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PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

ISLE OF WIGHT NATURAL HISTORY AND ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY

1979

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OBITUARY

CLARICE ELLEN RICHARDSON

It was with a great sense of loss that members learnt of the death on 11th January, 1980, of Mrs. Clarice Richardson, at the early age of 56.

Known affectionately as Clarrie to her many friends, she joined the Society, together with her daughter Connie, in 1970, and immediately started to play an active part in the affairs of the Society, being elected to the Council at the AGM in 1971. From the start she showed a particular interest in the activities of the Access to the Countryside Section and was a sturdy champion in the fight to keep our footpaths and rights of way properly maintained. It was no surprise therefore, when, in 1973, she was unanimously elected as Leader of that Section, and her place on the Council was taken by her daughter, who spoke up for the interests of the younger members of the Society.

For the next six years she continued to lead the Access to the Countryside Section, arranging a programme of monthly walks in all parts of the Island, which were invariably well attended. She also played a large part in the preparation of the Local Look Nature Trails, and every year during her tenure of office she prepared a striking display for Local Look, illustrated by her own excellent photographs and illustrations by members of her talented family.

In 1979, with the considerable responsibilities as Head of the Medina Adult Training Centre, while caring for a sick husband, her own health began to fail. It says much for her leadership of the Section that, at her request, a full programme of meetings was arranged, with members of the Section taking it in turns to lead the walks. Following the death of her husband at the end of the year, her own health deteriorated rapidly. Our sincerest sympathy is extended to members of her family in their double bereavement.

O.H.F.

STANLEY T. WAITE, B.Sc.

We learnt with regret of the death during January, 1980, of Mr. S. T. Waite, B.Sc., affectionately known as "Ginge" by all who knew him.

After retiring as Chief Geologist with Shell in 1960, he came with his family to live at Cowes and immediately joined the Society. This was a time of rapid expansion of the activities of the Society, and at the AGM in 1961 he was appointed as the Society's first Conservation Officer, continuing to act in that capacity until he left the Island for family reasons in 1968. He played a significant part in the negotiations which led to the formation of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Naturalists' Trust, Ltd., and acted as Conservation Officer for the Trust as well as the Society. He was tireless in pursuing every aspect of conservation, yet at the same time he undertook the leadership of the Geological Section, when it was formed in 1963. Always ready and willing to put his wide knowledge at the disposal of members, he imbued many members with enthusiasm for this subject, and himself found a rare fossil fish, *Belonostomus hooleyi*, at Atherfield (See *Proceedings* for 1964, Vol. V, Pt. IX, pp. 404-5).

He was elected a Vice-President of the Society in 1966 and would undoubtedly have become President, if circumstances had not necessitated him leaving the Island to be closer to his family in Dorset, and later moving to Exmouth in Devon. In spite of being made an Honorary Member in recognition of all he had done for the Society, he typically insisted on paying his full subscription to the last, and he presented a number of geological books to the Society's Library.

Our sincerest sympathy is extended to his widow and family in their sad loss.

O.H.F.

Tributes to the seven other members who died in the course of the year are recorded in the report of the AGM later in these *Proceedings.*

EDITOR'S NOTE

Have you thought of contributing a paper to these *Proceedings?* The Editor is always ready to discuss and advise on the preparation of suitable articles on subjects related to the natural history and archaeology, in its widest sense, of the Isle of Wight. The commitment to the production of such a paper can and does act as a stimulus to sustained effort and a study in depth of one's chosen subject, which in itself brings great reward. Your attention is drawn to the Notice to Contributors, which appeared at the end of the last *Proceedings,* and copies of this are available, if required.

In addition short notes or observations worth placing on record are always required for the Natural History and Archaeological Notes appearing at the end of each issue. These have been discontinued for a number of years, but they have now been reinstated as a permanent feature, depending, of course, on there being plenty of suitable contributions. Such notes and observations should apply to the year of issue and may be submitted at any time in the course of the year, preferably when details are still fresh in your mind. Some idea of the variety and the form that they should take can be obtained by reading through those already published. If you are not sure whether an observation is really worth placing on record, it might be as well to consult with the appropriate Section Leader, and, if still in doubt, please send it in. In the well-known phrase, the Editor's decision is final, but it is nice to have a choice!

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE for year ended 31st December, 1979

1978	INCOME	£ p	£ p	£ p
	Balances at 1.1.79			
	Current Account		141·02	
	Deposit Account		3262·48	
	Cash in Hand		35·73	
	Hutchinson Memorial—			
	Deposit Account		129·67	
3207·00				3568·90
39·00	Interest on National Savings Bank Account		—	
61·00	Interest on Depsoit Account		302·52	
156·00	Interest on N.S.B. Account ...		—	
11·00	Interest on War Stock		11·28	
1062·00	Members' Subscriptions ...		1102·25	
86·00	Tax Refund on Covenants ...		91·34	
9·00	Sales of Proceedings		70·21	
	Local Look—Receipts	1825·32		
	Less Expenses	899·24		
616·00			926·08	
3·00	Sale of Badges		12·40	
7·00	Donations...		—	
7·00	Interest on Hutchinson Deposit Account		14·95	
9·00	Profit on Teas		3·58	
25·00	Bequest—Dr. Dunning, decd.		—	
—	Cheese and Wine Evening ...		55·45	
3·00	Sundries		2·30	
	Total Receipts			2592·36
£5301·00				£6161·26

1978	EXPENDITURE	£ p	£ p
1100·00	Loan to Flora Fund	—	
—	Proceedings and Bird Report	1660·54	
130·00	Duplicating and Printing	224·23	
209·00	Library Rent	260·14	
52·00	Library Expenses	61·72	
29·00	Hire of Halls	24·66	
39·00	Subs to other Societies	37·00	
34·00	Insurances	59·92	
—	Cheese and Wine Evening	53·74	
138·00	Petty Cash and Sundries	150·93	
130·00	Hutchinson Memorial Fund held as a separate investment	144·62	
	Total Expenses		2677·50
	Balances at 31.12.79		
	Current Account	107·20	
	Deposit Account	3341·00	
	Cash in Hand	35·56	
3440·00			3483·76
£5301·00			£6161·26

Investment—
£322.76 3½% War Stock
Value 31.12.79—£100·00
Equivalent yield of 11½%

Hutchinson Memorial Donation $250

Present Deposit Balance £144.62

Audited and found correct

(Signed) K. D. RIDDELL, N. PREECE } *Hon. Auditors*

(Signed) D. J. HUNNYBUN, *Hon. Treasurer*

GENERAL MEETINGS, EXHIBITIONS AND EXCURSIONS

As the Annual General Meeting for 1979 had to be postponed from 27th January to 10th February, 1979, owing to inclement weather, the reports of meetings held prior to this date appeared in the *Proceedings* for 1978.

General Meeting on 17th March, 1979.

This meeting took the form of a "Symposium on Insects of the Isle of Wight", the chief aim of which was to encourage the re-formation of the Entomological Section, which was at present without a leader.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Oliver Frazer stressed the importance of insects in their abundance and diversity and the pressing need to undertake recording of their distribution. He introduced the first of the speakers, Mr. Norman Holland, who spoke on moths and butterflies, demonstrating some simple home-made equipment used for breeding and recording, without the need for collecting. He then showed colour slides of some of the more striking specimens one might encounter.

In the absence of Mr. Lovely, of Bembridge School, who was unfortunately not able to be present, the President, Lieut.-Commander Jim Cheverton, R.N., gave an account of the dragonflies and damselfles to be seen in the Island, illustrated with colour slides. Mr. Oliver Frazer then showed slides of grasshoppers and bushcrickets, mostly Island specimens, but also including a few species not yet recorded in the Island, but which should certainly be looked for. He also demonstrated an ingenious collecting box, invented by his father, which could be used at field meetings. Finally, Mr. Pat Ewbank showed by means of colour slides examples of some of the other major groups of insects, including beetles and flies.

After light refreshment, kindly prepared by Mrs. D. Frazer and helpers, there was discussion on future activities. Apart from members undertaking the recording of the many different orders of insects, what was particularly required was an enthusiastic member who would undertake the leadership of the section and organise field meetings. In the meantime the President expressed his willingness to organise a programme of meetings until another leader was appointed.

The President thanked the speakers for a most enjoyable and instructive evening.

Excursion to Godshill on 22nd April, 1979.

For this, the first outdoor meeting of the season, members met in the public car park at Godshill for a walk of general interest in the Godshill area.

In a normal season the walk through the woods should have provided a wealth of flowering plants, but on this occasion there were few in evidence, apart from Wood Anemones and Moschatel. Some badger sets were investigated, but it was sad to see how these had been interfered with. Rabbits were much in evidence, however, and a short-tailed vole was observed scrambling through a hedge.

The hedge-banks of Red Hill Lane provided the greatest variety of flowering plants for the botanists in the party, but once again was very poor compared with the usual profusion normally found at this time of the year.

On their return to Godshill, members were kindly invited to a sumptuous tea by Mr. and Mrs. Alldred at their charming home, while outside the much-needed rain began to fall.

Excursion on cliffs and shore at Brook on 20th May, 1979.

Undaunted by thick mist and almost continuous rain, a small number of members met at Brook Car Park in the morning. Under the leadership of Mr. Oliver Frazer, with other Section Leaders in attendance, it was planned to explore the shore during the period of low tide and examine the cliffs for features of geological interest between Brook and Chilton Chine, returning after a picnic lunch along the cliff exploring and recording dragonflies, insects, plants and other forms of life, with opportunities for pond-dipping.

In the event, owing to the weather conditions, the morning's activities were confined to the examination of some peculiar features of the eroding cliffs with Dr. Alan Insole, who took some photographs and later carried out further investigations along the shore. In the afternoon some eight more members joined the party and returned towards Brook along the cliffs. Most noticeable were the numerous snails and large slugs enjoying the wet conditions. One adult female dragonfly, *Libellula depressa,* which had just emerged and unfortunately succumbed to the terrible weather conditions, was observed, but pond-dipping revealed a number of damselfly and dragonfly nymphs in various stages of development, promising a plentiful supply of these attractive insects in happier days to come. Also recorded were many mayfly nymphs, black water beetles and their larvae, lesser water boatmen and two species of newts, smooth and palmate, together with their larvae. Although many other forms of life would have been observed under better conditions, the excursion was not without interest for those who were brave enough to take part.

Excursion to Brownsea Island on 10th June, 1979.

This excursion was cancelled due to lack of sufficient support.

Excursion to Rocken End on 21st July, 1979.

In spite of high winds, members led by the President enjoyed an all-day meeting on the landslip at St. Catherine's Point. After Dr. Alan Insole had outlined the geological structure of the area and explained how the frequent landslips had occurred, the party clambered over the broken ground and searched for interesting flora, insects, birds and pond life.

Amongst the many items found were dumpy centaury, shining cranesbill, marsh and pyramidal orchids, squinancywort, the great green bush cricket, mottled grasshoppers, two silver-studded blues and a large yellow underwing. A group of several

mousenests were found underneath a sheet of corrugated iron, and one of these had been adopted as a nest by bumblebees. The rare Sea Spleenwort and a variety of lichens were also noted.

Private View of Local Look on 31st July, 1979.

There was a good attendance of members, particularly prospective stewards, at the Local Look Exhibition at Brook. The President, in welcoming the members, paid tribute to the hard work put in by many members to make what promised to be a very interesting exhibition. Mrs. K. Wadham, the Chairman of the Local Look Committee gave details of the organisation to ensure a smooth running of the exhibition, and Mr. O. H. Frazer, the over-all organiser, gave details of the individual displays, which were well explained in the official guide, copies of which were made available.

Members then examined the displays and a working party was formed to fold and staple the remainder of the Guides.

Exhibition Local Look at Brook from 1st August to 2nd September, 1979.

A report of this, the 19th "Local Look" Exhibition, appears later in these *Proceedings*.

Excursion to Hamstead Duver on 18th August, 1979.

A good number of members met at Hamstead Grange, by kind permission of Lieut.-Colonel C. R. H. Kindersley, D.S.O., M.C., to explore and record the wildlife on Hamstead Duver and the surrounding area, under the leadership of Mr. O. H. Frazer.

In spite of the dull weather there was plenty of wildlife in evidence, including an abundance of butterflies and moths, three species of bush-crickets, four kinds of grasshoppers and, the most exciting of all, a large and handsome spider, *Argiope bruennichi*, which had not previously been recorded in the Island. Details of this and also an interesting group of ants' nests noted by Mr. R. Snow are given under Natural History Notes later in these *Proceedings*.

Many photographs were taken, and a fine dragonfly, probably an *Orthetrum* species, evaded capture and so was not positively identified. A number of birds were observed through binoculars and a weasel was also seen.

A check was made on the many interesting plants in this favoured area, and it was good to see that, in spite of considerable erosion, the important species were all holding their own. In addition, an unusual clematis, similar to the "Virgin's Bower", most probably a garden escape, was growing profusely far from any human habitation, and this was also a new record.

The President thanked the leader for a most interesting day, and the leader in turn thanked all the members present who had all contributed to the success of the outing by finding or identifying specimens in great variety.

General Meeting on 7th September, 1979.

In anticipation of a visit to The Mens Nature Reserve in West Sussex, members were given an introductory talk by Mrs. Ruth Tittensor, M.Sc., of Chichester.

Introducing the speaker, the President said that Dr. and Mrs. Tittensor were already well known to members, following the "Red Squirrel Week-end" which was so successful last year, and there was no doubt that members would have a most interesting talk and visit.

As the Society was concerned with both natural history and human history, the speaker said it was particularly appropriate to talk on The Mens Nature Reserve, which not only has a wealth of natural history, but also a well-documented history from its first written record in an Anglo-Saxon Charter dated 953 A.D. It comprises some 400 acres of high forest on the Sussex Weald, rising to some 500 feet on the Lower Greensand escarpment in the south. Its name has nothing to do with the male of the species, but is derived from the Old English "gemaennys" meaning "common land", which was later corrupted to "mennesse" and then to "the Mens".

In early times the woodlands were used as 'swine-pasture' in summer, and during the Middle Ages they provided fuel and ash for the important glass-making industry and later for a number of iron furnaces, but the rights of the commoners probably conferred some protection on these woodlands. The effects of man's past use of woodlands can still be traced in the vegetation today, because trees are long-lived and reflect the conditions of their lifetime. The shapes of the trees themselves are revealing. For instance a large oak tree with large horizontal branches low down and a broad crown must have matured in a parkland setting, although now forming a component of woodland, and this is supported by documentary evidence and old maps, some of which were on display. The limb of a large pollarded beech tree was found from annual ring counts to be 200 years old, indicating a last pollard cut in about 1775. In the nineteenth century many parts were enclosed to encourage tree regeneration, but by the end of the century The Mens became derelict with dead and dying trees left in situ, and the whole spectrum of woodland life was able to develop towards a natural state, as can be seen today.

It is because of this chequered history that the natural history of The Mens is so outstanding, with a wealth of flowering plants, mosses, lichens, fungi, woodland birds, mammals and insects. Purchased by the Sussex Trust for Nature Conservation between 1970 and 1973, The Mens Nature Reserve is also listed as a Grade 1 Site of Special Scientific Interest by the Nature Conservancy Council, and detailed ecological research is carried out by members of the Horsham Natural History Society.

Thanking the speaker, the President said that she had not only prepared members for a most interesting visit next month, but had also indicated the sort of approach that we should have adopted here in the Island.

Visit to Nunwell House on 22nd September, 1979.

A large number of members met at Nunwell House, Brading, by kind invitation of Mrs. M. E. Oglander.

After being greeted by Mrs. Oglander, the party was addressed by Mrs. Werner, who gave a brief history of this famous house, which had been in the possession of the Oglander family continuously since 1522, but was soon to be sold and the contents

largely dispersed. The party then divided into two groups and were conducted round the house and garden by Mrs. Oglander and Mrs. Werner, who drew attention to and gave many intimate details of the many treasures to be seen in this historic house.

The President expressed the thanks of members to Mrs. Oglander and her friend and companion, Mrs. Werner, for a most enjoyable visit.

Excursion to The Mens Nature Reserve, West Sussex, on 6th October, 1979.

Members travelled by coach to visit The Mens Nature Reserve, near Petworth, West Sussex. In spite of rather gloomy forecasts, the weather was perfect and the journey by coach through the delightful West Sussex countryside was much enjoyed.

On arrival at the Nature Reserve the party was met by Mrs. Ruth Tittensor and her husband, Dr. Andy Tittensor. After a picnic lunch in a woodland clearing, Mrs. Tittensor gave a brief account of the history of the Reserve for the benefit of those who had not been able to hear her previous talk, and the party then were taken on a conducted tour of the woodland reserve, and the many interesting features pointed out. Many species of fungi were seen and identified, as well as evidence of mammals, such as deer slots and grey squirrel dreys.

Thanks of members to Dr. and Mrs. Tittensor for a most interesting visit were expressed by Mr. John Stafford on behalf of the President, who was unfortunately not able to attend.

Fungus Foray and Exhibition on 27th and 28th October, 1979.

A large number of members and friends met at Combley Great Wood, by kind permission of the Forestry Commission, to collect specimens of fungi.

The leader, Mr. O. H. Frazer, showed a number of fungus specimens previously collected to indicate the variety of form and types of habitat where these organisms should be looked for. The party then divided into six groups, each of which was provided with a collecting tray and map showing the portion of the wood allocated to that group. The weather was fortunately fine, but it was very wet in some parts of the wood due to recent rain, and this had no doubt encouraged the growth of fungi. Reassembling at the finishing point later, members were amazed to see every tray full of fungi of almost every shape, size and colour imaginable. The leader drew attention to some of the specimens obtained, which were then transported to the Teachers' Centre, Newport, to be identified and arranged in order for the purposes of a display.

As an aid to identification a number of the specimens were laid on grey paper to obtain spore-prints overnight with the help of Mrs. D. Frazer and Mr. and Mrs. J. Cull. On Sunday morning the considerable task of identifying and naming the specimens was undertaken by the leader, ably assisted by Mr. L. Cox, Nicholas Cox and Phillip Rose, of Cowes High School, Mr. R. Lightbown, Dr. A. Insole and Dr. C. Pope. As a result more than 120 species were recorded and arranged in systematic order for members to examine on Sunday afternoon. In addition a further 24 specimens were sent to the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, for identification or verification in the case of those which had not previously been recorded in the Island. As a result the following five species can be added to the Island list – *Amanita citrina* var. *alba, Cortinarius delibutus, Gymnopilus hybridus, Russula mairei* and *Incrustoporia semi-pileata.*

A large number of members and friends attended on Sunday afternoon to see the display and also examine the details of some specimens under microscopes, kindly provided and set up by Mr. D. Roberts and Mr. F. Neat. The leader gave a short talk, illustrated with slides, on fungi in general and also showed some species which had not been found on this occasion. Tea and biscuits, kindly prepared by Mrs. L. Prangnell and helpers, were provided as members were able to examine the display, which was left in position for viewing by the general public and local schools on Monday, Tuesday and part of Wednesday, by kind permission of the Warden of the Teachers' Centre, Mr. J. Hilsum.

The most striking feature of this year's fungus foray was undoubtedly the large number of species represented with no particular species being found in great numbers, as is usually the case. Since all the major groups of fungi were represented by one or more species, the display was of particular value to anyone seeking an understanding of this attractive and important division of the plant kingdom.

General Meeting on 30th November, 1979.

Members met at the Medina High School complex for a Wine and Cheese party. Entertainment was provided by the President, who devised a light-hearted quiz of some 60 colour slides showing Island views, buildings and natural history subjects. A toast was drunk to the memory of Frank Morey, who founded the Society in November, 1919, and whose outstanding book, *A Guide to the Natural History of the Isle of Wight,* had been published in 1909.

Thanks were expressed by the President to all those who had made the evening so enjoyable – Mrs. L. Prangnell, the programme secretary, Miss K. Page for refreshments and Mr. and Mrs. R. Snow, who organised the bar and box office.

General Meeting on 8th December, 1979.

Members were presented with the report of the twenty-first consecutive Annual Newtown Survey, held earlier in the year, from 19th May to 3rd June inclusive.

In his opening address, the President, who had visited the camp when the survey was being carried out, spoke of the excellent work being undertaken in so many fields by dedicated people, both staff and students, and the Society was pleased and honoured to be associated with it.

Presenting his report, Mr. L. E. L. Cox stated that, although the worst weather conditions for many years had been experienced, with heavy rain reducing the site to a morass of liquid mud, the pupils had remained cheerful and uncomplaining, and it was to their credit that they completed their tasks happily and successfully, as the comprehensive exhibition of their work indicated. With the aid of colour slides and some 8mm film, he described the work undertaken, which is reported elsewhere in these *Proceedings*.

After tea, kindly provided by Mrs. L. Prangnell, members were able to examine the displays and discuss the details with those who took part.

The President thanked Mr. Cox for a most interesting report and wished that more members had been present to see the impressive results of the Survey.

General Meeting on 12th January, 1980.

For the first general meeting of the new year, members heard a fascinating lecture on "Industrial Archaeology" by Dr. Alan Insole, the County Museums Officer.

Introducing the lecturer, the President hoped that members would have a more precise definition of what was actually meant by Industrial Archaeology as a result of this lecture, as he himself was not at all clear as to what subjects it embraced.

Dr. Insole agreed that there was no simple definition, but gave an outline of the development of Industrial Archaeology since its origins in the 1950's, and proceeded to show with the aid of some superb colour slides some of the fast disappearing relics of man's activities of the past before all traces were lost in these days of such rapid change. The important points, so far as the Island is concerned, are presented in the form of a paper later in these *Proceedings.*

After answering many questions, the lecturer appealed for help from members in carrying out the immense task of recording some of these features for posterity before it was too late, and was heartily thanked by the President for a most stimulating lecture.

Annual General Meeting on 26th January, 1980.

The President referred with regret to the loss by death of nine valued members in the course of the year. Mrs. A. B. Brannon, of Wootton, widow of the late Colonel C. W. Brannon, a founder member of the Society, and herself a member of long standing, died in February. Mr. W. E. Griffin, formerly of Ryde, also a founder member, who had celebrated his 100th birthday in January, unhappily died in April. In May, Mrs. E. J. Coles, formerly of Seaview, died in Portishead, Bristol, where her husband remains an Honorary Member. In June, Miss "Peggy" Parker, of Ryde, who joined the Society in 1942 and was until recently a most active member, passed away. Mr. H. Fuller-Clark, of Shanklin, died in August, leaving a widow, to whom our sympathies are extended. In October, Miss Elise Hewland, formerly of Whitwell, who designed the Society's Emblem, died after a long illness, and Mrs. W. Hibberd, of Shalfleet, also died, leaving her husband to whom our sincerest sympathies are extended. Early in the New Year, members were saddened to hear of the deaths of Mrs. Clarice Richardson and Mr. S. T. Waite, obituaries for whom appear elsewhere in these *Proceedings.* Members stood in silent tribute.

In his opening address, the President reported that membership stood at 556, a net increase of 41 on last year's figure. He reviewed the year's activities, and regretted that attendance was sometimes disappointing. He asked whether the Programme Committee was providing the type of programme members wanted and appealed for suggestions from members. He commended the work of the Sections and hoped that offers to become Section Leaders would be forthcoming. The Society had recently received a very welcome gift from Miss Wakely, who was not a member. Her father

was a nationally known amateur entomologist of repute, who had specialised in micro-moths. He was born at Shide, but spent most of his life away from the Island, although he accompanied the late Mr. J. Lobb on his expeditions in the 1950's. In his memory Miss Wakely presented a large mercury vapour lamp, 12 cases of specimens of micro-moths, some books and two small empty cases. The lamp will be available for members to use, the specimens have been placed on permanent loan to the County Museums Service, the books are in our Library, and the cases have been passed to a member.

In the Secretary's Report, Mrs. L. Snow, the Minuting Secretary, stated that Mrs. J. Greaves had been taken ill in the autumn and had to relinquish her secretarial duties. Members joined the Council in wishing her a speedy recovery. Mrs. Toni Goodley had agreed to undertake the job temporarily and would be standing for election at this meeting. She thanked all those who have helped in the distribution of programmes, etc., during the year.

The Treasurer, in his report, appealed for more members to sign covenant forms, as the Society benefitted considerably. The Statement of Income and Expenditure appears elsewhere in these *Proceedings*. Committee Reports on Publications, Library, Conservation and Local Look, which had been previously circulated, were received and adopted. Some of these are reproduced elsewhere in these *Proceedings*.

In Botanical Notes for 1979, previously circulated, the Botany Recorder, Mr. Bill Shepard, reported a most vigorous and exciting year, with nine new records, which would be published, with others, as a supplement to the I.W. Flora in due course. The Bird Recorder, Mr. J. Stafford, drew the attention of members to details of current surveys shown on display boards at the back of the hall. He appealed for help with the Rookery Census, which would be repeated in 1980 and in response to a request that a resumé of past Rookery Surveys should be published in the *Proceedings,* he stated that the large amount of information available would make it very expensive, but he hoped to do a report some time.

Reports by Society Representatives on other societies, which had been previously circulated were received and adopted. As the Society's representative on the Hants and I.W. Naturalists' Trust, Mr. P. Ewbank stated that the emphasis had been on conservation projects. A fencing project to protect the Field Cow-wheat at St. Lawrence had been most successful. Other tasks included scrub clearance in Swan Pond Copse, on Tennyson Down, along the Newtown Nature Trail, in the Freshwater Marsh and in Stag Copse. Other work was also done at Newtown and a pond-clearing task was started at Mottistone. In the summer the Trust's Conservation Officer, Mr. Colin Beard, who was also assistant conservation officer in the Society, moved to the mainland, and he was thanked for all his hard work. The Area Board Chairman, Mr. Andy Keay, had launched a Conservation Action Group and it was hoped that members would not only contribute knowledge and advice, but also give physical help. The Trust was also carrying out a survey of Otters and proposed to offer training, if sufficient members were interested. It was agreed that this should be organised through the Mammals Section.

Consideration was then given to the offer by Mr. and Mrs. de Neuville to the Society of the lease of Atkies Copse, near Shalfleet, for management and conservation. Council had considered all aspects very carefully and recommended acceptance. After considerable discussion, it was agreed, with only two against, to endorse the Council's recommendations and proceed with negotiations to acquire the lease of the copse.

Votes of thanks were proposed to retiring officers and members of the Council.

Officers and Council members were then elected as shown elswhere in these *Proceedings*.

Miss Middleton reported on the serious position caused by the Trustees of Carisbrooke Castle requiring that all excavation and other material should be removed from the Castle Museum. At present some of the material was at Bembridge Library, but other accommodation was badly needed and she appealed to members to bring this matter to the attention of County Council members. Mr. Bill Shepard appealed for trees and shrubs for the grounds of the Crematorium.

After tea, kindly provided by Mrs. K. Wadham and helpers, a showing of colour slides taken by members of the year's activities was made, with commentary by Mr. O. H. Frazer.

SECTION REPORTS

Access to the Countryside

The section suffered a severe setback by the illness and death of their dedicated leader, Mrs. Clarrie Richardson, to whom an obituary appears elsewhere in these *Proceedings*. In the absence of a leader, members of the section agreed to share the task of leading walks in different parts of the Island, and the following programme of events was arranged:

14th January	Meet at Totland Bay for a circular walk of 4 to 5 miles. Leaders: Mr. and Mrs. Mills.
18th February	Meet at Brading for a circular walk of about 5 miles. Leader: Barbara Buckingham.
11th March	Meet at Rowborough for a circular walk of 4 to 5 miles. Leader: Betty Devereux.
8th April	Meet at Whitwell Chapel for a walk of about 3 miles in the Stenbury Down area. Leaders: Mr. and Mrs. Everard.
15th April	Meet at St. Helens for a walk of 4 to 5 miles. Leader: Avril Wayte.
6th May	Meet at Blackwater for a walk of approximately 5 miles. Leaders: Mr. and Mrs. Hodgson.
24th June	Meet at the Viewpoint Car Park, Blackgang, for a walk of about 5 miles. Leader: Betty Devereux.
15th July	Meet at Gatcombe Church for a walk of about 5 miles. Leader: Barbara Buckingham.
16th September	Meet at Whitwell Chapel for a walk of about 5 miles. Leaders: Mr. and Mrs. Everard.
7th October	Meet in Wroxall for a walk of 5 miles. Leaders: Mr. and Mrs. Head.

4th November	Meet at Yarmouth for a walk of 5 miles. Leaders: Mr. and Mrs. Mills.
2nd December	Meet at St. Dominic's Priory, Carisbrooke, for a walk of about 5 miles. Leader: Barbara Buckingham.

Archaeology

In February the Section heard a talk on the history of Newtown by Mr. Robert Adams, and in March a number of members went to Southampton, where they were shown round the extensive excavations by the Director and also visited the remarkable system of vaults beneath the town, some of which had served as air-raid shelters during the last war.

In May a most interesting field-walk up the dry valley of Newbarn, led by David Tomalin, was regrettably curtailed by a violent hail-storm, literally "out of the blue". Better weather was enjoyed in June, when the Section visited the village of Niton, where, by the kindness of the owners, members were able to inspect some of the older houses and the remains of a Tudor barn.

During July a small amount of work was done at Combley Roman Villa, directed by the Field Officer, Miss Vicky Bishop, and in September Bill Shepard led a fascinating walk from St. Dominic's Priory round through Clatterford and Carisbrooke.

Dr. Alan Insole gave a talk in November on "Stones in Archaeology". Among the slides shown were examples of Isle of Wight stone used in various types of buildings on the mainland. This was followed in December by a geological talk with references to prehistoric archaeology.

M. G. MIDDLETON

Botany

As the season was so cold we postponed our first meeting to 31st March, when a large number of members met at Providence Farm, Ningwood, and Mr. and Mrs. de Neuville took us to see Atkies Copse, for which it has been proposed that the Society should accept responsibility for management and conservation. The copse stands a field away from the road, and is on heavy clay. A small stream skirts it and runs northwards into the Newtown Estuary, and there is a public right of way from the Yarmouth road to Providence Farm, and this goes past the copse. The area is not large, but it has a typical woodland flora and, at the time of our visit, was carpeted with wild daffodils and the lesser blue periwinkle.

On 1st April we met on the Duver at St. Helens hopefully to see the ephemerals, the annual flowering plants that come very early. We were a small group, led by Reg. Kettell, who had found a very few examples to show us. It was cold and really too early for the flowers, and those who went for the walk were well rewarded and learnt a lot about the harsh environment of the Duver.

On 19th May we had an all day meeting to make a survey of Headon Hill for the National Trust. Mr. Burn was the leader and we spent the morning exploring the shore line from Totland Bay to Alum Bay, recording as we went. This time the weather was fine, and we were joined by further members at a secondary meeting point after lunch. Mr. Burn allocated different areas of the hill to small groups and we worked independently, meeting on the Turf Walk at Totland at the end of the afternoon. Mr. Burn has worked to co-ordinate the lists, which will be passed to the National Trust.

On 17th June about 12 members met at Newchurch. We looked at the marsh plants behind the church and were delighted with the varied flora of one old meadow on the way down to the old railway track, along which we returned. There were magnificent marsh orchids to the south of the path, and there were dragonflies everywhere.

On 27th June a small group of members walked up on to Brook Down for an evening walk. There was a rich downland flora, but few orchids.

On 14th July over 20 members met to walk over High Down, Freshwater. We started from the chalk pits behind the High Down Inn and after much searching for the frog orchid, one specimen was found in bud (a week later rabbits had eaten it!). There was concern expressed about the placing of a seat by the Tennyson Memorial, also of the wear to the turf from horse riding. The cutting of bramble and gorse was noted, and a report is to be made to the National Trust.

On 23rd September over 30 members visited Hillier's Arboretum, near Romsey. A misty wet day gave us a rather damp walk, but the trees and shrubs were spectacular and we met the director, Roy Lancaster, who spent some time telling us about his trip to China and also talked about the management of the Arboretum.

The last outside visit was on 21st October in Parkhurst Forest to record the flowering plants. We started this survey in April, 1978, and met each month on the first Sunday up to August, so this was a continuation of that exercise.

In response to our request to record plants growing in Island Churchyards and Cemeteries, we now have at least eleven being surveyed. Perhaps next year we can cover more of them.

MISS K. PAGE

Entomology

The section was re-started this year and, although lacking a leader, held several successful meetings which were programmed with the aim of observing certain groups of insects as follows:

3rd June	The President led a walk along the Eastern Yar from Sandown Water Works to Alverstone, returning via Blackpan Common. Damselflies and butterflies. A Green Hairstreak was seen.
5th August	Oliver Frazer showed us how to identify grasshoppers on Luccombe Down.
11th August	Pat Ewbank led a moths meeting at dusk at the Newtown Nature Reserve. Apart from moths various species of grasshoppers, bush-crickets and flies were identified.
19th August	The President and Pat Ewbank led a meeting in Parkhurst Forest. Many species of butterflies, grasshoppers, crickets and flies were recorded. The rare fly *Physocephala nigra* was found.
2nd September	Oliver Frazer furthered our knowledge of grasshoppers on Headon Hill.
13th October	Norman Holland led a moths meeting at his home at Queen Bower. Apart from moths, a Great Green Bush Cricket, Wood Crickets and Dark Bush Crickets were seen.
16th November	An indoor meeting at Newport to arrange future programmes and to see slides taken by members during the year.

J. M. CHEVERTON

Geology

Meetings were arranged as follows:

24th February	Bonchurch
21st April	Culver Cliff
26th May	Shanklin and Luccombe Bay
23rd June	Freshwater Bay
7th July	Compton Bay
4th August	Whitecliff and Howgate Bays
15th September	Grange Chine
20th October	Hamstead Cliff
17th November	Steephill Cove
14th December	"The Pleistocene and Recent History of The British Isles", by Dr. A. N. Insole

A. N. INSOLE

Mammals, Reptiles and Amphibians

Following the finding of a Grey Squirrel, *Sciurus carolinensis,* which had been knocked down by a car at Wootton on 23rd October, 1978 (see *Proceedings,* Vol. VII, Part III, p. 202), we were asked by Dr. A. Tittensor, of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food at Chichester, to undertake a survey of all the woods and copses within a one mile radius of Palmer's Brook, to see if there were any signs of a breeding colony of Grey Squirrels, which might account for the specimen found. The survey was to be under the supervision of Mr. Hardie Crozier, MAFF Regional Pest Officer, Reading, to whom any findings were to be sent.

Accordingly, a series of meetings was arranged, starting at dawn each Saturday morning from 10th February to 31st March, inclusive. An average of six members attended on each occasion, when a different area of woodland was chosen and thoroughly explored for dreys, feeding signs and sightings of squirrels. The weather was cold, with some snow on occasions, but the task was completed satisfactorily, resulting in the finding of 44 dreys, 11 feeding sites and 11 positive sightings of squirrels, which were all, without exception, Red Squirrels, *Sciurus vulgaris.* On re-visiting some of the dreys later, it was observed that a number had been dismantled, possibly by rooks and crows for nest-building material, but others were clearly still in use. One structure, however, in a small area of woodland behind houses and close to the area where the Grey Squirrel was found, was clearly different from the other dreys observed, and this was suspected as being possibly connected with the Grey Squirrel. On 11th April, this was examined by Mr. Hardie Crozier, and, on being poked down with a long pole provided by Mr. D. Roberts, it was disclosed as being an "upside-down crow's nest"!

As a result of the information obtained, therefore, it would seem that there is a healthy population of Red Squirrels in the area, and there were no indications of a breeding colony of Grey Squirrels, although it must be stated that the largely deciduous areas of woodland would be most favourable to Grey Squirrels, should they get a foothold. The opportunity was taken to warn many residents in the area, who regularly see squirrels, to keep an on-going watch and report any Grey Squirrels immediately. As a result, a number of Red Squirrels were reported at intervals, and a further Grey Squirrel was found dead in almost the same area towards the end of the year. (See Natural History Notes at the end of these *Proceedings*).

On 7th April a further meeting was held at the Brook House Hotel, Binstead, to explore the area for Grey Squirrels, following the report of one seen crossing the road. A comprehensive search was undertaken by kind permission of Mr. Horne, of the Brook House Hotel, and also Mr. and Mrs. Gordon-Walker, who live opposite, and kindly gave us permission to search their lovely grounds. Signs of squirrel feeding activity were seen, but no Grey Squirrels were observed.

In the meantime (in late February), in response to "a cry for help on the final leg of the current dormouse survey" from Miss Elaine Hurrell, of the Mammal Society, an appeal was made to members to get out and search for evidence of dormice – particular the characteristically gnawed nuts and disused nests. The response from members was excellent and as a result a large number of records, with supporting evidence, were sent to Miss Hurrell, who acknowledged them most gratefully.

During the next three months the attention of the section turned towards the sighting, photography and identification of dolphins at sea, in response to an appeal for records by the Mammal Society. On 12th May members met at the La Falaise Car Park at Ventnor, from which there is a good view of the sea. Cameras were set up, and the opportunity was also taken to search for the Wall Lizards, known to breed in this area. The weather was not favourable, however, and neither lizards nor dolphins were seen. The opportunity was taken to test the cameras by focussing on a sailing ship well out to sea and the results were encouraging, so that, if dolphins appeared, it should be possible to get good photographs. In the afternoon we visited the grounds of Lisle Combe, St. Lawrence, by kind permission of Mr. and Mrs. H. Noyes, where palmate and common smooth newts were observed. On 23rd June the cameras were set up on the cliff top to the east of Grange Chine, Brighstone, but once again no dolphins were observed. On 7th July all the heavy equipment was carried down the Devil's Chimney to the Landslip at Bonchurch, from which there was again a good view of the sea. Although no dolphins appeared, it was a pleasure to explore the surrounding area, with its rich flora, including many orchids.

On 13th October a small mammal survey was carried out in the grounds of Brook Hill, Brook, by kind invitation of Mrs. Karen Todd. The first round at 7.30 a.m. yielded 26 Wood Mice from thirty Longworth Inspection Boxes, which by any standard is a very high catch-rate. Examining the boxes every two hours throughout the course of the day yielded five Bank Voles, none of which were recaptures, and all except one from the deciduous woods, mostly horse chestnut and silver birch, on the lower slopes, where there was an almost complete ground cover of ivy. There were ample signs of feeding by red squirrels in the pine woods above the house and one drey was observed.

Members continued to make their own observations of all mammals, reptiles and amphibians and on 23rd November an informal meeting was held to review the year's work and make future plans.

The most exciting event, however, was reserved for the very end of the year, when Mrs. Audrey Wilkinson, of the Youth Hostel, Whitwell, gave me a grass nest, which she had found at Bury Lane, Niton. I sent it to the national recorder, Mr. Stephen Harris, who confirmed that it was undoubtedly the nest of the Harvest Mouse, *Micromys minutus*. This is the first positive record for this species in the Island since the section was formed. (See Natural History Notes at the end of these *Proceedings* for fuller details).

O. H. FRAZER

Maritime Archaeology

This is a new Section, which was formed during the year. The group met on several occasions during the summer on Fishbourne beach to draw and record the slipways of List's abandoned shipyard. We also carried out a preliminary excavation of a small vessel buried near the slipways. These slipways are endangered by the proposed British Rail car ferry expansions and are being severely eroded by the present ferries' wash.

The group's winter activities continued the compilation of a register of existing Island built craft. An appeal was made for any information that members may have, or know the whereabouts of, relating to any photographs, documents or objects concerning the Island's maritime heritage, which can be recorded in a file for future research.

HILTON MATTEWS

Microscopy

Meetings were held as follows:

13th March	Members met at the home of Mr. Norman Holland, B.Sc. The subject was "Seeds". Mr. Holland, a specialist seed producer, showed a fascinating variety of seeds of very many shapes and sizes, making wonderful shows under the lower powers of the microscope.
12th June	A meeting at the home of Mr. F. E. Neat. A really good microscope and its auxiliary apparatus are very expensive items, but Mr. Neat showed a variety of home-made microscopic and photographic appliances which worked efficiently and had saved him much costly outlay. A large number of photographs were shown, taken directly through his microscopes.
2nd October	At a meeting at Headquarters there was a discussion on making the most efficient use of a microscope. Members brought a large number of slides and objects for examination, including seeds.
28th October	As usual a number of microscopes were set up at the annual fungus display. The examination of their microscopic spores is often essential for the identification of species.

D. ROBERTS

Ornithology

A disappointing year with a late breeding season. The total number of species seen at section meetings this year was the lowest since the section was formed. Meetings were arranged as follows:

20th January	East bank of the River Medina between Folly Inn and Binfield. 40 species seen, including a Slavonian Grebe, 5 Pintails, 12 Tufted Ducks, 3 Goldeneyes, and 10 Turnstones.
24th February	Brighstone Down. A surprisingly poor day with only 8 species seen.
25th March	Firestone Copse and Wootton Mill Pond. Only 16 species seen.
21st April	At "The Firs", St. Lawrence, by the kind invitation of Mrs. C. Pelham, with the object of looking from the top of the Undercliff

	into the rookeries. Contents of nests varied from eggs to well-grown young. There were approximately 108 nests at Owl Cottage and 65 at Mirables, the site of the earliest rookery recorded on the Island.
29th April	Eastern Yar from Sandown Water Works to beyond Alverstone. 42 species were seen. Various summer migrants which might have been expected were absent and there were few indications of nesting. No sand martins had arrived at the pit where they usually nest.
25th May	Corf Heath Firs to London Heath. 22 species were seen or heard, including 5 nightingales.
16th June	Brading Marsh from Brading Railway Station to Centurion's Copse. 41 species were seen including a Cetti's Warbler which was singing strongly in a suitable nesting habitat.
25th August	Newtown Nature Reserve. Poor viewing conditions accounted for a disappointing total of 17 species.
21st September	Yarmouth Estuary and the pond near the old railway station. The meeting was held late in the day to observe any evening movements, but poor visibility in overcast conditions limited observations to 18 species. 30 Pied Wagtails were seen, apparently preparing to roost among the reeds in the pond.
10th November	East bank of the River Medina between Folly Inn and Binfield. The sight of a Shorelark, which allowed a close approach as it foraged along the shore-line, was the highlight of the meeting.
7th December	Indoor meeting at Newport to plan future activities. Jim Cheverton gave a brief talk, with slides, on the Tit family.
9th December	The meeting planned for Bembridge was cancelled because of heavy rain.

Various members again took part in Wild Fowl Counts, B.T.O. Estuary Counts, the B.T.O. Nest Record Scheme, and the R.S.P.B. Beached Birds Survey, and provided data for the Wintering Blackcaps Survey and the Ring-necked Parakeet Survey.

J. M. CHEVERTON

Seashore

It was hoped that a start could be made in 1979 on a survey of the distribution of the littoral flora and fauna of the Isle of Wight coastline, but a combination of circumstances, particularly the weather, disrupted the first part of the year's programme and we got off to a bad start.

Unfortunately support for the project turned out to be rather poor and the study was therefore soon abandoned.

One very pleasant meeting which was well attended took place at Brook Bay and Hanover Point in May. The weather was ideal and although this site doesn't produce large numbers of animals it is beautifully rich in red algae to test our identification skills.

L. BATTY

CONSERVATION REPORT FOR 1979

By Dorothy Frazer

After an apparent dichotomy of interests this year has seen the drawing together of those organisations which have, or who are developing conservation working parties and this Society, which has so much knowledge of the natural environment. The results of this can be seen in the various items in the current bulletin, and in the account of the "Local Look" exhibition. One event arising from the exhibition was a request from the Director of the Medina Valley Centre for a small display featuring some aspects of the Society's role in conservation, to be on view during a weekend seminar entitled "Caring for God's Earth". The display made use of the panels shown at "Local Look" headed "Look at Churchyards", "Look at Lichens", and a special central panel relating to the conservation aims of the Society. Also on view was the 1979 "Year of the Child" panel which had formed the background to the Childrens book table. The display was shown at the St. John's Church Hall, Newport, on 13th/14th October and created interest.

Practical conservation work was carried out by some members of the conservation committee at the wood calamint site and they also helped at the field cow-wheat site. In both cases the land owners were co-operative and work was rewarded by an increase in flowers. The publication of the "Flora of the Isle of Wight" had been appreciated by botanists from far afield who not unnaturally wish to see our local rarities. This poses problems and members of the Society who are asked to divulge certain locations are advised to pass these requests to either the Botanical Recorder, the Botany Section Leader or the Conservation Officer.

The Management plan of the **Newtown Nature Reserve** has been published after much deliberation. Mr. Herbert Axell, representing the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, visited the Reserve and drew up plans for possible improvements that could be made to encourage the breeding of Little Terns. The formation of an enlarged "Scrape" near the observation tower was proposed and an appeal made for contributions.

The Council for the Protection of Rural England (I.W. Branch) devotes much of its committee time to the vetting of planning applications and considering the effect on the environment which they might have. On the practical side, tree seedlings raised by members were planted out in a plot in Parkhurst Forest by kind permission of Mr. Sherwood, head forester, for further growth. Meanwhile, young trees from the C.P.R.E. nursery at King's Manor, Freshwater, were planted at a site in Hoxall Lane, Mottistone, made available by Mr. W. A. P. Wykeham, and to be known as "Mark's Copse". Other possible tree planting sites have been inspected.

The request for the collecting of wild flower seeds for subsequent sowing on suitable road side verges evoked no response from members of our Society. There are several seedsmen who offer wild flower seeds on sale, and I would suggest that members might care to establish a wild flower plot in their own gardens, as this can be most rewarding.

South Wight Management Advisory Committee for Freshwater Marshes

At a meeting held in November it was reported that the acquisition of land at Blackbridge might soon be completed. This would form a link with the two areas of marsh. A footpath and timber bridge would be required to complete the walk. The

Society has been asked to think about providing material for a comprehensive nature trail leaflet. Other matters under discussion included tree planting and the problems relating to water levels in the marsh, and general management.

Island Conservation Areas Advisory Committee

During the year I have attended meetings in Yarmouth, Freshwater and Shanklin, where working parties and on-site inspections have taken place, and in Newport for the Annual General Meeting. Some of these meetings have been attended by representatives of public services who have been most co-operative. The I.W. County Council South East Plan, the latest of the local plans to be published, envisages further conservation areas, and members of this society may have helpful views on this matter.

Although Mr. Colin Beard, who initiated much valuable conservation work, has left the Island, we can be sure that the good work will be carried on with the help of the new groups referred to at the beginning of the report (Hants & I.W. Naturalists' Trust, the Conservation Corps, the I.W. Young National Trust Group and others including affiliated schools).

LOCAL LOOK REPORT FOR 1979

By Mrs. K. Wadham

With the growing interest in conservation, we felt that the theme "Keep a Place for Wildlife", would be popular with the visitors as well as an appropriate lead up to the European Campaign for Conservation, and as a result, the sections of the Society produced their colourful displays, arranged in "habitats".

The window display, planned by the I.W. Technical Unit, showed what action the Island Authorities are taking, to keep a place for wildlife. Changes in modern farming, forestry and recreational activities, are unfortunately reducing the size and quality of wildlife habitats, but the creation of two country parks and a nature reserve, is a step in the right direction. The County Council has helped in felling and replacing diseased Elm trees, and help has also been given with other planting schemes. We are pleased to note the Council's promise – "where development in the countryside is necessary, it will, where possible, save the beauty, wildlife and character of the rural landscape".

The geological structure of the Island is responsible for the vegetation and the differing environments around us.

The archaeological display showed that changes in the Island's vegetation, produced by changes in climate, followed by the appearance of Man and his activities, may be determined by examination of pollen grains which have been preserved for many hundreds of thousands of years. The appearance of agricultural communities and the clearance of forests, have caused changes, further increased by pollution and urban growth, but good as well as bad results may also be found.

The ridge of chalk downs across the centre of the Island, from E to W has its own typical flora and fauna, while the prominent cliffs at either end, provide safe homes and nesting places for many seabirds.

Woodlands give a sheltered home to plant and animal life. The deciduous trees have

abundant undergrowth, the pine woods almost none, and as the seasons progress, flowers, birds, animals and insects live their own lives in their own habitats, enjoying the plenty of Summer and preparing for the scarcity of Winter.

Hedges, banks and verges which have been a feature of our landscape for hundreds of years, providing sanctuary for the birds, insects and numerous other small creatures are now unfortunately disappearing – larger fields for larger machines – but the Island is still lucky to have many miles of hedgerow habitat, carefully preserved.

Churches and graveyards, quiet, peaceful and undisturbed, are important habitats, having their own particular growth of mosses, ferns and lichens.

Ponds and streams have their own interesting wildlife which, for a time, was in danger when ponds were gradually vanishing. Since the drought of 1976, however, many landowners have excavated large ponds which will thus produce increased plant and animal life for the future.

The growth of the towns has buried many of the natural habitats under roads and buildings, but even here, birds, insects, flowering and seeding plants, even badgers and foxes may still be found. We can all, in our own gardens, provide a small corner for wildlife.

Estuaries are the most productive of all habitats and on the Island, we are fortunate that Newtown has been declared a Nature Reserve and the County Council is in the process of developing the Medina as a Country Park.

Our last display was the seashore, where plants and animals are adapted to survive in the harsh conditions under which they live. This is a fascinating area, where we may see and observe so easily but where the threat of pollution is an ever increasing danger. Plants and animals can cope with the weather and tides, but not with Man's activities. What can we do to help?

In addition to being a lead-up to the European Campaign for conservation, this was also the "year of the child", so the top display was of posters sent in by Island Primary Schools for a competition based on the Radio Solent series – "On the beach". The selected subject was "Pollution on the Beach".

This, our 19th Local Look, was exceedingly colourful and brought forth many admiring comments. From a statistical point of view, we were down on the number of visitors by nearly 1,000 – 6,500 as against 7,400 in 1978 (blame the good weather), but our profits were greater – after all expenses were paid and donations made to the R.S.P.C.A. and the Sussex Nature Reserve.

Local Look is essential to the finances of the Society. It is hard work, on the part of a very small number of members and I sincerely thank all those who so generously give of their time. I would like to thank Mr. V. Wadham for the use of his store for our equipment; those who helped with "setting up" and "taking down" the Exhibition; those who planned and arranged the displays; the Schools Transport Dept., for their invaluable help in carrying our gear from the store to Seely Hall, and back at the end of the month; finally my thanks to our loyal little band of stewards, diminishing in number, but still managing to cover the whole of August – plus the extra day or two when the calendar so decrees.

If you are a new member – or even if an old member who has so far not shown willing – please offer to help with the stewarding. It is an interesting way to pass a morning or afternoon, or two, and you meet many genuinely keen nature lovers who have become the Society's friends over the years. You don't need to be an expert. Lead them to our Library of beautiful books and let them find out for themselves.

NEWTOWN SURVEY REPORT, 1979

By L. E. L. Cox

I am pleased to present an outline report of our Twenty-first Survey at Newtown, held this year from Saturday, May 19th to Sunday, June 3rd. The exhibition itself presents the detail and comparative records that reflect the variety of life and changes in communities of some plants and animals of the Reserve.

The two weeks again catered for two groups of differing ages and experience. The first groups consisting mainly of third years. Fortunately the presence of abler hands, namely Jonathan Cox, Ian Way, David Elford, Christopher Stroud, David and Robin Grant and Ashley Small helped considerably in setting up camp and establishing both domestic and survey routines.

I am pleased to record that both groups worked with enthusiasm and were responsive and co-operative throughout their time at Newtown. We experienced the worst weather conditions for many years. Continuous, heavy rain reduced the site to a morass of liquid mud. The store tent had to be re-sited because of a mud flow that converged on its entrance and the surrounds of the fire had to be raised in order to prevent the fire pit becoming a lake. Despite the adverse conditions, pupils remained cheerful and uncomplaining and it is to their credit that they completed their tasks happily and successfully. Many students were impressed by the sound of the approaching storms as they lay listening in their sleeping bags. A quiet stillness being broken by the approaching roar before the wind hit us.

Although work was at times hampered by the wet conditions most of the usual activities were undertaken and were as follows:

MAMMALS

Small Mammal trapping

The work of trapping and recording continued this year and was expanded to include some new habitats. Traps were set up on the North Cliff, beside one of the main ponds and on the marsh. The difference in the catches revealing that the wood mice were more widely distributed than the voles. It remains for next year's group to try to decide what may be the factors that restrict the bank voles to certain sites. Tracey Hart was again the leader of this group. She has assembled an impressive record for the last three years and is to be thanked for the many hours she has spent in assembling and presenting her records. Tracey was very well supported by Margaret Scott and Anita Colebrook who took pride in their work and exhibited patience in introducing the newcomers to their studies.

Rabbits

The distribution and size of the rabbit population was a new study this year and was undertaken by Nicholas Cox. He has a display to himself and on-going study that should provide interest and raise questions over the next two or three years.

BOTANY

Flower Studies

Catherine Aylward was again able to check the distribution of orchids but because we were earlier in the field this year, an entirely different picture was obtained. The common Spotted orchid was not out but we were presented with the poportunity of recording and mapping the early purple orchid which was in full flower and abundant. Catherine was also able to supplement her art folder in preparation for admission to Southampton College of Art and we have two samples of her work on display.

Fungi

The wet and humid conditions this year provided us with an unexpected bonus in the variety of fungi that sprang up. Twelve species were identified and gave the photographers excellent opportunities for studies in form and colour.

SEA SHORE AND CLIFFS

The work here falls into four groups.

Coast Erosion

The datum line was again measured and records reveal little loss of material from the cliff face other than some minor slumping. The slide showing the mud flow is illustrative of the effects of recent heavy rainfall. The work was again supervised by Jonathan Cox who was ably assisted by third year recruits James Hayles, Robert Collier and Angus Belcher.

Geology

Robert, James and Angus were involved for the majority of their time in measuring and mapping the extent of the Bembridge Limestone exposed in the face of the North cliff. Their drawings illustrate the sections made and indicate the predominant fossils identified.

Sea Shore

Alan Bearwish undertook to examine the plants and animals distributed along a line from the North Cliff to the low water mark and to complete a survey for marine research which is to be sent to the S.W. Survey Centre, Plymouth.

His own transect reveals the main shore zones as far as the plants are concerned but he will have to be more specific about the animals when he returns to check his line again next spring.

Fossil Hunting on the Reef

This proved a popular task again this year, but we sadly missed our "veterans" of former years Andrew and Guy. Nevertheless, our new recruits were diligent in their searches and very good with their mapping. They gained in knowledge and experience and were soon able to distinguish bison and elephant from the modern remains of sheep and pig. Chris Stroud in particular began to exhibit the uncanny knack of spotting fossils that everyone else had missed. Our searches were hampered by neap tides

that prevented us from reaching some of the richer beds, although a return in the summer holidays on springs did not produce much more in the way of finds.

In looking for fossils we had also hoped to check the Zostera beds and look for flowering specimens, but the water did not recede sufficiently for us to get to them.

MOTHS AND BUTTERFLIES

The weather made its most significant mark in this work. Very little was available in the form of either moths or butterflies, although newcomers were able to spend time in identifying the limited numbers of specimens of butterflies available and will be in a good position next year to consider distribution of species and available food supplies.

The moth trapping was extremely curtailed as the risk of filling the trap with water and drowning specimens was too great.

POND SURVEY

Chris Stroud, Ian Way and David Elford were able to make a comparison of their records of the previous year and their display illustrates the minor changes in populations that were noticeable.

BIRDS

There was an increase in the number of nesting birds at Newtown this year. The display map shows the distribution and number of species and the varying habitats. An unusual record was the appearance of a gannet, presumably weakened and driven in by storms. It was unable to recover and died on the saltings within 48 hours. The work of recording and discovering nesting sites was enthusiastically pursued by Robert Smallman, Miles Downer, Alistair Cardno and Michael Williams. The colourful display assembled by Michael is most praiseworthy and the careful and accurate mapping completed by Miles and Robert has enabled the records for the last three years to be presented.

For the first time for many years a sky lark's nest was actually found; much to the delight of Mr. Etherington who had remarked, previously to discovering the nest, that there were always plenty of sky larks about but that he had never managed to find a nest. He always gives us full support at Newtown and we are grateful for the slides he has contributed this year.

The birds of the estuary and marsh suffered badly this year as many nest and eggs were washed away by the very high tides coinciding with gales on May 25th and 26th. Black-headed gull, herring gull, and redshank all suffered. Gary Ward had the experience of sitting in a hide to find that suddenly his boots had filled with water whilst he was concentrating on filming. He became a little concerned as high winds whipped up the waves, threatening to convert his hide into an amphibious vehicle.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Students were able to benefit from the teaching and fund of knowledge that Mr. Oliver Frazer always brings to Newtown. In particular we are always indebted to him for his advice in photographic work and for the subsequent developing and printing.

Unfortunately his lessons were not well-learned this year and the black and white photography was not successful. Misjudged distances, wrong aperture settings, neglect in winding on, led to disastrous results.

I hope we at least will have learned from our mistakes.

The cine photography was however more successful as is shown by the film taken, edited and assembled by the students. The prime movers in producing the film are Tracey Hart, Sheridan Small and Gary Ward. We have felt the need to produce photographic records of small mammals and this year sees the first of attempts at filming them.

SOCIAL HISTORY AND INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY

My wife, Mary, continues to glean details of the history of the occupants of the cottage at Brickfields and is indebted to Mr. Foss and the late Mr. Heal for their information regarding their recollections at Newtown and the activities of brick-making at Brickfields. Our display includes samples of bricks and an artist's impression of what the site probably looked like. We are pleased to have Mr. Mason's work on display and thank him for the interest he has shown in our enquiries. Any readers who knew the area long ago are asked to help fill in the gaps in our knowledge. Unanswered questions as yet are – how many chimneys did the kiln have and how high were they?

WARDENING

We had few visitors to the camp this year and apparently no trespassers. No doubt the weather was an important factor in limiting the number of visitors. We continued the policy of welcoming genuine enquiries and conducting tours of the area to show the various aspects of our work.

Our principal visitors this year were Mr. Geoff Beaver, Mr. David Hunnybun and the President of the Society, Mr. Jim Cheverton. They were able to check and confirm our bird records and added to our list a nesting oystercatcher. Mr. Beaver has supplemented our display with the photographs he took during his visit. The approaching Red Shank is effective and well described by Paul Gooch.

CONSERVATION

This work was also undertaken by pupils, in clearing scrub and bramble, an ever-increasing menace, in reconstructing the landing stage and clearing dead elms.

Mrs. Iris Gaskin was again with us and benefitted from her days in the open air despite the wet. I was again impressed by the concern and help extended to her by our pupils.

My thanks go to Mr. G. Ablitt, who allows us access over his land to transport stores and equipment. To Mr. Bert Long, who hauls the equipment, and finally to Pat Ewbank who is always at hand to support and advise us in our activities.

Finally, my thanks to all students who readily co-operated in work under difficult conditions and in particular to those students who have worked whole-heartedly in preparing the display.

Proc Isle Wight Natur Hist Archaeol Soc for 1979, Vol. VII, Pt. IV (1981), p. 236

BRYOLOGICAL NOTES for 1979

By Lorna Snow

1979 produced some interesting bryophyte records, with pride of place going to a visitor, Mr. C. C. Townsend, on holiday from the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew. Among the records he sent in were four new Vice County Records:

Trichostomopsis umbrosa (C. Mull) H. Robinson	from the Shanklin/Wroxall railway line
Ditrichum cylindricum (Hedw.) Grout	R. Medina above the wilderness
Campylopus pyriformis var *azoricus* (Mitt Corley)	fern stumps in the Wilderness

and one hepatic:

Southbya nigrella (De Not) Spruce	near St. Catherine's Point. The only other British station for this is Portland, and that is doubtfully extant.

All these records have been sent to the Recorders of the British Bryological Society. Not content with these, Mr. Townsend went on to find *Tortula rhizophylla* (Saki) Iwats & Saito, at Brook, and a very small stunted *Philonotis marchica* (Hedw.) Brid. in Shanklin Chine (see *Proceedings* I.W.N.H.A.S. 1977 Vol. III Pt. II p. 107-108). This has raised the possibility that the specimens found in 1964 were in fact *P.marchica* and not *P. rigida* Brid, as recorded. Comments from those taking part in the 1964 Excursion have been invited in the Bulletin of the Br. Bryological Society and are awaited with interest.

The *Tortula rhizophylla* is an interesting find. A very small, arable field moss, this was first discovered during the 1964 Excursion visit to the Island of the B.B.S. and was then thought to be new to science and was called *T. vectensis* Warb. & Crundw. Later it was found to have been described from Japan, and has also been found in Hawaii, Louisiana, Mexico and Bolivia. Brook was the only European station for it, until it was found in Italy in 1974. In spite of several searches by various people it had not been seen again until Mr. Townsend found it this summer.

Recording for the Biological Records Centre continued, although there is still a lot of work to be done. *Sphagnum sub-nitens* Russ. and *S. auriculatum* Schimp. growing on the vertical clay side of a ditch in Combley Great Wood were rather unexpected, and have been confirmed by the British Museum. Hopefully 1980 will produce some more good records.

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BIRD REPORT FOR 1979

By J. Stafford

The number of species recorded this year was 196 – exactly the same as in 1978.

Again no new species were added to the Island's list, but Red Kite and Shorelark had each been recorded only twice before. Other rare occurrences were Sooty Shearwater (for the sixth time). Goshawk, Glaucous Gull and Marsh Warbler (each for the seventh time) and Honey Buzzard (eighth).

The weather played its part right from the start of the year, when snow on the last day of 1978 was followed by various movements and unusual occurrences throughout January. The species involved, to varying extents, included Bittern, White-fronted Goose, Brent Goose, Pochard, Tufted Duck, Hen Harrier, Coot, Purple Sandpiper, Woodcock, Greenshank, Long-eared Owl, Skylark, Brambling and Hawfinch; details are to be found in the Systematic List. Further snow on January 27th also apparently affected some of the same species, and some additional ones: Water Rail, Knot, Short-eared Owl, Fieldfare and Redwing. The late spring delayed the arrival of some migrant species, and autumn gales stranded two Little Auks.

My thanks are again due to all those observers who took such trouble to submit their records.

Abbreviations, etc.

The sequence and vernacular names follow *The "British Birds" List of Birds of the Western Palearctic* (1978). Names of subspecies, where appropriate, and species numbers are taken from the British Trust for Ornithology's *Species List of British and Irish Birds* (1971).

♂: male. ♀: female.

S.C.P.: St. Catherine's Point.

Other initials in the Systematic List denote the observers concerned in certain categories of record (see *Report for 1969*).

Observers and Contributors

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SYSTEMATIC LIST

4 **Red-throated Diver.** S.C.P.: One on the sea on February 24th. A total of 16 flew E, March 25th – April 26th. There were rather more unidentified divers there, which are most likely to have been this species – 57 between March 25th and May 14th, all except 2 flying E.

The only one identified elsewhere was off Totland Pier on March 24th.

1 **Black-throated Diver.** One in Osborne Bay on January 3rd and 7th. 10 flew E past S.C.P., April 8th – 26th.

2 **Great Northern Diver.** Single birds in Osborne Bay on January 7th and April 1st, and at Quarr on March 17th, November 7th and December 16th. One flew E past S.C.P. on April 12th.

9 **Little Grebe.** At least 3 pairs bred at Bembridge – all seen with their young on July 8th. One in Quarr Marsh from May 18th to October 7th.

21 on W. Yar on December 24th.

5 **Great Crested Grebe.** Up to 3 on the W. Yar, January 8th-16th, and 1 there on February 8th. One at Newtown, January-March. One in the marina at Cowes, January 12th-18th. Small numbers frequent in Osborne Bay at both ends of year – most 4 on November 25th.

6 **Red-necked Grebe.** Several records, all off the N.E. coast:

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Nov.	Dec.		
	6th	4th	18th	12th	3rd	16th	
Osborne Bay		1					JMC, DJH
Woodside				3			MT
Quarr	1		2		2	2	FEH

7 **Slavonian Grebe.** Also mostly along the N.E. coast:

	Jan.				Feb.		Mar.	Dec.	
	3rd	7th	8th	15th	13th	17th-20th	18th	16th	29th
Osborne Bay		2							
Woodside	1		2	2					4
Quarr							3	2	
Seaview					1		1		
Bembridge						1			

Three other single birds in January: Freshwater Bay on 5th, near Folly on 20th, and at Newtown from 24th until February 3rd.

26 **Fulmar.** First on March 4th, at Main Bench. Several counts of up to 10 there in breeding season; on June 19th, 3 sitting on suitable ledges were being visited by other adults, but no young were seen.

At S.C.P., on typical April days 10-12 flew W: 30 to W on April 21st, and 63 to W on May 1st. Also 1 to W on August 26th.

Elsewhere, 2 at Seaview on April 4th, 2 at Bembridge on 7th, and 2 at Woodside on June 10th.

21 **Sooty Shearwater.** Single birds flew E past S.C.P. on August 12th, after storms (DBW), and past Whale Chine on September 18th (DTB). The sixth and seventh records for the Island.

16 **Manx Shearwater.** A few records at S.C.P. as usual: 20 to E on May 1st, 22 to E on 19th, and 1 to W on 26th. Also 21 flew E past Freshwater Bay on June 16th.

27 **Gannet.** Largest movements past S.C.P.:

March	April			September
25th	8th	9th	12th	2nd
61 to W	87 to E	89 to E	91 to E	36 to E, 5 to W

There were numerous records of smaller numbers there, March 9th-October 20th.

One off Ryde Pier in a southerly gale on May 23rd, and two days later one found dying on the Newtown saltings.

Also 1 at Freshwater Bay on June 17th, and 2 off Bonchurch on July 7th.

28 **Cormorant.** On June 19th, 293 counted from a boat between Yarmouth and Main Bench (JMC, DJH). (*Cf* very similar result in *Report for 1978*).

29 **Shag.** 7 occupied nests on Main Bench on June 19th.

One dead in Freshwater Bay on December 28th.

30 **Grey Heron.** 2 nests at Bembridge (JMC).

38 **Bittern.** An emaciated bird was found at Bembridge Pond on January 9th (JMC). It died while being cared for.

84 **Mute Swan.** 27 at Bembridge on January 14th. Two nests at Werrar were destroyed by tides (MW). A non-breeding pair in Quarr Marsh for most of June behaved aggressively towards calves (FEH).

86 **Bewick's Swan.** 3 off Fishbourne on February 4th (KVT).

76 **White-fronted Goose.** A gaggle stayed at Sudmoor, Brook, from January 3rd to 6th (MB, HC, JCG, JS, WKS); the number fluctuated between 28 and 39 – a genuine change, as they were easily counted. On 5th there were 28 at Sudmoor in the morning (JS), 7 flew N over Brighstone about midday (HC), and in the afternoon none could be found at Sudmoor but *c* 20 (presumably the remainder) were at Atherfield (WKS). Also on 5th, while 37 were on the ground, 31 others flew past to W (JCG).

Several other records in January. 28 at Yarmouth on 1st (possibly the ones which later appeared at Sudmoor), and 1 there on 13th-14th (PMcA, SMcA, JSL, JS). 40 flew E past S.C.P. on 9th (DBW). 4 at Newtown on 31st.

The only one outside January was at Yarmouth on March 18th (TG).

75 **Greylag Goose.** 5 E flew past S.C.P. on May 7th (JSL).

82 **Canada Goose.** Seen at Newtown for most of the year except August, with over 100 in January; did not breed. Quarr: 6 on March 12th, 3 on April 9th. Sandown Canoe Lake: 2 on April 3rd. Brading Marsh: 10 on August 12th. 12 in field at Hale Common on October 27th.

80 **Brent Goose.** Largest numbers at Newtown as usual, where the monthly maxima were:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
730	921	490	287	—	—	—	—	1	9	397	799

A bird of the pale-breasted race *hrota* was seen there on February 11th.

Numerous occurrences elsewhere. At Quarr, 75 on January 1st had increased to 203 by March 11th, but only 2 remained on April 13th; 5 on November 24th, 120 on December 30th. Others along the NE coast – possibly the Quarr birds wandering – were: Osborne, 7 on January 7th, 3 on February 4th, 10 on November 25th; Fishbourne, 100 on February 24th; Ryde Sands, 7 on March 14th, 12 on 15th, 23 on 16th. 5 by R. Medina on January 20th. 226 at Thorness Bay on November 18th were probably from Newtown. Yarmouth: 2 on January 8th, 2 on 17th, 3 on 19th, 5 on February 8th. Freshwater Bay: 5 flew over on January 4th, and 7 were on the sea on 28th. Bembridge: 5 on February 18th, 1 from October 27th to December 2nd. 29 grazing at Chale on February 4th. Movements past S.C.P., all to E: 17 on February 24th, 77 on April 8th, 7 on 11th.

73 **Shelduck.** 108 by R. Medina on January 20th. 147 in Brading Harbour on January 28th, when the adjacent ponds and marsh were frozen. The largest numbers at Newtown were 471 on February 25th and 400 on March 11th. 17 on the sea at S.C.P. on April 14th left to E.

Nesting: Newtown, 3 pairs; Quarr, 2 pairs; R. Medina, 2 pairs.

— **Mandarin.** A ♂ and 2 ♀ at Carisbrooke Waterworks on December 9th (MW).

50 **Wigeon.** Monthly maxima at Newtown:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
200	570	42	5	—	—	—	—	43	200	178	225

Yarmouth: 215 on January 13th, 183 on December 24th. 387 at Foreland on February 18th. 4 with White-fronted Geese at Sudmoor, January 4th-6th.

49 **Gadwall.** 2 ♂ at Bembridge on January 14th (JMC, DJH). Single birds flew E past S.C.P. on April 7th and 8th (JMC, DJH, DBW).

46 **Teal.** Monthly maxima at Newtown:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
220	495	75	—	—	—	12	57	190	400	440	548

127 in Brading Marsh on January 14th; numbers were low there at the end of the year, when there were unusually many at Yarmouth – 614 on December 24th.

Distraction display at Bembridge on May 15th.

45 **Mallard.** 67 young flew from 9 broods in Quarr Marsh. 240 at Bembridge on September 16th.

52 **Pintail.** Newtown: 108 on January 7th, 112 on February 25th, 150 on October 28th. 10 at Bembridge, January 14th. 5 by R. Medina, January 20th.

53 **Shoveler.** Surprisingly few at Newtown this year: only 1 on January 5th and a pair on 8th. Quarr: 3 on January 13th, 1 from November 23rd to December 24th. Foreland: 29 on February 4th, 49 on 26th, 30 on March 3rd, 58 on April 4th. A ♂ on Dunsbury Pool, Brook, on December 27th.

57 **Pochard.** The first recorded nesting in the Island occurred this year at Bembridge, where it had been expected for some years and suspected in 1978. A ♀ was present throughout the summer, and 3 ♂ on June 23rd. Both parents were seen with 8 young on July 1st (DJH). Meanwhile the presence of one on Wootton Creek in May and June is a reminder that there are other possible nesting localities.

55 on Sandown Canoe Lake on January 20th, decreasing until last on 30th. 2 at Quarr on January 13th. Yarmouth: 1, January 8th-16th (pair on 13th); 12, February 19th. 83 at Bembridge on November 18th.

56 **Tufted Duck.** At least one pair nested at Bembridge, for the fourth consecutive year.

Scattered occurrences in January: 8 in Freshwater Bay on 6th; 50 on Sandown Canoe Lake on 8th, decreasing until last on 30th; 49 at Bembridge on 14th; 12 on R. Medina on 20th.

4 flew E past S.C.P. on April 8th. A ♂ at Newtown on June 17th.

55 **Scaup.** A ♂ off Foreland on January 6th (JCG).

67 **Eider.** 2 at Newtown several times in January. 4 at Foreland on January 14th. 2 off Seaview on March 18th. 33 flew E past S.C.P. on April 11th. 2 ♀ off Headon Warren on May 8th.

64 **Common Scoter.** Spring movements of scoters past S.C.P., all to E:

	March	April							May	
	25th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th	14th	6th	7th
Common	90	14	619	300	205	188	19	83	90	155
Velvet			16					9		

Autumn passage to W included 2 at S.C.P. on September 2nd and 15 at Main Bench on 23rd.

Movements along the Solent coast more frequently depart from the norm of E in Spring and W in Autumn. Instances this year are 50 to W past Seaview on January 1st (not a good example, a hard-weather movement rather than a migration) and 6 to W past Woodside on March 3rd. It is conceivable that birds following the S coast to E allow it to lead them round into the Solent.

62 **Velvet Scoter.** One on St. Helens Mill Pond on February 11th (JMC). 2 off Seaview on March 30th and September 17th (SMN).

See also under Common Scoter, above.

60 **Goldeneye.** Newtown: 10 on January 24th, 11 on February 11th, 10 on 25th; first 1 of the autumn on October 26th; 10 on December 30th.

More than usual elsewhere, especially at the beginning of the year. Yarmouth: a ♂ on January 1st, 2nd and 10th; 1 ♀ on 24th; a pair on February 19th; 1 ♂ on 25th. 2 in Osborne Bay on January 7th. R. Medina: 3 on January 20th, 4 on February 11th. Bembridge: 3 on January 2nd, 2 on February 11th, 3 on 18th, 2 on October 24th.

71 **Smew.** Several records of a ♂ and ♀ in Brading Marsh between January 10th and February 20th. They moved around, being seen along the river and on the ponds, and were seen together only once, on January 16th. It may have been the same ♀ which was seen on the sea at Foreland on January 6th and 20th. (JMC, JCG, DJH, SMN, JS).

69 **Red-breasted Merganser.** Spring movements past S.C.P.:

April		May
8th	14th	5th
1 to E	8 to E	1 ♂ to W

The first autumn bird at Newtown was seen on November 2nd; 30 there twice in December. Seen also at Yarmouth, Osborne, Quarr, Seaview and Bembridge in winter.

70 **Goosander.** One flew W past Seaview on February 2nd (SMN).

98 **Honey Buzzard.** On September 22nd one flew N over High Down and continued towards the mainland (JSL). About the same time observers at Pennington, Hampshire, saw one arrive from the direction of the Island. This is the eighth record for the Island, and its circumstances closely resemble those of the fifth one (see *Report for 1972 and 1973*).

95 **Red Kite.** One at Newtown on January 7th (PMcA, SMcA) was mobbed by crows. It put up many birds, including Brent Geese.

One near Shalfleet on April 29th (PJE) was also mobbed, this time by gulls and crows, and flew away to SW. One at Yarmouth an hour later (SMcA) was presumably the same bird.

These are the third and fourth records for the Island.

97 **White-tailed Eagle.** On March 12th, 2 flew SE over Shanklin and continued out to sea (JMC). This is apparently the first record since 1932.

100 **Hen Harrier.** Following the arrival of one on December 24th, 1978 (*see Report for 1978*), up to four roosted in reeds along the West Yar regularly until February 22nd, and 1 or 2 occasionally until March 31st. On most days they arrived about 15-30 minutes after sunset, and hunted the immediate area for several minutes before dropping into one of three favoured spots. (JSL, PMcA, SMcA, AW).

Many more than usual elsewhere, especially at the beginning of the year. All were single birds, except where stated otherwise. The birds in the West

Wight may have been the ones which were roosting near Yarmouth. Newtown, January 5th and December 23rd. East Afton Down, January 8th. Brading Marsh, January 8th and October 13th. Yaverland, January 14th. Brading, January 21st to February 27th. Near Godshill, January 22nd. Newchurch, January 30th. Shanklin, February 11th. Carisbrooke, February 22nd. Shalcombe, February 24th. Compton Grange, February 28th. Luccombe, April 15th. High Down, October 22nd (2). Yarmouth, December 2nd.

94 **Goshawk.** One W of Carisbrooke on July 15th, near a freshly-killed woodpigeon (JMC). One near Godshill on December 31st (SMN). The seventh and eighth records for the Island.

93 **Sparrowhawk.** One arrived at S.C.P. from sea on May 11th.

91 **Buzzard.** Nested again in the Brighstone Forest area.

Seen elsewhere outside the breeding season, singly unless stated otherwise: Newtown, February (2) and September; Havenstreet, March; Luccombe, April; Knighton, April; Brading Marsh, July.

110 **Kestrel.**

107 **Merlin.** Widespread records of single birds, at Newtown, Porchfield, Brook, Brighstone Forest, Cowes, S.C.P., Quarr and Newchurch, in January, February, April, July, August and November.

104 **Hobby.** Single birds at Carisbrooke on April 28th, S.C.P. on May 4th, and Newtown on October 22nd.

105 **Peregrine.** The increasing frequency of records in recent years had prompted hopes that the species would return to nest here. When one did return this year to visit the former nesting locality at Main Bench, it could receive only a muted welcome because it apparently destroyed the Kittiwake colony. (See the separate paper by J. M. Cheverton on pp. 250-251).

Other records (all of single birds): St. Helens in January; Newtown in January and February; Yarmouth in April and May; Alum Bay area, October to December; Bembridge, October to December.

115 **Red-legged Partridge.** One near Shalcombe on May 8th (PMcA, SMcA).

116 **Grey Patridge.**

118 **Pheasant.**

120 **Water Rail.** On February 2nd one ate rice pudding in a Seaview garden (SMN).

125 **Corncrake.** One at Quarr on August 9th (FEH).

126 **Moorhen.** 33 at Bembridge on February 18th.

127 **Coot.** More in January than usual. 461 at Bembridge on 14th. 2 off Gurnard on 3rd. Up to 6 at Yarmouth, 4th-13th. 1 on Sandown Canoe Lake on 25th. 1 at Newtown on 2nd, and on March 12th.

One in Freshwater Bay on June 17th.

Four pairs in Quarr Marsh reared 12 young.

131 **Oystercatcher.** 74 at Bembridge on November 9th. 44 at Quarr on December 9th.

189 **Stone Curlew.** One dead on road at Vittlefield on May 2nd (JMC).

134 **Ringed Plover.** 83 at Newtown on September 8th. 167 at Foreland on November 18th.

140 **Golden Plover.** Monthly maxima at Newtown:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
312	812	46	24	—	—	1	28	92	137	292	380

For comment on the different fluctuations of Golden and Grey Plover numbers, see the *Report for 1978*.

250 spent several days at Atherfield in mid-March. Other parties were much smaller: 7 near Brook, January 5th; 6 at Yarmouth, January 13th; 15 flew NE over Carisbrooke, February 10th; 1 with Lapwings on Bowcombe Down, February 20th; 14 at Brading, February 23rd; 25 flew N over S.C.P. on March 13th.

139 **Grey Plover.** Monthly maxima at Newtown:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
25	38	42	36	28	10	30	26	74	55	52	110

Bembridge: 12 on January 6th and February 11th. Yarmouth: 6 on January 15th. R. Medina: 2 on January 20th; 3 on November 10th. Quarr: 24 on March 5th.

133 **Lapwing.** The largest flocks reported were at Bembridge – 2,000 on February 11th, 1,000 on November 18th – and Newtown – over 700 on February 25th and December 2nd.

169 **Knot.** A quite exceptional flock at Newtown during February, reaching 1,200 on 25th, falling to 200 by March 6th. Otherwise only up to 7 there, which is about the usual strength (e.g. compare *Report for 1978*).

45 flew W past Seaview on November 22nd.

181 **Sanderling.** In the Bembridge/St. Helens area, where this species mostly occurs, typical numbers were:

Jan.	Feb.		Aug.	Nov.	Dec.	
14th	11th	22nd	26th	18th	2nd	21st
45	60	87	5	31	58	250

The only ones recorded elsewhere were: Quarr, 1 on January 2nd, 6 on April 30th; Newtown, 2 on February 25th, 1 on November 14th.

171 **Little Stint.** One at Newtown on July 14th.

179 **Curlew Sandpiper.** Seen only in September, at Newtown: 1 on 14th, 2 on 23rd and 30th.

170 **Purple Sandpiper.** Foreland: 16 on January 2nd and 6th, 18 on December 21st and 30th. 2 at St. Helens on January 14th. One at Quarr – a new locality – on January 1st (FEH).

178 **Dunlin.**

184 **Ruff.** 12 at Park Farm, Nettlestone, on March 27th (SMN).

146 **Jack Snipe.** Single birds at Newtown, January 5th-7th, at Yarmouth, November 17th, at Brading Marsh, November 18th and at St. Helens, November 18th and December 2nd.

145 **Snipe.** One on High Down in mist on October 16th. 43 at Atherfield on December 21st. 17 S of Merstone on December 30th. One dead in a Totland garden in December.

148 **Woodcock.** One in field at Carisbrooke during snow on January 4th (JCG).

154 **Black-tailed Godwit.** Monthly maxima at Newtown (compare with *Report for 1978*):

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
80	70	235	69	9	3	35	42	72	300	98	150

Few elsewhere: Quarr, 4 on January 1st, February 7th and 17th; Yarmouth, 2 on January 6th; R. Medina, 3 on November 10th.

155 **Bar-tailed Godwit.** Monthly maxima at Newtown (compare with *Report for 1978*):

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
4	2	11	4	—	—	1	1	6	3	—	4

Seaview, 13 on January 27th, 9 on December 4th. 3 at Foreland, March 18th. 15 flew E past S.C.P. on May 10th.

151 **Whimbrel.** The first two flew E past S.C.P. on April 11th. Last on October 17th, at Newtown.

150 **Curlew.**

162 **Spotted Redshank.** Numerous records of one or two at Newtown, January to April and July to October, then five from November 29th onwards.

Several records of one or two at Yarmouth, January 8th to March 8th.

161 **Redshank.**

165 **Greenshank.** One at Gurnard – a new locality – on January 23rd (GB). Largest number at Newtown was 13 on August 18th. One flew out from S.C.P. to SW on August 26th. Heard over Alverstone Marsh after dusk on October 13th (JMC).

156 **Green Sandpiper.** Mostly recorded singly. Yarmouth, January 16th and March 8th. Seaview Marsh, April 15th. Newtown, April 16th and September 27th (2). Brading Marsh, July 10th. Apse Heath, August 1st.

157 **Wood Sandpiper.** One in Seaview Marsh on July 8th (SMN). One at S.C.P. on August 12th (DBW).

159 **Common Sandpiper.** 14 at Seaview on August 25th.

143 **Turnstone.**

195 **Pomarine Skua.** Only two records – see under Arctic Skua, below.

193 **Arctic Skua.** Movements of skuas past S.C.P., all to E:

	April											May				
	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th	13th	14th	15th	20th	22nd	1st	5th	6th	7th	10th
Pomarine													1			1
Arctic	8	4	12	1	8	4	1	1	1	1	1	14		8	6	
Great		3														

Two Arctic were chasing terns at Wootton on August 26th.

194 **Great Skua.** Only one record – see under Arctic Skua, above.

205 **Mediterranean Gull.** One off Steephill on January 1st (KVT). One on pile at Ryde Pierhead on September 3rd (JMC).

207 **Little Gull.** An immature in Freshwater Bay on April 12th. An immature flew E past S.C.P. on April 15th. 3 adults and an immature in Freshwater Bay on December 27th, after gale.

208 **Black-headed Gull.** About 300 pairs nested together at Newtown, but were washed out in May. Several smaller colonies then formed, which were more successful.

At Ryde on July 16th, 3 out of 14 on a fence had only one leg (JMC).

201 **Common Gull.** 336 at Bembridge on March 18th.

Not often seen away from the Bembridge/Ryde shore, but it occurred in inland meadows during snow on January 28th – 38 at Apse Manor and 16 at Branstone Cross (JMC).

199 **Lesser Black-backed Gull.** Bred at both Main Bench and Culver Cliff.

200 **Herring Gull.**

202 **Glaucous Gull.** A party of five adults at Quarr on May 15th (FEH). The seventh record for the Island.

198 **Great Black-backed Gull.** Two nests on Oldpepper Rock. A pair attempted to nest at Newtown.

211 **Kittiwake.** Movements past S.C.P., all to E:

	Mar.	April					May		Sept.
	25th	8th	11th	12th	21st	23rd	1st	7th	2nd
Adult	25	250	51	220	29	31	18	50	6
Immature	4	9				5			

The Main Bench colony started the season well, but was then apparently destroyed by a Peregrine (JMC, DJH). (See the separate paper by J. M. Cheverton on pp. 250-251).

223 **Sandwich Tern.** Spring movements of terns past S.C.P., all to E:

	March	April			May		Total
	25th	9th	10th	14th	10th	20th	
Sandwich	3			316			476*
Common/Arctic		1	3	12	71		87
Black						2	2

*Including 157 others on various dates up to May 5th.

The 3 above on March 25th were the first for the Island this year. The peak day of April 14th also saw the first arrivals at Newtown.

Last on September 16th, by R. Medina and passing S.C.P. to W.

Courtship feeding at Newtown on April 20th (GB). One off Osborne on June 26th was carrying fish (JMC). Two feeding a juvenile at Bembridge on July 13th (SMN).

217 **Common Tern.**
and
218 **Arctic Tern.** First on April 9th, at S.C.P. Last on October 9th, at Newtown.

At least one pair of Common nested at Newtown.

Movements to W in autumn included 20 past S.C.P. on August 16th and 32 past Fort Victoria on September 1st. Notable gatherings were 50 at Woodside on August 19th, 200 at Quarr on August 26th, and 600 at Woodside and 35 at Newtown, both on September 2nd.

The few Arctic Terns which could be distinguished from Common were 4 in Brading Marsh on May 8th, 2 at Newtown on May 12th, and several at Fishbourne on August 27th and September 2nd.

See also under Sandwich Tern, above.

222 **Little Tern.** First on April 13th, at S.C.P. Last 3 on September 9th, at Newtown.

Courtship feeding at Yarmouth on June 4th. 25 at Quarr on August 22nd.

212 **Black Tern.** Three in Freshwater Bay on June 10th. See also under Sandwich Tern, above.

222 **Guillemot.** 245 at Main Bench on June 19th (JMC).

224 **Razorbill.** Very few at Main Bench this year, and only one pair definitely nested.

226 **Little Auk.** One found on Chale beach on December 2nd (KES) had apparently been dead for several days; there had been a gale on November 26th. Another in December was probably at least two weeks later and not part of the same occurrence, but the precise date is not known. The bird was found exhausted in a flower bed at Brook, being stalked by a cat (PG). See photograph in *Isle of Wight Weekly Post*, December 21st.

230 **Puffin.** One on sea below Main Bench on April 2nd. Two flew W past S.C.P. on May 19th.

232 **Stock Dove.** Autumn flocks included 123 near Bembridge on October 13th, 20 at Newtown on December 1st, and 100 near Brading on 22nd.

234 **Woodpigeon.**

— **Collared Dove.** Nested twice on a telegraph pole in Wellington Road, Newport (MW).

235 **Turtle Dove.** First on May 1st, at Foreland. One arrived at S.C.P. on June 12th. One in gorse on High Down on September 2nd.

237 **Cuckoo.** First on April 24th, in Brading Marsh.

241 **Barn Owl.** Out of 10 nesting pairs located, the 7 nests which could be studied produced only 12 young – tentatively attributed to lack of available prey due to the late breeding season (JCG).

246 **Little Owl.**

247 **Tawny Owl.** Heard and seen at Quarr, September 4th-21st (FEH).

248 **Long-eared Owl.** Three near Bembridge on January 22nd (SMN).

249 **Short-eared Owl.** More recorded than usual. Two seen frequently in the Compton area, February 18th to April 4th. One on cliff at S.C.P. on April 16th, apparently very tired. One at Porchfield, July 9th. Brading Marsh, 1 on June 3rd, 2 on October 14th. One on High Down, on October 20th. One at Foreland, October 28th. One at Ashey, November 3rd. One at Newtown, November 17th, 27th, 28th and December 30th.

252 **Nightjar.**

255 **Swift.** First on May 1st, at Seaview. Last flew W past S.C.P. on September 21st.

Notable flocks and movements included: 200 at Sandown Canoe Lake on May 16th, during hatch of blackflies; 800 to NE over Shanklin on May 25th; 500 near Nettlestone on June 16th, and 600 there on August 19th; 1,000 at Shanklin on June 28th; 1,000 at Dunnose, on June 29th.

258 **Kingfisher.** On September 1st one crossed the Solent from Fort Victoria (SMcA).

261 **Hoopoe.** Only two birds, both in April: S.C.P., 9th-15th; Brading Marsh, 18th.

262 **Green Woodpecker.**

263 **Great Spotted Woodpecker.**

264 **Lesser Spotted Woodpecker.** One near Shide on January 21st (JMC, DJH). One at Newtown on June 3rd and August 5th.

272 **Skylark.** Following the hard-weather movement on the last day of 1978 (see *Report for 1978*), there was a continual passage to W past Newtown for the whole of January 1st.

Again conspicuous during snow on January 27th: 2,000 to W past S.C.P.; 114 at Seaview; 520 in two hours to W over Carisbrooke. 80 at Newtown on 28th. 200 at Nettlestone on 29th.

273 **Shorelark.** One by R. Medina S of Folly Inn on November 10th was seen by members attending the meeting of the Ornithological Section. It allowed a close approach as it foraged along the tideline. The third record for the Island.

277 **Sand Martin.** First on April 8th, at Quarr. Last on September 22nd, near Carisbrooke.

27 flying above the usual Sandown site on June 12th, but no nests seen.

274 **Swallow.** First on April 7th, at Quarr. Last on November 18th, at St. Helens. Still 300 over Shanklin on October 18th.

S.C.P.: 700 to SE on September 16th; 1,000 to W on 21st.

276 **House Martin.** First on April 8th, at Quarr. Last on November 18th, at Seaview. Still 200 over Shanklin on October 12th.

Notable movements in September:

	7th	11th	12th	13th	21st
Shanklin	1000 to S	800 to S	50 to SW	850 to SSW	
S.C.P.					8000 to W

376 **Tree Pipit.** One at S.C.P. on April 9th. Two in Brading Marsh on April 28th. One to S from S.C.P. on August 26th. One at Headon Warren on September 15th and October 14th.

373 **Meadow Pipit.** 2,000 arrived at S.C.P. on March 13th. Autumn movements there:

September			November
6th	21st	22nd	7th
1 to W	100 to W	200 from SE to NW	25 to W

379 **Rock Pipit.**

382 **Yellow Wagtail.** First 2 on April 10th, at S.C.P. Last on October 3rd, at Carisbrooke.

On September 12th, 73 settled to roost in reeds at Bembridge (SMN). Other autumn records included 18 flying E past Quarr in the evening of August 27th, 18 at Newtown on September 1st, and 20 at S.C.P. on 16th.

381 **Grey Wagtail.** A pair twice nested unsuccessfully at Carisbrooke Waterworks (MW). Otherwise reported only in January and from September onwards.

380 **Pied Wagtail.** *c* 350 arrived at S.C.P. on March 13th, passing inland to N, or NE along coast; some were identified as the White Wagtail subspecies.

299 **Wren.**

371 **Dunnock.**

325 **Robin.**

322 **Nightingale.**

The first two were heard in song at S.C.P. on April 21st.

321 **Black Redstart.** Only two in the early months – at Niton on January 9th and near Needles in February-March. More in autumn: Seaview, September 3rd; up to 6 in the Alum Bay area, October 15th-28th; ♂ in the Shalcombe quarry, October 16th; ♂ at S.C.P., October 20th and 28th; High Down, November 10th; an immature at Chale, November 14th.

320 **Redstart.** First on April 9th, at S.C.P. Last 2 on October 11th, at Headon Warren. Very few others reported this year.

318 **Whinchat.** First on April 22nd, on Shalcombe Down, then no others until a general influx on May 5th-8th. 25 near Nettlestone on May 8th. Last on October 13th, at Thorley and Headon Warren.

317 **Stonechat.** Only one nesting pair known, on High Down, but pairs also present on Afton Down and near Brighstone on June 21st.

311 **Wheatear.** First on March 17th, at Niton. Last on October 28th, on High Down.

50 at S.C.P., April 9th. 28 in Brading Marsh, May 8th. 22 on Culver Down, August 22nd.

307 **Ring Ouzel.** High Down: pair on April 9th, 1 on 13th. ♀ at Porchfield on May 5th.

Alum Bay area: at least 6 on October 14th, 1 on 20th, 2 on 27th. 1 at S.C.P., October 26th.

308 **Blackbird.** On February 15th, 29 were feeding on fallen apples in a Northwood garden (GB).

302 **Fieldfare.** Several movements on January 27th, during snow: 1,000 to W, S.C.P.; 70 to W over Shanklin; 1,000 at Nettlestone; 105 feeding on fallen apples in a Totland garden (where there had been 50 on 24th). Occurrences in next few days included 250 to W past S.C.P. on 28th, 430 at Kitbridge and 250 at Northwood on February 3rd, and 1,000 at Ashey on February 14th.

Three late birds were still at Alum Bay on May 6th. The first of the autumn was on Culver Down on October 14th.

303 **Song Thrush.**

304 **Redwing.** 800 flew W past S.C.P. on January 27th. 400 at Newtown on 27th, 20 on 28th. 150 were preparing to roost at Carisbrooke on February 26th.

The first of the autumn was at Carisbrooke on October 30th.

301 **Mistle Thrush.**

326 **Cetti's Warbler.** Reported from two sites, at opposite ends of Brading Marsh. In Centurion's Copse (first occupied in 1977 – see *Report for 1976 and 1977*) a ♂ was singing in April and June (JMC, DJH, PMcA, SMcA, JS, DBW). A ♂ sang by the pools at Bembridge on April 18th and September 8th (JMC, DJH).

327 **Grasshopper Warbler.** First on April 22nd, at S.C.P. One by the Alum Bay car park on May 5th, and one dead at Totland the same day. The last was moving W through Osborne on September 23rd.

337 **Sedge Warbler.** First on April 13th, at Sudmoor. Many arrived at S.C.P. on August 29th.

334 **Marsh Warbler.** Reported again in the area occupied in 1977 (see *Report for 1976 and 1977*). A ♂ was heard on June 1st, 2nd and 11th. On June 2nd two birds were seen, one of which was carrying nesting material (JSL, PMcA, SMcA). The seventh record for the Island.

333 **Reed Warbler.** First on May 14th, at Dodnor. Two pairs bred in Seaview Marsh, and three at S.C.P.; also at Bembridge and Newchurch as usual.

Ringing recovery: a bird ringed as adult at Alverstone on August 20th, 1971 was re-caught on June 10th near Droitwich, Hereford and Worcester, 190 km NNW (JCG). It must have been at least nine years old.

352 **Dartford Warbler.** Again present in the breeding season, in the same two localities as in 1977 and 1978.

348 **Lesser Whitethroat.** Reported from Newtown, Porchfield, Carisbrooke, S.C.P., Quarr and Brading Marsh.

347 **Whitethroat.** First on April 20th, near Whitecroft. Last on September 11th, at Quarr.

346 **Garden Warbler.** First on April 17th, at Alum Bay. Last on September 9th, at Quarr.

343 **Blackcap.** Several wintering birds at the beginning of the year: at Totland, January 7th-9th, eating apples; a ♂ at Yarmouth, January 28th-30th, then a ♀ in the same garden from February 19th onwards, eating apples; a ♀ at Cowes, January 30th to February 24th; one at Carisbrooke in mid-March.

A ♂ wintered into 1980 at Freshwater.

357 **Wood Warbler.** One at Alum Bay on May 3rd (PMcA, SMcA). One in Parkhurst Forest on May 25th (MW). During strong winds on August 9th, one landed exhausted in a Northwood garden, and after several minutes left to E (GB).

356 **Chiffchaff.** Wintering birds were at Seaview Duver on January 5th, Carisbrooke on January 6th, near S.C.P. (2) on January 16th, NE of Niton on January 22nd, and at Foreland on December 30th.

354 **Willow Warbler.** First on April 1st, at Newtown. Last on October 20th, at S.C.P.

364 **Goldcrest.**

365 **Firecrest.** One in Shide chalkpit on January 21st. A ♀ on High Down on April 4th, and about three hours later on Headon Warren (possibly the same bird?); found in same place on High Down on 8th and 19th. One at S.C.P. on April 9th.

366 **Spotted Flycatcher.** First on May 9th, at Alum Bay. Last on October 1st, at Quarr. Passage noted at several places at the end of August, including 20 at Alum Bay and 5 in a Freshwater garden on 28th, and 35 at S.C.P. on 29th.

368 **Pied Flycatcher.** Alum Bay area: 1 on April 19th, 1 on May 4th, 3 on 5th, 1 on September 2nd and 23rd. A ♂ at Brighstone on May 2nd. 3 at S.C.P. on August 29th. A ♀ at Newtown on September 20th.

294 **Long-tailed Tit.** 36 at Osborne on February 4th. A flock of 92 tits, mostly this species, arrived at Quarr on July 9th; they ate caterpillars from oaks. 24 at Shanklin on October 5th.

292 **Marsh Tit.** Reported only from northern localities: Newtown, Parkhurst Forest, Osborne, Firestone Copse.

290 **Coal Tit.**

289 **Blue Tit.** Newtown flocks of 55 on September 28th, 35 on December 23rd and 17 on 30th.

288 **Great Tit.**

298 **Treecreeper.**

278 **Golden Oriole.** One near Cliff Farm, Shanklin, on April 15th (LS, RAS). A ♂ at Osborne on May 13th and 17th (DTB). A ♂ on Headon Warren on November 24th (FL) – a late date.

388 **Red-backed Shrike.** Only one record – a party of 4-6 on Brook Down on July 1st; 1♂, 1♀, the others possibly juveniles (BR).

384 **Great Grey Shrike.** One at Quarr on April 8th (FEH).

286 **Jay.** Several large parties in autumn. 18 at Headon Warren on October 11th and 15th, apparently separate from the 45 at Alum Bay on 14th. 30 near Yarmouth on October 12th. 20 at Osborne on December 23rd.

284 **Magpie.**

283 **Jackdaw.**

282 **Rook.**

280 **Carrion Crow.**

281 **Hooded Crow.** One arrived at Alum Bay from W on October 20th.

389 **Starling.** On July 28th over 1,000 roosted on Carisbrooke Church and adjacent buildings, where there are usually no more than a few (MW).

424 **House Sparrow.**

425 **Tree Sparrow.** Nested unsuccessfully in a nestbox at Shorwell (AB).

407 **Chaffinch.**

408 **Brambling.** More than usual following the snow early in the year. Several near Freshwater, January 1st. 2 at Quarr, January 2nd. In the Shalcombe/Chessell area, 7 on January 16th, 5 on 17th, 13 on 28th, over 30 on February 4th. 10 at Rowborough, on January 20th. A few at Apse Manor, February 18th. A ♀ at

Carisbrooke, February 21st. 45 at Cridmore, March 14th. One at Wootton, April 7th-13th.

The only others were 2 on Idlecombe Down on December 30th.

392 **Greenfinch.**

393 **Goldfinch.** In the afternoon of March 13th, 30-40 were in central Newport, flying about in the region of the church and bus station (JO'D).

394 **Siskin.** 9 at Newtown on January 24th. 15 in Brading Marsh on January 28th. 2 at S.C.P. on October 28th. 25 at Quarr on December 31st.

395 **Linnet.**

396 **Twite.** One at Newtown on December 31st (MMS).

397 **Redpoll.** One at Lushington on February 3rd, and one at Alverstone on 23rd. At S.C.P., 16 flew to E on October 28th, but 20 to W on November 7th.

401 **Bullfinch.**

391 **Hawfinch.** Up to 5 seen regularly in a small area of hawthorn bushes S of Kitbridge, January 2nd to April 18th (JCG, DJH).

409 **Yellowhammer.**

415 **Cirl Bunting.** Eight near Nettlestone on October 22nd (SMN).

421 **Reed Bunting.** Bred at Quarr. 16 at Newtown on November 4th.

410 **Corn Bunting.** Seen again in the breeding season at Atherfield and Leechmore Cross (see *Report for 1978*). One on High Down on May 3rd may have been still migrating.

KITTIWAKES AT MAIN BENCH

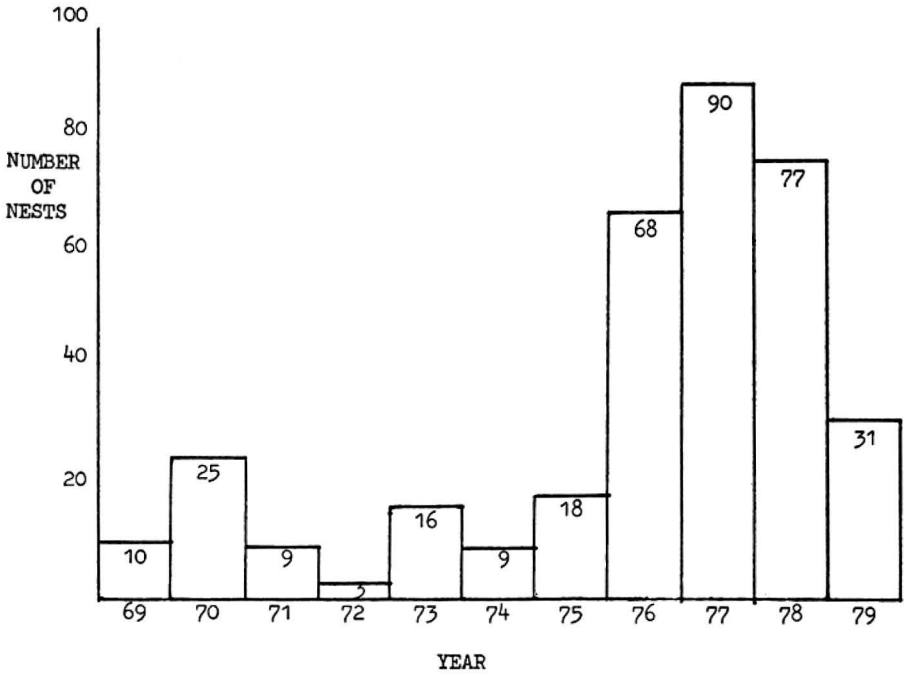
By J. M. Cheverton

Kittiwakes used to breed "somewhat freely at Freshwater" and eggs were taken about 1832 (Fox 1909). By the turn of the century they were considered a very scarce breeding species, based on an egg found on Culver Cliffs in 1903 (Kelsall & Munn, 1905). This egg was later considered to have been a dwarfed egg of a Herring Gull (BB.2.425), so that the Kittiwake appears to have reduced to an occasional visitor and passage migrant by World War I. Up to 1964 nearly all records are of dead, sick or storm-driven birds, and birds passing St. Catherine's Point, January to May and July to November (Cohen 1963).

On 27th March, 1964 a Kittiwake was noticed at Main Bench (personal observation); another was seen on 26th June, 1966, while in the summer of 1967 there were nine. After a decrease to three birds in the summer of 1968 the first nests were found at Main Bench in 1969 (personal observation). The number of nests recorded each year since then is shown in the diagram. These numbers were recorded during annual boat trips made from Yarmouth, around the Needles, as far as the cliffs below the Tennyson Memorial.

During the visit made on 19th June, 1979 a female Peregrine was seen perched on a flattened Kittiwake's nest. A considerable amount of droppings was noted below the nest on the cliff face, indicating that the nest was used as a regular roosting, feeding,

or lookout point. As observations at Main Bench indicate that Kittiwakes seldom foul the area below the nest, it was thought that the Peregrine was responsible. There were only five occupied nests, one extra adult Kittiwake, and twenty six apparently empty nests, all of which had been occupied during the weekend 9/10th June. Comparison of this state with that on similar dates on previous years led the observers to infer that the nests had been predated possibly by the Peregrine. It was not possible to see into the nests, but nests with eggs are seldom, if ever, left by the adult Kittiwakes since both sexes incubate, and nests with newly-hatched young are tended by one or other adult.



Kittiwakes are listed as "many" under food taken by the Peregrine (Witherby 1943) and it seems possible that the bird seen had decimated the colony.

The effect on the future of the colony cannot be foreseen. Kittiwakes take three years to mature and possibly longer to reach a breeding state, and it may be some time before any effect is noticed. Numbers counted in the next few years will be noted with interest and reported in the *Proceedings* in due course.

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POLLEN STUDY 1979

By R. A. Snow

Pollen Analysis requires the study of fossil and recent (live) pollen and spores, because investigations from time to time produce types not previously encountered and these have to be identified. Reference slides are used together with textbook keys and illustrations. There is no doubt that a most useful way of learning to recognise the many forms, is that of collecting pollen from known or authenticated growing plants, from which reference type slides can be made. The examination of fossil types can be undertaken for the purpose of learning the features of new and unfamiliar forms in the fossil state, which often differ when observed in comparison with live pollen, and samples taken from bog and other peat deposits are both of great interest and a worthwhile exercise.

Pollen types are therefore studied whenever opportunity arises and from various sources. A hive-frame kindly supplied by Douglas Roberts, The Bee Farm, Wootton, I.W. provided many examples of the Umbelliferae, which from the point of view of pollen study gives hours of interest, although, owing to the great diversity, many of the grains were not identified, and it is doubtful if many would be encountered in an archaeological context.

The art of understanding what does not assist, as well as what does assist in identification is important, as both are of value.

It is only after the many pollen grains and spores on the slide, which represent the content of the deposit being investigated, have been identified, that an analysis of the results can be undertaken, and from which emerges a picture representative of the trees and plants that were growing at the time of deposition. By examining a sequence of deposits, the charges in dominant forms can be studied.

When the Society's 1979 "Local Look" Exhibition was held, visitors had the opportunity to see through the microscope pollen grains and spores from Island peat as part of the Archaeological Section's display, demonstrating the changes in past environments produced both by nature and by man.

The sample piece of peat, from which the pollen and spores were obtained, was provided by Mr. Boswell of Parsonage Farm, Newchurch, I.W., where peat is worked for horticulture, and came from peat already dug in the normal working of the bed to a depth of about 12 feet. It is therefore only a random sample for study and unrelated to a sequence deposit.

Among the spores recovered those from the Royal Fern, *Osmunda regalis* were abundant and, not having been encountered before they were of great interest to identify. Textbooks were consulted for illustrations, keys and photographs (Moore and Webb, 1978 and R. O. Kapp, 1969).

A degree of care is necessary when using more than one textbook, as some confusion can arise from photographs of surface features depicted at various stages of magnification and depths of plane, which sometimes appear at variance with line drawings of the same species, thus information gained from textbook sources must with care be related to the specimen being observed with the microscope.

Osmunda spores are relatively large, measuring between 50 and 60 microns in diameter, and sometimes as large as 70 microns. They are trilete spores, having a pore

formed from a branched slit in the shape of a Y. The surface of the spore is covered with closely spaced "baculae", i.e. rod-like projections that are longer than they are wide, which may be seen clearly on the distal face, and are appreciably well defined on the outer edge. (See illustration 1). As the *Osmunda* spores recovered are a strong representation, it is of some interest that in Morey, 1909, the following appears:

Osmunda regalis, L. Flowering Fern. July to September.

Bogs and wet woods, not common: Freshwater Gate, Westover, Calbourne Mill, Wilderness (extinct 1906), Wolverton, Shorwell, Kingston, Blackgang, Godshill, Blackpan, Lake, Sandown, Niton Undercliff, Sandown Bay.

Compare this with the following from Bevis, Shepard and Kettell, 1978:

Osmunda regalis

Perennial. A declining calcifuge. Formerly common in valley bottom bogs, but now restricted to habitats not subject to agricultural drainage. On bank of railway cutting along old track between Shanklin and Wroxall. Munsley Moor . . . On talus at the foot of the cliff at Lake . . . Until recently on Bleak Down.

It is probable that the *Osmunda* spores came from a very local position in the peat bed, and it must be noted that ferns disperse a great many spores. Nevertheless a very large decline in the *Osmunda* is demonstrated.

Other fern spores recovered include those referred to as "undifferentiated" and are a large proportion, which, in fossilization or in subsequent treatment, loose the outer envelope, or perine, which carries the identification features and characteristics, leaving only a general outline of the shape, and, as many fern spores are similar in shape, these spores cannot be identified. They are put together as undifferentiated fern spores (see illustration 2).

Not all fern spores, however, appear to be affected in this way. Polypody is often recovered with the outer envelope intact, and its surface decoration and characteristic shape make identification relatively easy (see illustration 3).

Moss spores were well represented with those from Sphagnum.

Similar to *Osmunda,* Sphagnum spores show a three branched slit in the form of a Y shape. They are however not round, but subtriangular in general form, and again may appear with or without an outer envelope. Without the perine they are smooth walled. often with a "cloud pattern" lightly visible on the surface. With the perine present, such are the characteristics that at least 18 of the species can be identified by careful measurement of the diameter, the relative widths of the wall layers, and by the sculpturing of the perine (J. H. Tallis, 1962) (cf. illustration 4 and 5).

Referring again to Morey, 1909, notes under the heading Mosses by the Rev. H. M. Livens include:

Sphagnum subsecundum, var. *contortum*	Boggy ground. Rare. Apse, and the marshes at Newchurch.
Sphagnum subsecundum, var. *turgidum*	Has been found only in the Newchurch marshes.
Sphagnum squarrosum, var. *imbricatum*	Has been found only in a ditch in the Newchurch marshes.

There has been one other find reported, *S. subnitens* was recorded by W. R. Sherrin as present in the Newchurch marshes, 17.9.25.

It is hoped that the spores recovered from the peat will assist in the further identification of those species given by the Rev. Livens, as the names given are somewhat

obscure, when reference is made to modern textbooks. The spores from Lycodopium, clubmoss, have also been recovered.

Clubmoss should not be confused with moss. It differs by having a well developed vascular system, as opposed to mosses which take in moisture by leaves and rhizoids and not through roots and stems.

Clubmoss is recorded in Morey, 1909, as having been "on heaths and St. Boniface Down (probably extinct)". It is therefore of some interest to find it well represented in the peat sample, and it is likely that the higher area immediately above and south of the peat bed would have in the past been more heathland than it is today. Morey records the species as *L. clavatum.*

Lycopodium spores are not easy to identify from photograph or line-drawing illustration, and, subject to confirmation by reference slide and dependant on textbook illustrations, the spores recovered and referred to here, indicate *L. inundatum.*

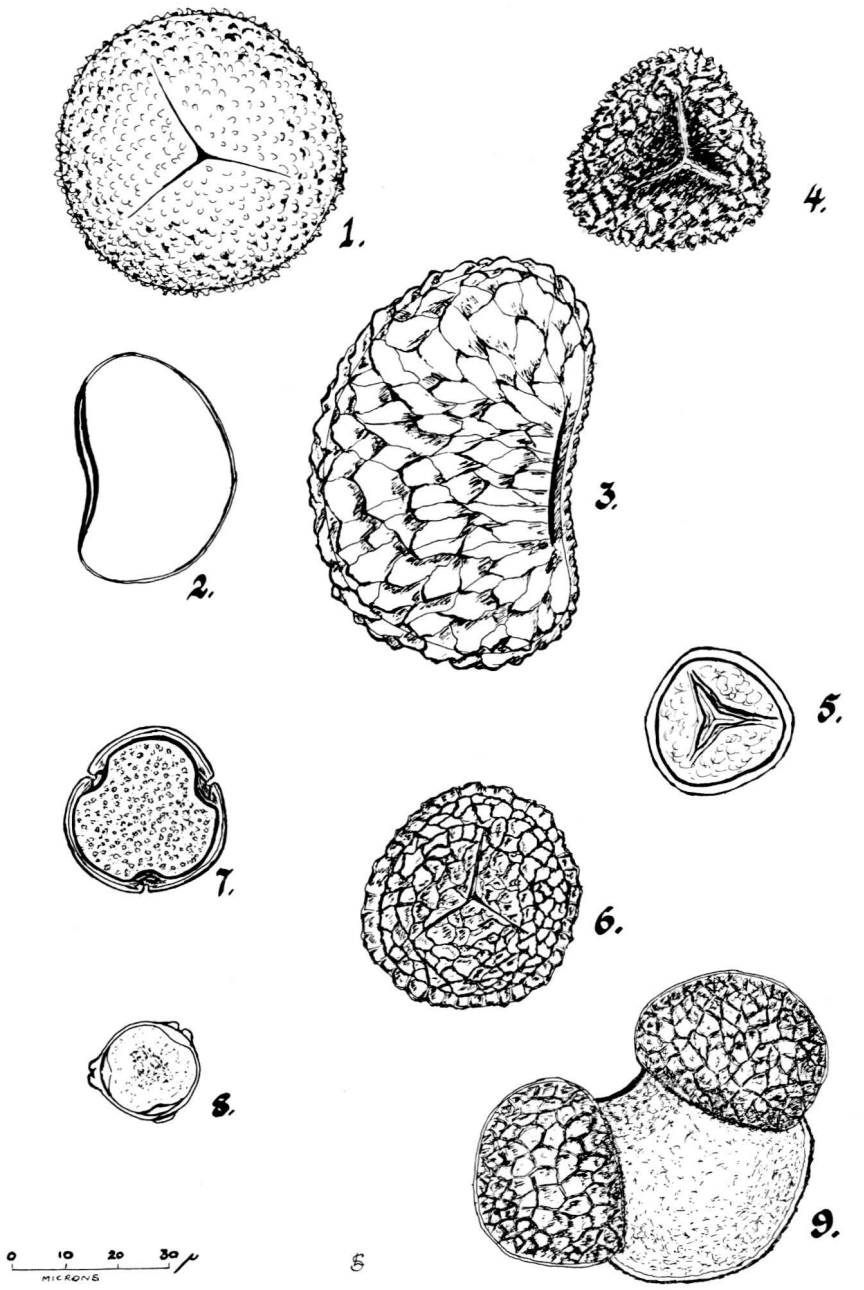
Detail of the spore character is not easy to describe. The surface is covered with large creases of irregular reticulum. The pore is trelete the arms of the Y shape of irregular widths but tapering to the outer edges. The general shape of the spore is rounded triangular, and measures between 45 and 50 microns (see illustration 6).

There was also recovered a very small percentage of grass pollen which probably reflects the condition of the peat bed as it developed, with much shade from the Osmunda fronds and a high tree canopy preventing sun-light reaching a dank and dark woody-birch swamp or bog. Such conditions would be poor for hazel growth too, for the percentage of hazel pollen was very low. There were also the pollen grains from pine, alder, birch, lime and willow, but a marked absence of any pollen from oak and elm.

The pollen grains from the lime are from *Tilia cordata,* the small leaved lime from the detail of the pore structure, and the size and fine degree of coarseness of the reticulation pattern of the grain surface (see illustration 7). It is problematical from the point of view that it is well represented as pollen, and when compared with records from the Flora which quotes Dr. Bromfield, 1856, as giving one site at Tapnell. Bearing in mind that the tree enjoys a limestone habitat, the question arises as where the lime then grew, which provided the fossil pollen grains. The nearest today that any lime is to be found is a few miles to the north of the Newchurch peat bed, at Knighton Gorge on the edge of the chalk downland.

This is not *T. cordata,* however, but, from the leaf shape and vein structure, *T. platyphyllos.* It is possible that *T. cordata* grew closer to Newchurch than Tapnell! It is a native tree by all accounts, Godwin, 1975, growing over a wide range of fertile soils with a liking for limestone, reaching a height of 75 feet when fully grown and casting a lot of shade. It seems unlikely that it would have grown near an acid bog. It is insect-pollinated, and the outfall of pollen into the air is generally believed to be very small, although the amount of pollen produced is high. There seems to be nothing which accounts for the relatively high return recorded here, unless some evidence comes to light which would give support for *T. cordata* growing much closer to a sphagnum peat bog, i.e. an outcrop of chalk/limestone at present undisclosed.

The Birch is well represented not only by the pollen grains (see illustration 8), but by the remains of roots and branches and other fragments in the peat itself. Another native tree growing well in light soils and heathlands reaching a similar height as the lime, this is the tree of the site which cast the high canopy shade and prevented the grass from growing while providing conditions so suitable for the *Osmunda* and other



Illustrations (highly magnified) of Spores from: 1. *Osmunda regalis;* 2. Ferns (undifferentiated); 3. *Polypodium* sp.; 4. *Sphagnm* (with perine) *S. papillosum;* 5. *Sphagnum* sp. (without perine); 6. *Lycopodium* sp. *L. inundatum* (?); and Pollen from: 7. *Tilia cordata;* 8. *Betula,* Birch; 9. *Pinus,* Pine. (Drawings by Lorna Snow).

ferns, and assisting in the retention of the acid conditions for the *Sphagnum* spp.

Salix, the willow, probably grew alongside the birch. It is more difficult to determine, it being generally recognised that a large number of interesting plants cannot be identified to species level on the basis of the pollen alone, and *Salix* spp. are so affected. An interesting note reads:

"The catkins come out very early (often in May) and are among the first flowers of importance to bee-keepers, as willow pollen and honey make excellent food for bees. It may be mentioned here that very few of our forest trees are pollinated by insects. Nearly all are wind-pollinated and quantitites of free pollen are spread by the wind and caught by the viscid stigmas. This sometimes happens with willow pollen also". (Vedel and Lange, 1958).

Pollen grains from the Pine are generously provided with "sacci" or bladders, which greatly assist wide air-bourne distribution (see illustration 9). This tree pollen could therefore have come from far outside the location of the peat bed site, although today pines are to be found only a short distance away at the top of the village hill near the church rectory. Alder and hazel were presumably not growing plentifully, and there is a marked absence of pollen from oak and elm.

Percentages of the total count of pollen and spores from the study sample are as follows.

Filicales (Ferns)		Bryophytes (Mosses)	
Undifferentiated	35%	Undifferentiated	3.8%
Osmunda. Royal Fern	15%	Sphagnum spp.	6.8%
Polypodium. Polypody	5.8%		
Gramineae. Grasses	1.7%	Lycopodium. Clubmoss	5.8%
Trees and Shrubs			
Pinus. Pine	2.9%	Tilia. Lime	7.7%
Alnus. Alder	2.9%	Salix. Willow	5.8%
Betula. Birch	5.8%	Corylus. Hazel	1%

With this present study concluded, the way now is open for a full examination of this peat bed. Future activity will therefore require the extraction of samples from the sequence of layers of deposition, from which microscope sides will it is hoped, provide the evidence from the pollen and sores, of the plant history of the peat bed and surrounding areas. Core sampling will be undertaken as soon as a suitable instrument is available at a later date.

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INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY

By A. N. Insole
(Museum of I.W. Geology, Sandown)

Introduction

The term "industrial archaeology" is relatively new, having been coined as recently as the late 1950's. The topic is difficult to define because of its open-ended nature but basically it is concerned with an examination of the "process of industrialisation through a systematic study of its surviving monuments and artefacts" (Buchanan, 1972:19). Although the term industrial archaeology is new, interest in its subject matter is not. By the middle of the last century some people had realised that early examples of machinery were worthy of preservation. This resulted in the formation of museums, such as the Science Museum in London, devoted to the collection and preservation of various engineering and technological items. At the same time various individuals were involved in the study of the technical aspects of industries, the results of which appeared in the journals of various national and local societies.

In the late 1950's and early 1960's the increasing pace of urban redevelopment brought the realisation that many industrial relics were being destroyed without investigation or even elementary recording. As a result there was a spontaneous appearance in various parts of Britain of small groups of people who realised that our industrial heritage was just as important historically as churches, castles and mansions. These groups evolved into more formal organisations. Some became local industrial archaeological societies primarily engaged in recording and researching local relics. Others developed into trusts established to preserve and conserve industrial monuments. As interest grew various national bodies have become involved such as the Department of the Environment and the Council for British Archaeology. Finally in 1974 the Association for Industrial Archaeology was formed as a national body to co-ordinate the activities of the various regional groups.

Although much has been accomplished in the last 20 years, particularly in the more obvious industrial regions, there remain large areas which have either not received investigation or have been only superficially examined.

The Scope of Industrial Archaeology

Industrial archaeology covers a very broad and sometimes bewildering range of topics. Although not all workers would agree, the following nine categories would generally be accepted:

1. Agricultural industry
2. Power
3. Coal and metals
4. Building materials
5. Textiles, pottery and glass, food preparation, brewing and distilling
6. Public services
7. Transport
8. Industrial housing
9. Recreation industry

There are considerable difficulties in defining the period covered by the discipline.

In its most restricted sense industrial archaeology would cover the period between the middle of the eighteenth century when the Industrial Revolution commenced and the end of the 1914-18 War. However, this would leave out a considerable amount of industrial enterprises prior to the eighteenth century and a whole host of more recently developed industries. It can be logically argued that the Neolithic stone axe factories are just as much part of the topic as the nineteenth century iron and steel industry since it involved the transport and trade of manufactured articles. Similarly with the ever-increasing rate of modern industrial change, today's factories will be tomorrow's industrial archaeology. Therefore nothing is too old or too recent to be included within the discipline.

As can be seen industrial archaeology has wide boundaries. In many ways this is one of the most attractive features of the subject. It is also a topic to which everybody can bring some expertise whether it be the academic historian, the architect, the engineer or the housewife. Industrial archaeology, by its very nature, demands a multi-disciplinary approach.

Techniques

At the outset the industrial archaeologist needs to decide which type of study is of most interest. Basically there are two approaches to the subject: extensive and intensive. An extensive study involves the survey of a particular industry in a given area. This requires the location of sites occupied by the industry in question and the recording of each site as it exists today in terms of rough plans, notes and photographs. An intensive study deals with a single industrial site and involves a much more detailed approach than an extensive survey.

Although the emphasis in industrial archaeology is on fieldwork, it is also necessary to acquire some background information. For the budding industrial archaeologist there are many books which provide introductory accounts of the whole subject (e.g. Bracegirdle, 1973; Buchanan, 1972; Cossons, 1975; Major, 1975; and Pannell, 1966) and all of these give references to more detailed literature on specific industries. However, once fieldwork is started what the researcher requires is local information. There are a number of sources of such data, the most obvious being old maps, plans, local histories, trade directories, trade catalogues, auction documents and old photographs. Such documents should be available in the local library, record office or museum but occasionally it may be necessary to travel further afield. This type of material may or may not provide useful information and can sometimes be very misleading, but nonetheless should be consulted.

At the end of a study all the data acquired by fieldwork and documentary research is brought together and the results analysed and interpreted. In this way the remains of past industries can be related to the history of an area. Industrial archaeology thus provides the local historian with a new perspective in which to view the region under investigation.

Naturally when a survey has been completed the question of preservation may arise. However, few, if any, industrial archaeologists woud regard their prime task as the preservation of all industrial monuments, even if this were physically and financially feasible. The consensus view is that, while all industrial relics should be surveyed and recorded, only a representative selection should be preserved for future generations.

Industrial Archaeology and the Isle of Wight

The Isle of Wight might seem at first sight an unpromising area for the industrial archaeologist, and certainly this is true if it is compared with the heavily industrialised regions such as northwest England, Merseyside, the central Midlands or South Wales. However, until relatively recently the Island was largely isolated from the mainland. It can therefore be assumed initially that the population of the past would have been more self-sufficient than it is today. One would thus expect to find evidence of small-scale industries of various kinds which were established to supply a purely local demand. However, this can only be proven by careful fieldwork and documentary research.

Although some work had been carried out on the more obvious aspects of local industry, in 1975 Parker was able to state that the industrial archaeology of the Island had not been examined and that it was a field which urgently needed exploration. In 1976 an informal organisation called the Isle of Wight Industrial Archaeology Group was established to fill the gap, chiefly due to the efforts of Mr. Clive Burland. The purpose of this group was to carry out an extensive survey of the industrial relics on the Island as rapidly as possible. A large amount of data was gathered during the course of fieldwork and all the records were deposited with the County Museum Service. Although the extensive survey of some industries was still incomplete, sufficient information was gathered to warrant the publication of a brief guide to the industrial monuments of the Island (Insole & Parker, 1979). At the same time that the Industrial Archaeology Group were carrying out fieldwork, the County Museum Service was beginning to collect industrial objects and documents, particularly photographs. The next stage of research is now about to begin. During this phase, which will probably be very prolonged, more intensive studies will be made of the more important sites. Although the final decisions have not been taken as yet, it seems probable that priority will be given to shipbuilding and allied industries, ports and harbours, piers, lace-making and cement works. It is hoped that the results of this research will eventually be published and thus more light shed on the industrial and economic history of the Island.

Although a large amount of data has been gathered in the last few years, there are still many gaps in our knowledge. I am anxious therefore to examine any documents (especially plans) and photographs relating to Island industries which may be of use in site interpretation. If any members of the Society have any information which they feel may be of use in completing the picture, I would be grateful if they would contact me.

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GRANARIES ON STADDLESTONES IN THE ISLE OF WIGHT

By G. H. Powell

With the increasing mechanisation of farming which is now more an industry than a way of life – we see the rapid disappearance of two picturesque old types of farm buildings, the barn and the granary on staddlestones. The barn with double cart-porches and the threshing-floor in between, so that the dust was carried out by the wind, is usually stout-walked enough to survive as an implement shed or cattle byre or whatever – even as a garage – though its gabled roof has probably been converted to a single-slope expanse of asbestos or metal.

The granary, however, has less prospect of future usefulness and is, moreover, more frail of structure, so that a visit to many farms reveals a row of staddlestones, minus their caps, adorning the entrance drive or stood round the lawn, and one meets the caual remark "Oh yes, there used to be one over there, but it has been pulled down". Indeed, so popular are the stones as ornaments that now the supply is running short there is a firm on the mainland making concerete replicas for the guileless townsman.

The best way to preserve selected Island granaries would be if a number of representative examples were to become listed buildings. So far only one granary, at Weston Farm, has been listed. Curiously enough, a great many of the farmhouses to which the granaries are attached have been listed, but the farmbuildings around the house are not mentioned.

A staddlestone, then is a square steep truncated pyramid, usually of limestone, crowned with a mushroom-shaped head. Its height is usually in a ratio of roughly 1.6: 1 to the side of the base, but one or two granaries have been seen with staddles of lesser height, being between 1/2 to 1/3 of the normal. Also rarely there occur stones with slightly rectangular base and top, in which case the long side of the stone is placed parallel with the timber above. One wonders if this occasional variation might have been due to a desire to use up an otherwise imperfect block of stone.

A set of these staddlestones will be arranged in a square of 3 x 3 or 4 x 4, or equally in a rectangle of 3 x 4 or even 4 x 5, and on that base are laid two sets of stout beams, one set running from side to side and the other from front to back, slotted together, and on these the granary is erected.

The oldest type appears to be a timber framework with brick infilling, as at Afton Farm (see Plate IIa) similar examples being found occasionally in Berkshire and Oxon, and comparable with many old cottage constructions. Then there are granaries of timber framework with an outer cladding of weatherboard but with brickwork built up between the timbers, as can be seen peeping from the gaps in the decaying weatherboard at Kite Hill and Ningwood Manor Farm (see Plate IIb).

Out of the Island's 49 examples of granaries there are a dozen and a half built entirely of brick (see Plate IIIa) and in the majority of cases roofed with tiles, some few having slate and some the inevitable cheap repair or corrugated iron or asbestos.

A distribution map of granaries (see Plate I) shows that the brick type lies mainly in perhaps three groups, but the point that strikes you is that most occur on fairly large farms or manors (e.g. Gotten Manor, Morton Manor, Wolverton, Merston Manor,

GRANARIES ON STADDLESTONES (Shown in PLATE I)

1. **Merston Manor.** Brick. 3 x 4. Tiled roof. Hipped.
2. **Bembridge Farm.** Brick. 3 x 4. Tiled roof.
3. **Wolverton Manor.** Brick. 4 x 5. Tiled roof.
4. **Apesdown.** Brick. 4 x 5 (?). Tiled roof.
5. **Limerstone.** Brick. 3 x 4. Tiled roof.
6. **Rowborough.** Brick. 3 x 4. Tiled roof.
7. **Idlecombe.** Brick. 3 x 4. Tiled roof.
8. **Chessel.** Brick (later rendered with cement). 3 x 4. Tiled roof.
9. **Lee Farm.** Brick. 3 x 3. Tiled roof.
10. **Great Billingham.** Brick. 4 x 4. Tiled roof.
11. **Morton Manor.** Brick. 3 x 4. Slate roof.
12. **Staplers Farm.** Brick. 3 x 4. Slate roof.
13. **Hardingshute.** Brick. 3 x 4. Slate roof.
14. **Westover.** Brick. 3 x 4. Slate roof. Corn bins remaining.
15. **Cheverton.** Brick. 3 x 3. Timber extension. 2 x 3. Tiled roof.
16. **New Farm.** Brick. 3 x 4. Asbestos roof.
17. **S. Lee.** Brick. 3 x 3. C.I. roof. (Lately demolished.
18. **Gotten Manor.** Brick. 3 x 4. C.I. roof.
19. **Ningwood Manor Farm.** Timber. Brick. Inside weatherboard cladding. 3. x 3. Tiled roof. Hipped.
20. **Kite Hill.** Timber. Brick lining. Inside weatherboard cladding. 3 x 3. C.I. roof.
21. **Afton Farm.** Timber with brick infilling. 3 x 4. Thatched roof. Hipped.
22. **Pondcast Farm.** Timber with weatherboard cladding. 3 x 4. Tiled roof.
23. **Barnsley Farm.** Timber. Weatherboard cladding. 3 x 4. Tiled roof.
24. **Kingston Manor Farm.** Timber with weatherboard cladding. 3 x 4. Tiled roof (pantiles) and brick staddles.
25. **Compton Farm.** Timber with weatherboard cladding. 3 x 3. Tiled roof. Hipped.
26. **Yafford Farm.** Timber with weatherboard cladding. 3 x 4. Tiled roof.
27. **Churchill Farm.** Timber with weatherboard cladding. 3 x 4. Slate roof. Hipped. Corn bins.
28. **Hill Farm** (Gatcombe). Timber with weatherboard cladding. 3 x 3. Slate roof.
29. **Smallbrook Farm.** Timber with weatherboard cladding. 3 x 3. Slate roof.
30. **Champion Farm.** Timber with weatherboard cladding. 3 x 4. Slate roof. Hipped.
31. **Woodhouse Farm.** Timber with weatherboard cladding. 3 x 3. Slate roof. Upper storey.
32. **Loverston Farm.** Timber with weatherboard cladding. 3 x 3. Slate roof.
33. **Rowborough Farm.** Timber with weatherboard cladding. 3 x 3. Slate roof.
34. **Middle Barn Farm.** Bathingbourne. Timber with weatherboard cladding. 3 x 5. Asbestos roof.
35. **Hill Farm** (Alverstone). Timber with weatherboard cladding. 3 x 3. Slate roof.
36. **Lower Knighton Farm.** Timber with weatherboard cladding. 3 x 3. Slate roof.
37. **Chawton Farm.** Timber with weatherboard cladding. 4 x 6 (barn size). C.I. roof over thatch.
38. **Newnham Farm.** Timber with weatherboard cladding. 4 x 5. C.I. roof. Hipped.
39. **Lower Rill.** Timber with weatherboard cladding. 3 x 3. C.I. roof.
40. **Little Billingham.** Timber with weather board cladding. 3 x 3. C.I. roof.
41. **Pitt Farm** (Calbourne). Timber with weatherboard cladding. 3 x 4. C.I. roof.
42. **Wackland.** Timber. C.I. Cladding. 3 x 5. C.I. roof.
43. **Ningwood Dairy Farm.** Timber with C.I. cladding. 3 x 3. Upper storey. C.I. roof.
44. **Bobberstone.** Timber with C.I. cladding. 3 x 3. C.I. roof.
45. **Whitefield Farm.** Timber with C.I. cladding. 3 x 3. C.I. roof (pyramid).
46. **The Lodge,** Alverstone. Modern woodwooden rebuilding. 3 x 3. Tiled.
47. **Weston Farm.** Brick. 3 x 3. Slate roof. Hipped (listed building).
48. **Dungewood.** Timber with weatherboard cladding. 3 x 4. 1 corn bin left. Upper Storey.
49. **Hale Manor Farm.** Timber with weatherboard. 3 x 3. Tiled roof.

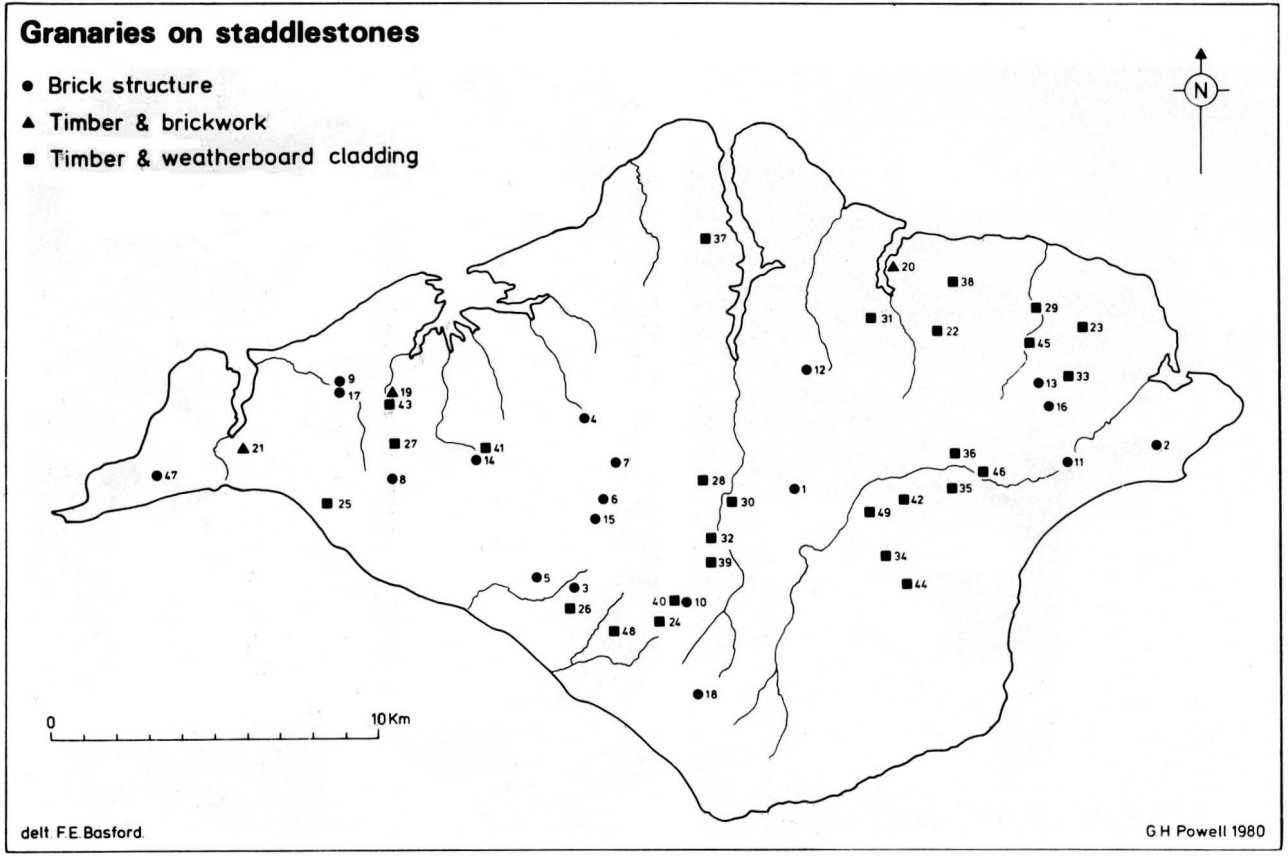


PLATE I—Distribution of Granaries on Staddlestones in the Isle of Wight.

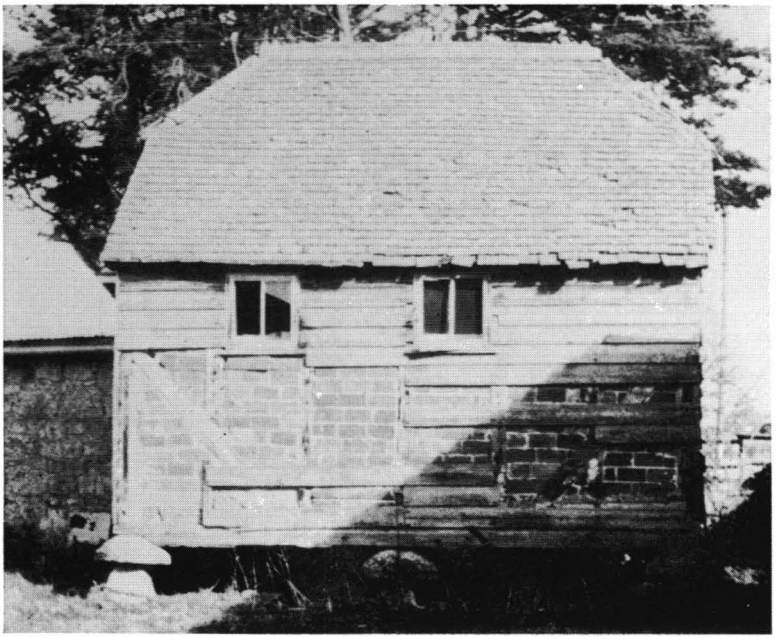
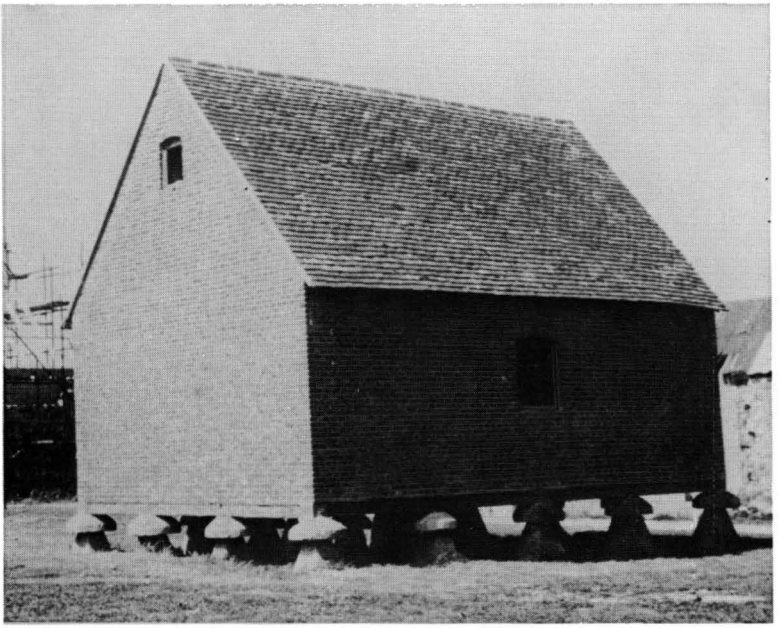


PLATE II—a. Afton Farm. Half-timber and thatch.
b. Ningwood Manor Farm. Brick lining.



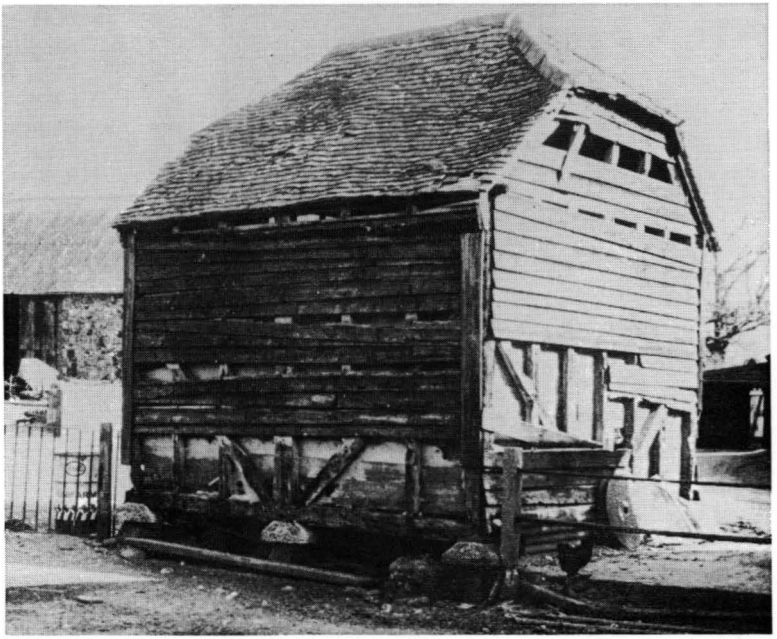
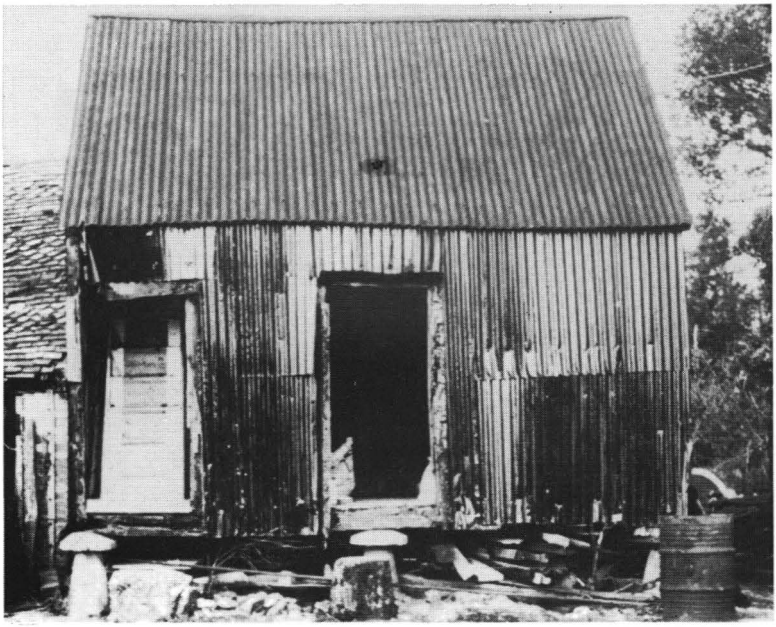


PLATE III—a. Wolverton Manor. Brick with tile roof. A splendid example.
b. Compton Farm. Weatherboard cladding. Now fully restored.



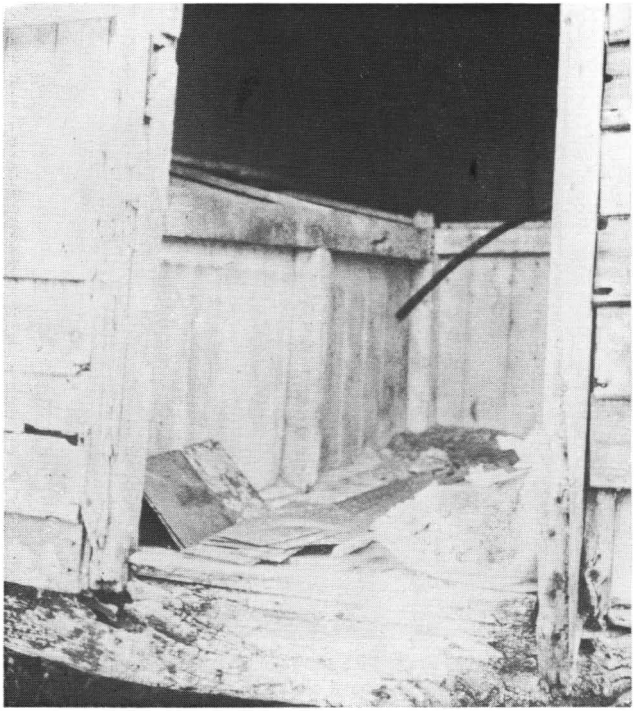


PLATE IV—

a. Ningwood Dairy Farm. Upper storey.

b. Churchills Farm. Retained corn-bins.

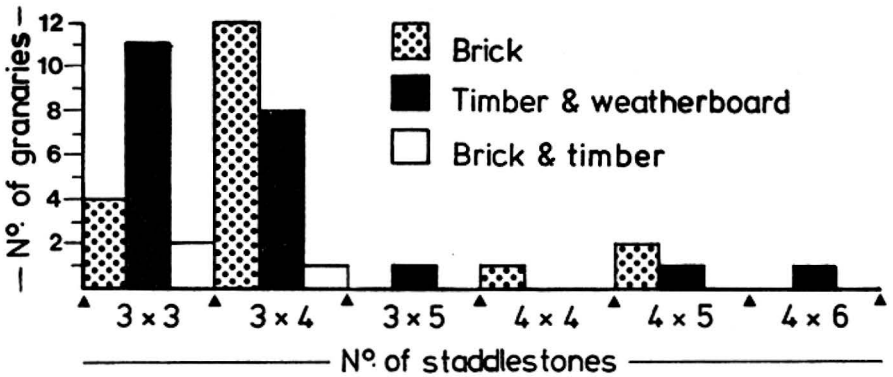


FIG. 1.—Relationship between construction techniques and number of staddlestones

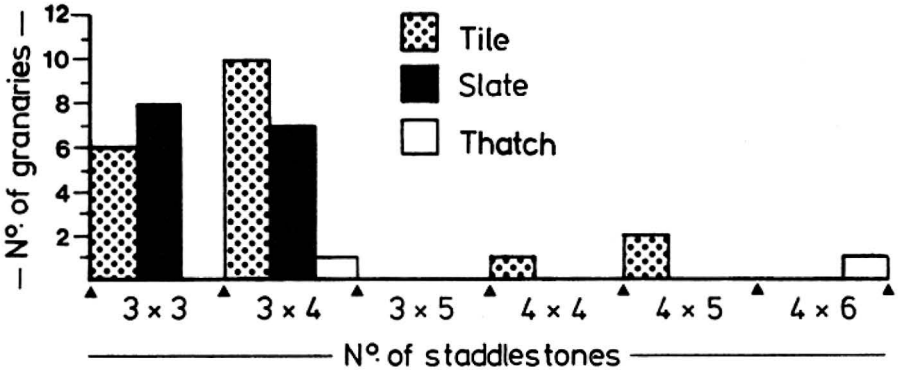


FIG. 2.—Relationship between roof material and number of staddlestones.

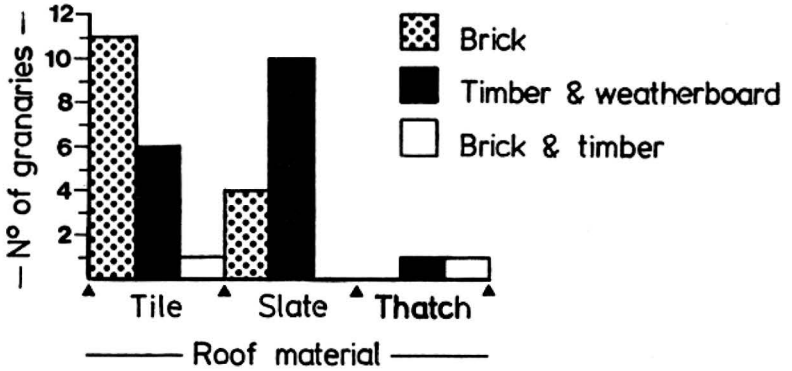


FIG. 3.—Relationship between construction techniques and roof material.

Westover, Great Billingham) and are usually of the 3 x 4 size. May we therefore hazard a guess that these represent a later rebuilding of earlier decaying wooden types, or even examples of the need to "pull down my barns and build greater?"

The largest group of granaries (24 out of 49) are of timber framework with outer cladding of weatherboard and an inner skin of thin boards. Good examples of these can be seen at Pondcast, Barnsley and Compton farms (see Plate IIIb). Several, including the above three, have tiled roof and Kingston Manor Farm has pantiles, but many have blue slate, and it is possible that is some cass this slate replaced thatch, especially as there are several hipped roofs which are less easily adapted to slate.

A number of histograms have been produced on page 261 to illustrate the relationship between construction type, roof material and number of staddlestones, and these emphasise the fact that the timber and weatherboard granaries tend to be smaller (mainly of the 3 x 3 size) and to have slate roofs whereas the brick examples tend to be larger (mainly 3 x 4 size) and to have tile roofs. Granaries of corrugated iron construction or with asbestos or corrugated iron roofs have been discounted in the production of the histograms.

The building at Chawton Farm, really a barn and not a granary as its base is 4 x 6, has a corrugated iron roof placed over the remains of thatch – a fact of which a pair of owls at one time took advantage.

Cheverton is unusual in possessing a brick and tiled granary of 3 x 3, to which is joined a wooden and tiled granary of 2 x 3, or really 3 x 3, sharing the last staddle of the brick building of equal dimensions. Which came first?

The purpose of the mushroom shaped cap on top of the straddle was to keep out rats and mice which could probably scale the stone pyramid but could not climb round the overhanging capstone to gnaw the wooden floor. Nowadays, however, many farmers have added stone or concrete steps to the granary, as at Loveston or Apesdown, wich would be no obstacle to the vermin, but Barnsley Farm still has portable wooden steps, to be withdrawn when not in use.

At Kingston Manor there is the unusual sight of brick staddles, but without the mushroom caps, and therefore less effective.

Many wooden granaries have now decayed to the point where roof and weatherboard sides have been replaced by corrugated iron, tarred black as at Ningwood Dairy Farm or Pitt Farm, rusted or still bright, as at Bobberstone, or even painted crimson as at Wacklands. The beams at the base of the granary carried considerable weight, especially in the case of brick buildings, and their decay meant disaster. So at many places we find extra support placed under a weak spot, such as a pile of concrete blocks, as at Idlecombe or Rowborough, or even a length of brick walling, as at Merston Manor or Wolverton. There are, alas, cases where this is not being done, and collapse seems imminent.

Several granaries have an upper storey, reached by ladder or even by staircase, as at Ningwood Dairy Farm (see Plate IVa). These upper floors were apparently not later insertions, for the framework seems to have been made tall enough intentionally. These upper floors would obviously not have supported the weight of much grain storage, and were possibly used for samples or special seed corn.

Some surviving granaries have been put to unexpected uses. Those at New Farm and Chessell for instance have been converted to a farm office, the former even with telephone installed, and Morton granary is planned to become a tea-room for visitors, but some are completely disused or are mere store space for junk. One I saw recently

was heaped up with derelict furniture, including an entire three-piece suite and other household rejects. The granary at Churchills, however, still retains the original corn-bins (see Plate IVb).

The Island was quoted as having 49 granaries remaining – or had until just lately when a fine specimen suddenly vanished, having been demolished to give a better outlook for the extension to a house nearby. Some farmers, however, cherish their granaries and recently when visiting a farm the farmer's wife looked out of an upstairs window and called to me "Have you come to photograph our granary?" I said that I should like to do so, but how did she know and she replied, "A farmer friend of ours said that there was a chap cycling round taking photos of them". So the old country grape-vine still functions!

METEOROLOGICAL REPORT FOR 1979

By Kenneth J. Hosking, F.R.Met.S.

The following account and summary of the weather in 1979 has been compiled from Ryde's records. The comparisons and averages now span 62 years since 1st January, 1918. The account is reproduced by kind permission of the Isle of Wight County Press.

RAINFALL

The 1979 total of 32.09in. compared with a 60-year annual average of 30.45in. and the 1978 total of 29.54in. Apart from the year just ended, only 1974 and 1977 during the past nine years have given rainfall totals in excess of average.

During 1979, January (3.87in.), February (3.15in.), March (3.58in.), May (3.66in.) and December (4.61in.) had rainfall totals appreciably in excess of their monthly averages, while June (1.31in.), July (1.42in.), September (0.89in.) and November (2.47in.) were drier than average.

The remaining months – April (1.72in.), August (2.29in.) and October (3.12in.) had totals close to their 60-year monthly means. The driest autumn on record in 1978 was followed by the wettest winter (December, January and February) for 19 years while only in 1932 (4.16in.) was May wetter than during 1979.

The 24-hour period ended at 10 a.m. on Sunday 29th July, with 1.08in. was the only instance during the year of a daily total to reach one inch. On average, a fall of one inch or more in a 24-hour period ended at 9 a.m. GMT occurs about five times over a two-year period – one inch of rain being the equivalent of 101 tons of water to the acre.

Thirty-two days preceding the heavy thunderstorms on 29th July had given only 0.01in. of rain at Ryde. During 1979, Ryde had 161 "rain-days" as compared with an annual average of 156.

A "rain-day" is a 24-hour period ended at 9 a.m. during which at least 0.01in. of rain is measured.

SUNSHINE

The 1979 total of 1679.1 hours at Ryde proved only a slight improvement on the totals of 1570.8 and 1592.2 hours respectively during the dull years of 1977 and 1978, and were thus for the third successive year well below the 60-year annual average there of 1748.2 hours.

Of the 73 sunless days during 1979, 11 occurred during January, 15 in February, ten in November and ten in December. The year included a June sunshine total of only 158.2 hours – a figure only lower during this month in 1977 and 1958.

MONTHLY SUMMARY OF WEATHER AT RYDE, ISLE OF WIGHT 1979

Month	Hours of Sunshine	Rain mm.	Screen Temperatures Mean Max. °C	Screen Temperatures Mean Min. °C	Extremes °C	Extremes °C	Mean Monthly Temp. °C
					From	To	
January	83.0	98.4	4.9	–0.7	9.4	–5.9	2.1
February	61.3	80.0	5.0	0.7	10.0	–3.5	2.9
March	115.6	91.0	8.8	3.4	13.9	–1.6	6.1
April	146.8	43.8	11.5	5.7	16.4	–0.2	8.6
May	214.1	93.0	14.2	7.5	21.4	1.6	11.8
June	158.2	33.3	17.6	11.5	22.3	8.4	14.6
July	240.8	36.2	21.5	14.4	25.4	11.8	18.0
August	198.6	58.3	19.2	13.1	23.7	7.6	16.2
September	180.2	22.5	17.7	11.5	21.6	5.0	14.6
October	125.8	79.1	15.5	10.5	20.1	4.6	13.0
November	89.2	62.6	11.3	6.0	14.9	0.6	8.6
December	65.5	117.1	9.7	5.5	15.4	–3.5	7.6
TOTALS	1679.1	815.3 mm (32.09")					
					Highest Max.	Lowest Min.	
AVERAGES		(25.4 mm=1 inch)	13.1°C (55.5°F)	7.4°C (45.3°F)	25.4°C 13th July	–5.9°C 1st Jan.	10.2°C (50.4°F)

TEMPERATURES

The maximum shade temperature reached or exceeded 70°F on 28 days during 1979 as compared with 27 such days during the previous year and an annual average of 39 such occurrences at Ryde.

Nineteen of these days occurred during July in the warmest calendar month since August, 1976. The temperature on the year's warmest day – 13th July – was 77.7°F – a reading exceeded on no less than 23 days during the hot summer of 1976. It was the coolest August locally since 1963.

During 1979 the minimum air temperature fell to 32°F or below on 35 occasions – 21 of these during January, easily the coldest month at Ryde since the "big freeze" of January and February, 1963 – as compared with an annual average of 23 air frosts and the record of 69 during 1963.

The first of January, with a maximum reading of 30.9°F and a minimum of 21.4°F, gave Ryde its lowest readings since the end of January, 1972, and provided the coldest day of the year. February, too, was the coldest since 1963.

The maximum of 46.4°F on 2nd May proved the coldest day in May at Ryde since records commenced. The very mild weather during the first fortnight of December resulted in a record high December minimum of 54.7°F on the 6th, following upon a maximum reading of 59.7°F on the previous day which had equalled the December record.

The 1979 annual mean maximum and minimum temperatures of 55.5°F and 45.3°F compared with Ryde's long-term means of 57°F and 46°F respectively resulted in the coldest year since 1963.

GENERAL

Snowfall occurred on the morning of 19th and 27th January and again on 8th, 11th and 12th February. There were sharp thunderstorms on 30th May and 29th July, while the year provided its usual quota of gales – easterly on January 4th, south-westerly on 9/10th January, 14th August (Fastnet race) and recently on 9th, 10th, 14th and 27th December.

This summary relates to Ryde's official records and although some variations have naturally occurred at other Island resorts, the general weather pattern depicted is broadly indicative of that experienced throughout the Island and adjacent mainland areas of central southern England.

WHIRLWIND AT SANDOWN

At 11.20 on 24th April, 1979, there was a sudden very heavy hail-storm in Sandown, which continued until 11.40. The hailstones were up to 1cm in diameter and covered the ground thickly enough to make new mown grass look white. Another observer said that there was half an inch of hail in Sandown High Street, making it 'crunchy under foot'.

Soon after the start of the storm, at approximately 11.24, there was a sudden strong gust of wind, accompanied by a loud whistling noise, which rushed across Brown's Golf Course from the direction of Morton Common, frightening several people, overturning two 6 ft. teak seats and damaging two teak tables, and went out to sea in the direction of the Nab Tower. There was no funnel formed, but spray was seen to be lifted and whirled round and round as the wind moved approximately one mile out to sea before dissipating.

LORNA SNOW, SHANKLIN, I.W.

NATURAL HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL NOTES FOR 1979

Webbed Hedgerow at Chessell—Travellers from Newport to Freshwater during July could not have failed to notice the amazing sight of a 50 metre length of hedge, just beyond the A.A. Box at Chessell (GR. 393858), completely defoliated and wholly covered with the white silken webs and caterpillars of the Small Ermine Moth, *Yponomeuta padella* (L.). The farmer was most concerned and wanted to spray the hedge with insecticide, but I was able to assure him that the hedge would recover, although it would not make any growth this season, thus saving the cost of trimming! Many good photographs were taken, including a complete set of all stages of this micro-moth by Mr. R. K. Pilsbury, F.R.P.S.

OLIVER FRAZER 20/7/79

Food-hoarding by Rook—A rook with a sore foot and damaged tail and wing feathers took refuge in our garden at Shanklin for five or six days in early August, spending most of the day resting on the lawn and sheltering at night in a corner of the garden. For food it visited the area below the bird table and, on Monday 6th August, finding more food than it required, some was collected and buried. First a piece of cheese rind was selected and pushed under a spreading fuchsia. Next a piece of raw pastry was taken and placed under a clump of heather, and three small stones were pushed in to keep it in place. Another piece of cheese rind was carried to the edge of a paved pathway, placed on the ground, while the bird pecked out a small hole in the earth, before depositing the cheese in the hole, tapping it down three or four times with its bill and covering it over with small stones and pieces of hard soil. It then returned to the lawn, where it went to sleep in the sun for the next four hours, being under observation almost continually during that time. At five o'clock (tea-time!) it stirred and started to move about, visiting each food cache in the same order as that in which it had been buried, retrieving and eating the cheese rind and pastry. The rook was not seen again, and hopefully had recovered enough to fly away.

RON SNOW 10/8/79

New Spider at Hamstead—On the occasion of the Society's outing to Hamstead on 18th August, 1979, members noticed a fine female specimen of the Orb Spider, *Argiope bruennichi*. With a shining silvery cephalothorax and a yellowish abdomen, as large as a man's thumbnail, with conspicuous black bars across it, it was certainly a sight not easily forgotten. Really a native of southern Europe, a thriving colony of these spiders was first recorded by Mrs. Morrison Bell at Southbourne, Hants, in 1940, probably descendants of some released in her garden in Hampshire by Mrs. M. J. Marples some years before. This is the first time it has been recorded in the Island, and it is a matter of speculation as to how it crossed the Solent. It might have come by boat, or, what is more likely, the egg-sac(s) could have been carried over on floating debris. The male, which is small and light brown, was not seen.

OLIVER FRAZER 18/8/79

Butterflies deceived—While having tea on a sunny day in August in the garden, we noticed a number of small Tortoiseshell Butterflies feeding on the flowers of French Marigolds, *Tagetes,* nearby. We were surprised when a number of them alighted on the tea-tray, which we had purchased from the National Trust and was decorated with stylised paintings of flowers of different kinds and colours. The butterflies repeatedly extended their proboscises in an effort to extract nectar from the centre of those orange-coloured flowers, representing Marsh-marigolds, which most closely resembled the French Marigolds, and they ignored all the paintings of other colours. There was no spilt tea or honey on the tray, and there was no doubt that they were attracted by the paintings.

DOROTHY FRAZER, Mottistone Mill, Brighstone, I.W.

Rare Hover-fly at Bembridge—On 5th September, 1979, a specimen of the uncommon and handsome hover-fly, *Volucella zonaria,* Poda, was netted by me as it cleaned itself on a wooden fence at Bembridge. At the time of Morey (1909) it was not on the British List of Diptera, and was considered to be a rare immigrant from the Continent, but since the 1940's it seems to have become established along the South coast. It was recorded by J. W. Saunt in 1946 and 1947 from West Cowes and in 1948 from East Cowes (see *Proceedings,* Vol. IV, Pt. III, pp. 88-9). This particular specimen was a female with a length of 20mm.

M. W. GILCHRIST

Shieldbugs at Freshwater—On 15th September, 1979, a group of approximately 30 specimens of the Shieldbug, *Sehirus dubius* Scopoli, was found on West High Down, Freshwater. They were all in the nymph stage showing red with black markings. A return visit on 30th September revealed a smaller number, but in the adult stage, the red having completely disappeared leaving a metallic blue-black shieldbug. The species is recorded from a few southern counties, including the Island, and is always found on chalky soils. Its host plant is Bastard Toadflax, *Thesium humifusum,* but it is suspected that it may at times feed on other plants, perhaps Marjoram, *Origanum vulgare.*

DAVID HUNNYBUN

Lobster Moth Caterpillar at Wootton—In late September a very curious-looking caterpillar was brought to me by Mrs. Jean Hayles, who found it behind the curtain in her home on the edge of Lushington Copse. It was identified as that of the Lobster Moth, *Stauropus fagi,* which is cited by Morey (1909) as being very rare, with only one record from Cowes, and has subsequently been found at Shalfleet (see *Proceedings,* Vol. I, Pt. IX, p. 593). Photographs were taken of the specimen.

MRS. MARION EDMUNDS

Unusual Food-plant for Lepidoptera—This year I noticed some leaf mines on evergreen laurel in a roadside hedge not far from the viewpoint car park on the Yarmouth-Newport road. Having been brought up in my early days to use crushed laurel leaves

in killing bottles, I was surprised to see mines in this pabulum. I sent some leaves to Dr. Bradley, of the British Museum (Nat. Hist.), who identified them as mines made by the micro-moth, *Lyonetia clerkella* L., which normally feeds on rosaceous plants and fruit trees like apple, pear and cherry. L. T. Ford (1949) gives as well birch, hawthorn, *Salix caprea, Pyrus aucuparia* and cotoneaster. Now the interesting thing about this observation is that Dr. Bradley tells me that two other collectors have also sent in similar mines on the same laurel. I suppose that, if a general feeder has a good year, it will possibly expand to other plants. There are, however, ample food-plants around, so why choose laurel? I suppose the upper and lower parts of the leaf could be very poisonous and the middle layer remain edible, but the happening is so unusual that at least three people thought it worthwhile to call attention to it. I am indebted to Dr. Bradley for kindly identifying the specimen.

Reference: FORD, L. T. (1949). *A Guide to the Smaller British Lepidoptera*, London.

RICHARD FORD

Another Grey Squirrel at Wootton—On 19th December, 1979, what was thought to be another Grey Squirrel was found dead in her drive by Mrs. Ablitt, of Palmers Brook Farm, Wootton, in the same area as one was found run over in the road a year ago (see *Proceedings for 1978*, p. 202). With the kind co-operation of Mr. J. Scott, Senior Technician at Cowes High School, it was put into the deep freeze to await expert examination. I was able to see it and took some photographs. It was certainly a Grey Squirrel, *Sciurus carolinensis*, and as far as I could tell, since it was already deeply frozen, it was a young male. This was later confirmed by Dr. Andy Tittensor, who stated that it was clearly one of this year's brood.

O. H. FRAZER 3/1/80

Harvest Mouse at Niton—Late in December, 1979, I found a neat round nest lying on the path known as Bury Lane, Niton, which had recently been cleared of undergrowth. The nest, which was wholly made of split grass, was sent to Stephen Harris, of the Mammal Society, who identified it as definitely that of a Harvest Mouse, *Micromys minutus*. This is the first positive record of this species in the Island since the publication of Morey's *Guide to the Natural History of the Isle of Wight* in 1909.

MRS. AUDREY WILKINSON 26/3/80