

TRANSACTIONS  
of the  
THE WHARFEDALE NATURALISTS' SOCIETY

VOL. I  
October 1945 - October 1946

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In September 1945 Mr. C. Thompson Walker suggested in a letter to Ilkley Gazette that a Natural History Society should be formed in the Di. As a result a meeting was held at Crescent House on October 2nd, 1945 an temporary committee formed. 12 members.

At a further meeting held in the Blue Bird Cafe, at which the Rever C.F. Tomlinson presided, it was unanimously decided that the society shd be known as the Wharfedale Naturalists' Society. Officers for the year 1945-1946 were elected as follows :- President, Dr. K.C. Crosbie; Honc Secretary & Treasurer, Mr. C. Thompson Walker; Committee, Miss N. Saund Miss E.M. Brown, Messrs. A. Charlesworth, W.F. Fearnley, A.E. Pullan, W.A. Russell, and John Busby.

The subscriptions for the year were fixed at a minimum of 5/- for a members and 2/6 for junior members between the ages of 13 and 17. At a l date an entrance fee of 7/6 was made payable by all adult members. Duri the session the membership rose to 40 adult and 16 junior members and th Society became affiliated with the Yorkshire Naturalists' Union.

Fortnightly meetings were held during the winter session which incl the following talks and lectures :-

Mr. A.E. Pullan on Wild Flowers of Wharfedale; Mr. C.A. Cheetham, Aims a Objects of a Naturalists' Society; Mr. W.F. Fearnley, Birds of the Ilkle District; Mr. W.R. Grist, Bird Song; Mr. D. Hinks, Beetles; Mr. A. Charl Millstone Grit; Mr. N. Whitehead, Life in Ponds and Streams. Other meet took the form of a Quiz, discussions and exhibitions of specimens. No meetings were held during the summer but programmes of excursions were arranged by the separate sections.

The foundation of a library of nature books has been made, a number volumes having already been presented by members. In October, 1946 a munificent gift of a number of authoritative works on Fungi, and a large collection of copies of The Naturalist, was added by Mr. H. Fowler Jones.

## BOTANICAL SECTION

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Records have been kept since January, 1946 of earliest dates and localities of Flowering plants found in bloom by members of the section 210 species have been recorded.

During the season the following field excursions were made :-

April 14th, Riffa Wood, Pool. 24 species recorded for the first time to

May 5th, Denton and Fairy Dell. 21 new species for this year from woodland hedgerow.

June 18th, Spicy Ghyll. An evening excursion in which most of the representative plants of this type of moorland were found.

June 23rd, Hundwith Beck, Denton Park. (Permission of Mrs. Hill). A number of interesting species observed including Doronicum Pardalianch which is to be found massed along the sides of the beck.

As well as these excursions, on May 22nd a visit was paid at Mr. Kerf's invitation to his Alpine Gardens where members were particularly interested in his collection of rare alpine species native of this country.

### Points of Interest from the Year's Records

- 1) February 7th. First recorded flower of Tussilago farfara (coltsfoot) M.M. Pool; followed by February 17th, Ranunculus ficaria (lesser celandine) A.E.P. Burley.
- 2) Several colonies of Tussilago petasites (butterbur) female plants along both banks of the Wharfe.
- 3) Plants characteristic of the limestone region of Upper Wharfedale including Primula farinosa (bird's eye primrose) N.N., Kettlewell, Campanula latifolia (giant campanula), Poterium officinale (great burnet), Geranium lucidum (shining cranesbill) A.S., Threshfield, Helianthemum chaemaecistus (rock rose) E.M.B., Grassington.
- 4) Typical bog plants from moorland areas. Drosera rotundifolia (round leaved sundew) K.C.C., Middleton Moor, Pinguicula vulgaris (butterwort) E.M.B., Beamsley, Narthecium ossifragum (bog Aspedel) D.H., Ilkley, Gentiana campestris (field gentian), Parnassia palustris (grass of Parnassus), Triglochin palustris (marsh arrow-grass) E.M.B., Malham Tardish.
- 5) Some other interesting species :- Ranunculus sceleratus (celery leaved crowfoot), Nasturtium palustre (yellow watercress), Sparganium simplex (unbranched bur-reed), Denton Park; Epipactis latifolia, Wells House; Scrophularia aquatica (water figwort), Lamium Galeobdolon (yellow archwort) K.C.C., Washburn, Inula Helenium (Elecampane) A.E.P., Middleton.

Initials represent members who first noted the species in each case : Miss E.M. Brown, Dr. K.C. Crosbie, D. Hinchliffe, Mrs. M. Marjoram, N. Nichols, A.E. Pullan, Miss A. Stansfield. Where no initials are given, species were observed on excursions.

## ENTOMOLOGICAL SECTION

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There has been no official Entomological Section during the Society's first year, as no members have offered to undertake the duties of Recorder and Secretary. Volunteers for these duties are badly needed and it is hoped that someone will come forward for next season.

On May 12th, a few members, guided by the Rev. C.F. Tomlinson, visited Hazelwood Moor to investigate the habitat of the Green Hairstreak; a number of the species were seen. On August 20th, Mr. Tomlinson and a party again visited the moor when some moths and full-grown larvae of Oak-egger were seen.

The following species were reported from the Bolton Abbey and Ilkley Districts :- BUTTERFLIES, Green Hairstreak (May 7th-21st); Large, Small and G.V. White; S. Heath, Meadow Brown, Orange Tip (1) (June 23rd), S. Tortoiseshell; Painted Lady (1) (July 7th), Peacock (September 9th), C. Blue (July 7th), S. Copper (May 12th), Red Admiral. MOTHS, Elephant (5) (June 20th-July 7th), Humming Bird Hawk (August 2nd), Northern Oak-Marbled Beauty, Neglected Rustic, Large Yellow Underwing, Old Lady, Feeble Gothic, Antler, Dark Arches, The Chi, The Mouse, Silver Y, Shaded Broad Twin Spot Carpet, Northern Spinach, The Chevron. HYMENOPTERA, Bombus Leucorum, Terrestis, Agrorum, Pratorum, Lapidarius (1), Psithyrus Vestigiarius. A Sirex Gigas was obtained in Ilkley on August 22nd.

Signed C.F. Tomlinson

## GEOLOGICAL SECTION

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An excursion was held on May 14th. The party examined the sections of shale and sandstone so well exposed in Backstone Beck (or Cow Close Ghyll). This phase of the Millstone grit belongs to the Kinderscout series and gives rise to the most prominent local landscape features such as Addingham Edge, Woodhouse Crag, Cow and Calf, Rocky Valley, the Chevin, etc.

The party proceeded to the high ground above Lanshaw Delve (an ancient lateral moraine) and from there an excellent view of the country just north of the Wharfe was obtained, and the location of the following divisions was easily seen, e.g. Skipton Moor group, Silsden Grit, Middleton Grits and the latter to the Kinderscout series. The weathering of the grits was discussed and the relation of the shales to the sandstone beds was noted. Plant impressions were seen in various sandstone rocks, and evidences of faulting in Cow Close Beck were examined.

Signed A. Charlesworth  
(Leader of the excursion)

REPORT of the ORNITHOLOGICAL SECTION  
of the  
WHARFEDALE NATURALISTS' SOCIETY

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RECORDER :- W.F. Fear.

Reports of 93 species have been received during the year, but this no means exhaustive, as many species common in the district have not been recorded at all. This is simply a very brief summary of the records brought by our members. Where only a date is given after the name of a bird, it is to the first occasion during the year on which the bird was noticed.

Hooded Crow (*Corvus cornix cornix*) has been seen once only, at Riffa January 23rd, (H.M.) Jays (*Garrulus glandarius rufitergum*) and Magpies (*Pica pica*) have maintained their increased numbers in the district. Magpies have visited bird-tables at Ilkley (Mrs.H) and Menston (V.H.) Jays have been seen frequently in the Ilkley district and also reported from Riffa (H.M.) Hawfinches (*Coccothraustes coccothraustes coccothraustes*) have proved to be more common in the district than was generally believed, being seen in Menston (V.H.), Otley (P.J.A.), Ben Rhydding (K.C.C., R.S.P.B.), Ilkley (D.I.T.W.), and Bolton Abbey (C.F.T.) Goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis britannica*) have been seen in the Ilkley district all the year round, flocks of up to about 30 occurring in autumn and winter, and family parties being seen in summer. Siskins (*Carduelis spinus*) were seen at Ilkley in December and at Menston in March (W.F.F. and J.P.B. respectively). Bullfinches (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula nesa*) have often been noted in Ilkley and we also have reports from Menston. Tree Pipit (*Anthus trivialis trivialis*) April 12th (D.H.) Yellow Wagtail (*Motacilla flava ray*) April 15th (R.S.F.) Nuthatch (*Sitta europaea affinis*) at Harewood April 17th (W.F.F.) We have notes of all the species of Titmice which are likely to occur here. Long-tailed Tits (*Aegithalos caudatus roseus*) having been seen at Ilkley, Burley, Menston, Farnley and Riffa. A suspected case of Willow-Tits (*Parus atricapillus kleinschmidti*) breeding at Riffa was unfortunately not proved but it is worth watching for in future. (H.M. and W.F.F.) Spotted Flycatcher (*Muscicapa striata striata*) May 21st (P.J.A.) A pair nested twice this season in an open box at Bolton Abbey Rectory, both broods fledging successfully (C.F.T.) A cock Pied Flycatcher (*Muscicapa hypoleuca*) was seen by the river at Ben Rhydding on May 2nd (H.C.), a nest and two young at Bolton Abbey on June 11th, and another pair not far away (P.J.A.) No Chiff-Chaff (*Phylloscopus collybita collybita*) has been reported from Ilkley this year, the nearest record coming from Harewood, April 17th (W.F.F.) Willow-Warbler (*Phylloscopus trochilus trochilus*) April 4th (H.V.W.) Wood-Warbler (*Phylloscopus sibilatrix sibilatrix*) April 19th (H.V.W.) Whitethroat (*Sylvia communis communis*) April 26th (P.J.A.) Twelve Fieldfares (*Turdus pilaris*) were still at Burley Woodhead on April 18th (P.J.A.) One was picked up from the road at Riffa on November 30th (H.M.) Ring Ouzel (*Turdus torquatus torquatus*) March 24th at Blubberhouses (H.V.W.), March 30th at Burley (P.J.A.) Wheatear (*Oenanthe oenanthe oenanthe*) March 24th at Blubberhouses (H.V.W.) March 30th at Ilkley (W.F.F.) Redstart (*Phoenicurus phoenicurus phoenicurus*) May 5th at Fewston (P.J.A.) Swallow (*Hirundo rustica rustica*) March 27th, two at Ben Rhydding (W.F.), two at Castley April 3rd (H.M.) and generally April 14th. House Martin (*Delichon urbica urbica*) April 16th at Burley (H.M.) Sand Martin (*Riparia riparia riparia*) April 1st, five at Castley (H.M.);



at Ben Rhydding on April 3rd (K.C.C.) Swift (*Apus apus apus*) April 30 (K.C.C.) Nightjars (*Caprimulgus europaeus europaeus*) were heard at I on June 21st (W.F.), and have also been reported from Norwood. (W.F.F. Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis ispida*) has been noted several times at Ilkley and Denton. Young birds were seen from Ilkley Golf Course (H. Green Woodpecker (*Picus viridis virescens*) is reported from many parts the district, from Buckden (W.F.F.) down to Riffa (H.M.) Great Spotted Woodpecker (*Dryobates major anglicus*) from Riffa (H.M.), Timble (R.S.P. and Ilkley. Cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus canorus*) April 14th at Riffa (H.M. and Barden Moor (C.F.T.) Egg May 19th on Burley Moor (W.F.) Little Owl (*Athene noctua vidalii*) pairs have been seen at Nessfield (W.F.F.), Ilk and Burley Woodhead (P.J.A.), and reports of nesting of Tawny Owl (*Strix aluco sylvatica*) and Barn Owl (*Tyto alba alba*) have been received (A.E. and F.B. respectively). A pair of Merlins (*Falco columbarius oesalon*) attempted to nest on Burley Moor but were unsuccessful (W.F.) A family Kestrels (*Falco tinunculus tinunculus*) was reared in Denton Park (F.B.) A Common Buzzard (*Buteo buteo buteo*) frequented the neighbourhood of Fe Reservoir for some time during mid-July (W.F.) Sparrow Hawks (*Accipiter nisus nisus*) have not been noticed nesting this year near Ilkley, after year's four nests. A nest found at Riffa was unsuccessful. At Riffa, Sparrow Hawk was seen to take and bear away a blackbird from a hedge, and another occasion one was seen to capture a starling on the ground (H.M. whilst at Bolton Abbey a hen Sparrow Hawk chased a house-sparrow into a disused aviary and was itself captured there (C.F.T.) About six Herons (*Ardea cinerea cinerea*) were at Farnley Lake on June 4th (H.E.A.) The Wharfedale heronries have been visited by members. At Hubberholm eight nests appeared to be occupied (J.A.C.) The birds were very wary, as if persecuted. At Harewood, where they are carefully protected, they were less wild, and there were fourteen occupied nests (W.F.F.) A pair of Mute Swans (*Cygnus olor*) attempted to nest at Denton Lake (F.B.), and another at Farnley Lake (W.F.F.), but neither pair succeeded. On February 13th Grey Geese were seen flying up the Wharfe Valley near Burley (J.P.B.), and about 20 over Addingham Moorside on September 29th (J.A.C.) Three Canada Geese (*Branta canadensis canadensis*) were at Denton Lake on April 22nd (W. two at Marsh Ghyll on May 3rd (A.C.M.D.), and three have been seen at Fe (W.F.F.) Most large sheets of water in the area have been watched when opportunity has arisen, but Fewston should have more attention in the future no members having reported Duck from there. Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos platyrhynchos*) have been seen on all watched waters in the area, Teal (*Anas crecca crecca*) on all except Chelker, Wigeon (*Anas penelope*) on Chelker and Lindley (W.F.F.). Ten Pintail (*Anas acuta acuta*) were shot at Farnley on January 24th (H.M.) Shoveller (*Spatula clypeata*) has been seen on Lindley (W.F.F.), Pochard (*Nyroca ferina ferina*) on Chelker, Lindley and the river Wharfe; Tufted Duck on the latter three and also on Farnley Lake, and Goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula clangula*) on Chelker, Lindley and the river Wharfe. A Goosander (*Mergus merganser merganser*) was on Swinsty on January 6th (H. Great Crested Grebes (*Podiceps cristatus cristatus*) have occurred at Harewood (W.F.F.), Farnley (H.M.), Lindley (K.C.C.), and Chelker (K.C.C.) Two nests were built at Farnley but neither was successful. A Stock-Dove (*Columba oenas*) nested on Burley Moor (P.J.A.) One or two Curlew (*Numenius arquata arquata*) were seen during winter, at Blubberhouses on January 13th (D.I.T.W.), at on February 13th (H.M.), and at Chelker on March 10th when the reservoir

nearly completely frozen over (W.F.F.). The first nest with four eggs was reported from Burley Moor on May 18th (W.F.) On one of the Society's out on May 5th a group of members disturbed a brooding Woodcock (*Scolopax rusticola*) and saw it fly away carrying a chick between its thighs. The two chicks flew away unaided in the opposite direction on being examined. The first Dunlin (*Calidris alpina schinzii*) were seen on the river bank on April 21st (K.C.C.) and at least one chick with its parents on Ilkley Moor June 16th (H.V.W.) Common Sandpipers (*Tringa hypoleucos*) reached Chelker April 14th (P.J.A.) Two Green Sandpipers (*Tringa ochropus*) were seen near early in September (H.M.) On May 26th a Grey Plover (*Squatarola squatarola*) was seen with Golden Plover and Lapwings near Marsh Ghyll (A.) Three Common Gulls (*Larus canus canus*) were seen at Menston on February 9th and some near Ilkley on August 2nd (J.P.B.) About two hundred were resting on Kilnsey Crag on April 14th (J.A.C.), and numbers at Arncliffe on April 22nd (P.J.A.) The only reports of Corncrakes (*Crex crex*) were of two calling at Norwood and one at Otley (W.F.F.) Farnley is the local stronghold of the (Fulica atra atra). Over 160 were counted there on December 5th (W.F.F.), on January 12th (H.M.), and there were many nests there in the summer. A (Not two hens) of Partridges were seen sitting together, facing opposite ways on 20 eggs, all of which hatched (W.F.).

The initials in the above report refer to the members who have supplied notes for the records :- H.E. Adamson, P.J. Allister, F. Ball, Col. R.S.P. Ba J.P. Busby, J.A. Chadwick, H. Clarke, Dr. K.C. Crosbie, A.C.M. Duncan, W.F. Fear W. Flesher, D. Hinchliffe, Mrs. Holmes, V. Huddleston, H. Marjoram, A.E. Pullan, Rev. C.F. Tomlinson, D.I.T. Walker, H.V. Williamson. Some of the notes have been made jointly by several members, and many notes of local interest have been supplied by other members of the section, and full details may be found in Society's Ornithological Record Book.

There have been evening meetings of the section at approximately six-week intervals during the summer, and an evening excursion to Farnley Lake, by permission of Major le G. Horton-Fawkes, was held early in June under the leadership of Mr. H.E. Adamson.