites during a wildfowl count.



Five little egrets on 4th December 2019; James Emerson's *The Birds of Whitlingham and Thorpe 2019* contains a review of local little egrets. Grass snake swimming through frogbit, 29th June 2018 (DL).

Birds

Bird records for Thorpe Marshes were included in James Emerson's *The Birds of Whitlingham and Thorpe* for 2018 and 2019. These reports are on both www.honeyguide.co.uk/thorpemarshes.htm and <http://jamesbirdsandbeer.blogspot.co.uk/>. Records in this report include wildfowl counts for the BTO's Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) based on combined counts for Whitlingham Little Broad, Great Broad and St Andrews Broad.

Amphibians and reptiles, fish

Common toad 18th October 2019, first reserve record.

Common frog 2nd May 2018, tadpole photographed by DL.

Grass snake 29th June 2018, photographed by DL.

A 'baby newt' was in the pond-dipping records for 30th June 2019; presumably newts are always present but overlooked. There were no records of common lizards in 2017 or 2018.

Ninespine stickleback 26th April 2019, (male in breeding colours) was a pond-dipping record.

Mammals

A few casual records.

Weasel	17 th April 2018 photographed eating a dead pigeon on the railway line (DL)
Brown rat	2 nd March 2018 (MB)
Water vole	14 th May 2018 (SW); droppings on a platform, 29 th May 2018.
Mole	Molehills in rough grass, especially on the riverbank footpath.
Chinese water deer	Records from guided walks: 1, 15 th February 2019 and 2, 17 th April 2019. It's likely they are often present and out of sight. Also 16 th March 2018 (JE).

Butterflies

Orange-tip surveys: transect-style counts of orange-tips were undertaken in both years, making it five years of monitoring 2016-2019 so far. In 2018, the peak count during six surveys was 22 (18 males, 4 females) on 7th May. In 2019, the peak count during five surveys was 16 (14 males, 2 females) on 22nd April. This may not be a real decline, as counts are strongly influenced by the weather. However lady's smock, the favourite larval food plant here, seems to be getting scarcer as grazed areas become less open. This might be partly offset by more wintercress, which grows by paths: on 29th May 2018, an orange-tip caterpillar was found on wintercress.

There were no new butterfly species recorded in 2018-19. Generally, sightings fitted into the patterns of previous years. In the dry summer of 2018, when there were concerns expressed about how butterflies would cope, the relative lushness of the marshes and good numbers of butterflies stood out. As everywhere, 2019 was a good year for painted ladies.



Female orange-tip nectaring on wintercress *Barbarea vulgaris*, 7th May 2018. Essex skipper on purple loosestrife, 21st July 2018.

This is the list of butterflies recorded at NWT Thorpe Marshes 2012-2019:

Essex skipper
Small skipper
Large skipper
Large white
Small white
Green-veined white
Orange-tip

Brimstone
Small tortoiseshell
Comma
Painted lady
Red admiral
Peacock
Meadow brown

Gatekeeper
Ringlet
Speckled wood
Holly blue
Small copper
Brown argus
Common blue

Moths

This section presents a selection of records, probably incomplete, many as photos taken and identified by Derek Longe.

29th May 2018, Yellow-tail moth caterpillar on *Rosa rugosa* (also known as beach rose or Japanese rose).



All on 18th July 2018: Dingy Footman var *stramineola*; White Plume Moth *Pterophorus pentadactyla*; Straw Grass-Veneer *Agriphila straminella*.



Also 18th July 2018: Mother of Pearl *Patania ruralis*; Hemp Agrimony Plume *Adaina microdactyla*.



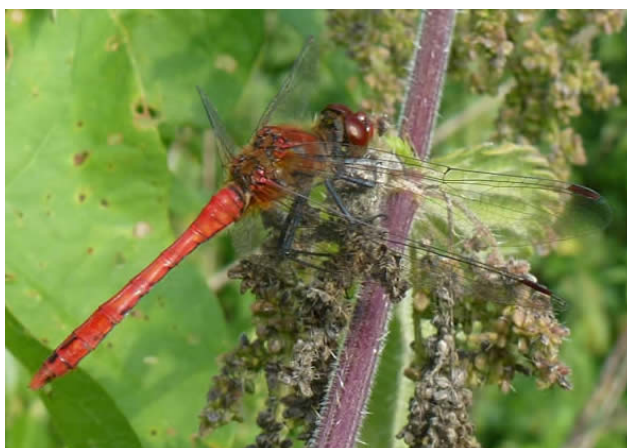
Knot Grass *Acronicta rumicis* moth larva, 4th July 2019; Clouded Border moth 24th May 2019

Additional species not shown as photographs:

18/04/2019	Drinker	<i>Philudoria potatoria</i>
24/05/2019 & other dates	Small china mark	<i>Cataclysta lemnata</i>
29/05/2018	Silver Y	<i>Autographa gamma</i>
29/05/2018	Garden tiger	<i>Artica caja</i>
15/06/2019 (JE)	Beautiful china mark	<i>Nymphula stagnata</i>
17/06/2019	'Mint moth'	<i>Pyrausta aurata</i>
17/06/2019	Nettle Tap	<i>Anthrophila fabriciana</i>
18/06/2018 & 03/07/2019	Common marble	<i>Celypha lacunana</i>
18/06/2018	Mullein moth caterpillar	<i>Cucullia verbasci</i>
03/07/2019	Brown china mark	<i>Elophila nymphaeta</i>
04/07/2019	Common yellow conch	<i>Agepeta hamana</i>
05/07/2018	Cinnabar moth caterpillars	<i>Tyria jacobaeae</i>
06/08/2019	Elephant Hawkmoth caterpillar	<i>Deilephila elpeno</i>
06/08/2019	Common Carpet	<i>Epirrhoe alternata</i>
23/08/2019	Buff tip caterpillars	<i>Phalera bucephala</i>
19/10/2018	Common plume moth	<i>Emmelina monodactyla</i>
19/10/2018	Ruby tiger	<i>Phragmatobia fuliginosa</i>
06/11/2018	Large yellow underwing caterpillar	<i>Noctua pronuba</i>

Damselflies and Dragonflies

The main news was the discovery of **variable damselfly**, with three sightings in May to early July 2019. This is the 21st species of Odonata for Thorpe Marshes nature reserve. We took some care as azure damselfly is relatively common here; the two are very similar and previously (in 2016) an aberrant azure damselfly had shown some features of variable damselfly. All were photographed in the same area of the reserve, photos helping to see the diagnostic shape of the pronotum. The ID was verified by the British Dragonfly Society.



Variable damselfly, 29th June 2019; ruddy darter, 3rd September 2018.

There was just one record of **small red-eyed damselfly** in 2016, 2017 and again in 2018, so being seen on three different dates in 2019 is a positive step. There were no records of **emerald damselfly** for a third year; whether they are absent now or overlooked remains a unknown. **Willow emerald damselfly** had two more excellent years and a teneral on 3rd July 2019 was our earliest record to date. Willow emerald ovipositing scars on a domestic apple overhanging a ditch near the railway line, found in January 2018, were confirmed by the British Dragonfly Society as the first for the UK. This and similar firsts at RSPB Sutton Fen were summarised in a short paper in *The Natterjack* published by the Norfolk & Norwich Naturalists' Society; these and additional interesting records are also illustrated and described online at www.honeyguide.co.uk/Chalcolestes.htm.

Transect-style counts of **Norfolk hawkers** were run for a fourth and fifth years. A count by Derek Longe of 73 on 20th June 2018 was a record count; we should note that this is for the regular route walked on the survey and is not a complete count for the reserve. **Broad-bodied chaser** is never common, but it was confirmed breeding for the first time: a female was ovipositing into the flood on 6th June 2018. Unfortunately, the flood later dried out. There was just a single record of a male in 2019. **Southern hawker** was not recorded in 2017 and 2018, so the sighting on a guided walk in September 2019 was welcome.

The only 'missing' Odonata species at Thorpe, compared with the RSPB's Mid Yare Reserves (excluding vagrants) is scarce chaser *Libellula fulva*.

English name	Scientific name	2018	2019	Comments
Willow emerald damselfly	<i>Chalcolestes sponsa</i>	✓	✓	
Emerald damselfly	<i>Lestes sponsa</i>	X	X	no records since 2016.
Banded Demoiselle	<i>Calopteryx splendens</i>	✓	✓	
Common Blue Damselfly	<i>Enallagma cyathigerum</i>	✓	✓	
Azure Damselfly	<i>Coenagrion puella</i>	✓	✓	
Variable Damselfly	<i>Coenagrion pulchellum</i>	X	✓	1 May (SW), 29 June (CD), pair on 3 July (DL)
Red-eyed Damselfly	<i>Erythromma najas</i>	✓	✓	
Small Red-eyed Damselfly	<i>Erythromma viridulum</i>	✓	✓	After just single records for 3 years, four dates in 2019: 29 th July, 1 st , 6 th , 30 th Aug.
Blue-tailed Damselfly	<i>Ischnura elegans</i>	✓	✓	
Large Red Damselfly	<i>Pyrhosoma nymphula</i>	✓	✓	
Southern Hawker	<i>Aeshna cyanea</i>	✓	✓	♀ 13 th September 2019.
Brown Hawker	<i>Aeshna grandis</i>	✓	✓	
Migrant Hawker	<i>Aeshna mixta</i>	✓	✓	
Norfolk Hawker	<i>Anaciaeschna</i> (or <i>Aeshna</i>) <i>isosceles</i>	✓	✓	
Emperor Dragonfly	<i>Anax imperator</i>	✓	✓	
Hairy Dragonfly	<i>Brachytron pratense</i>	✓	✓	
Four-spotted Chaser	<i>Libellula quadrimaculata</i>	✓	✓	
Broad-bodied Chaser	<i>Libellula depressa</i>	✓	✓	♀&♂ and egg-laying seen in June 2018. One record in 2019, ♂ on 5 th June 2019.
Black-tailed Skimmer	<i>Orthetrum cancellatum</i>	✓	✓	
Ruddy Darter	<i>Sympetrum sanguineum</i>	✓	✓	
Common Darter	<i>Sympetrum striolatum</i>	✓	✓	

Hoverflies

Susan Weeks identified and recorded many hoverflies at Thorpe Marshes in 2019. Below is her list of species in date order (also on file in alphabetical order if anyone is keen to see it). Most species do not have a commonly used English name: where one is noted it comes from *Britain's Hoverflies: An Introduction to the Hoverflies of Britain* by Stuart Ball and Roger Morris.

Great pied hoverfly *Volucella pellucens* (SW).



01/05/2019	1	<i>Eristalinus sepulchralis</i>	
	2	<i>Eristalis nemorum</i>	
	3	<i>Helophilus pendulus</i>	
	4	<i>Merodon equestris</i>	
05/06/2019	5	<i>Xanthogramma pedissequum</i>	
	6	<i>Anasimyia contracta</i>	
	7	<i>Episyrphus balteatus</i>	Marmalade fly
	8	<i>Eristalis horticola</i>	
	9	<i>Eristalis intricaria</i>	Bumblebee mimic
	10	<i>Volucella pellucens</i>	Great Pied Hoverfly
	11	<i>Anasimyia lineata</i>	
	12	<i>Melanostoma scalare</i>	
	13	<i>Cheilosia illustrata</i>	
	14	<i>Tropidia scita</i>	

04/07/2019	15	<i>Melanostoma mellinum</i>	
13/07/2019	16	<i>Cheilosia impressa</i>	
	17	<i>Syrphus ribesii</i>	
	18	<i>Sphaerophoria scripta</i>	
	19	<i>Syritta pipiens</i>	
	20	<i>Chrysotoxum verralli</i>	
	21	<i>Eristalis arbustorum</i>	
	22	<i>Leucozona laternaria</i>	
06/08/2019	23	<i>Volucella zonaria</i>	Hornet mimic
	24	<i>Myathropa florea</i>	
	25	<i>Eristalis tenax</i>	Drone fly
	26	<i>Helophilus trivittatus</i>	
	27	<i>Melangyna compositarum labiatarum</i>	
13/09/2019	28	<i>Xylota segnis</i>	

James Emerson recorded the following additional species of hoverflies in 2018 and 2019. They both found *Riponnensia splendens* just off site, in vegetation along Whitlingham Lane.

17/06/2018	29	<i>Chrysogaster solstitialis</i>	
14/10/2018	30	<i>Dasysryphus tricinctus</i>	
15/06/2019	31	<i>Dasysryphus albostratus</i>	
04/08/2019	32	<i>Melangyna umbellatarum</i>	

Other invertebrates

Bugs



Corizus hyoscyami, a scentless plant bug called 'cinnamon bug' or 'black & red squash bug'; hairy shieldbug (aka sloe bug) *Dolycoris baccarum*, both on 6th November 2018. Pied shieldbug *Tritomegas bicolor* 29th March 2019 (and other dates, SW).

More bugs on James Emerson's *Shieldbugs and allied insects of the Whitlingham Area*. James recorded a late instar tortoise shieldbug at Thorpe Marshes on 4th August 2019 and noted that it was the first time he'd recorded this species near Norwich.

Bees and wasps

19th October 2018: **ivy bee** *Colletes hederæ* (new record for reserve) on ivy near railway bridge. This ties in with many records for this species first recorded in the UK in 2001 and steadily spreading north



Red bartsia bee *Melitta tricincta* 8th Aug 2018 (JE); median wasp *Dolichovespula media* we think.

8th and 11th August 2018; 6th August 2019: **red bartsia bee** *Melitta tricincta*. Another species spreading north, easily overlooked and generally found by its close association with the plant red bartsia, though that also attracts other bees, especially common carder bees *Bombus pascuorum*. Initially found by James Emerson, it was re-found both in 2018 and 2019 on the same patch of red bartsia. They are fast-moving and tricky to photograph!

Hornets are regular, as are other wasps and bees. A probable new species – again ID is challenging – was median wasp *Dolichovespula media* on 18th October 2019. The above are selected highlights: James Emerson's *Bees of the Whitlingham Area* gives a fuller picture for the range of species.

Beetles

Norfolk beetle recorder Martin Collier and another expert in micro-fauna, Steve Lane, visited in December 2018, finding a long list of species: a detailed spreadsheet was supplied to NWT. The photos are of two *relatively* large species found identified on the day.



Paederus riparius a rove beetle in ditch edge vegetation;
false ladybird *Endomychus coccineus*
under some bark, 11th Dec 2018

Jim Boulter noticed a single **glow-worm** *Lampyrus noctiluca* on 7th July 2019 and returned on 8th July finding four glowing females plus one male with a female. Lucy Seeley reports that a volunteer with the work party on 27th September 2019 also photographed a glow-worm, the ID confirmed after posting the photo on ispot.



Musk beetle *Aromia moschata* 6th August 2019 (SW); garden chafer *Phyllopertha horticola* 22nd May 2018; male thick-legged flower beetle *Oedemera nobilis* 29th May 2018 [not to scale]. The last is regularly seen at Thorpe Marshes in good numbers, often (as here) on ox eye daisies.

Above are a few photos of showier species. James Emerson found various beetles (see also his four guides to beetles of the Whitlingham Area, including ladybirds and longhorn beetles): selected examples from his records for Thorpe Marshes include adonis ladybird (08/08/2018), kidney-spot ladybird 23/07/10, fairy-ring longhorn beetle *Pseudovadonia livida* and black-and-yellow longhorn *Rutpela maculata* (both 17/06/2018)

Crickets and grasshoppers

No new species. Thorpe Marshes is a good place in early autumn to see dark bush cricket and long-winged conehead, among others. See also James Emerson's *Grasshoppers and Crickets of the Whitlingham Area*.

Soldierflies and allies

James Emerson's *Soldierflies and allies of the Whitlingham area* details ten allied groups covered under the same recording scheme, including soldierflies, horseflies and bee-flies.

A highlight at Thorpe Marshes was Susan Weeks's discovery of the 'Nationally Scarce' silver colonel soldierfly *Odontomyia argentata*, seen at Thorpe Marshes on 1st May 2019.

Vanna Bartlett recorded locust blowfly *Stomorphina lunata* on 17th August 2018 (per SW). As its name suggests, the larva of *Stomorphina lunata* is a predator of the egg pod of Acrididae (locusts) and sightings are currently considered as vagrants. However, the number of sightings is growing, including male and female photographed in Susan Weeks's garden in Norwich.



Left: silver colonel soldierfly *Odontomyia argentata* (SW).

Centre, by way of contrast: common green-colonel *Oplodontha viridula* (SW).

Right, downlooker snipefly *Rhagio scolopaceus*, 29th May 2018: the background colour is a walk participant's jumper. 'Downlooker' refers to how they characteristically look downwards. Non-biting (to humans).

Other invertebrates

Aquatic invertebrates at Thorpe Marshes were surveyed in 2012 by Norfolk Wildlife Services Ltd and regular pond-dipping complements this information base.

The two species illustrated here are two of the larger invertebrates of the 90 species identified by Martin Collier and Steve Lane in December 2018 (see beetles, above).



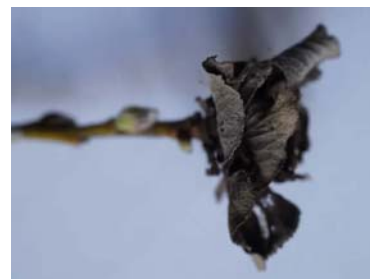
Left, pseudoscorpion, species unknown (examined in a specimen tube); centre, a tiny harvestman with two white spots *Nemostoma bimaculata* (on my hand), both 11th December 2018.

Fungi and gall

Two records that came from guided walks.

Groundsel leaf rust fungus *Puccinia lagenophorae* found and ID by Roger & Jenny Jones (November 2018).

Roger & Jenny Jones also named the gall, right, caused by a gall midge called *Rabdophaga rosaria*, which forms camellia galls on the terminal bud growth of various willow species (March 2018).



There are longer lists of fungi in previous Thorpe Marshes reports, and various galls and leaf mines (many relate to moths) are noted on file, from James Emerson, and in *Leaf mines of the Whitlingham area* volumes 1 & 2.

For more information about NWT Thorpe Marshes, including details of guided walks, please visit the websites noted on page 1. As a local charity committed to saving Norfolk's wildlife, NWT relies on membership and other public support.