

Stenus nitidiusculus Steph. Woodcombe, in damp meadow.
September. Generally distributed.

ELATERIDAE

***Hypnoidus quadripustulatus** F. Woodcombe, in damp meadow.
June. Local.

ANOBIIDAE

Xestobium rufovillosum Deg. Chaffcombe, one taken crawling up
trunk of cedar in churchyard. May. Generally distributed, in
old trees as well as houses and churches.

CHRYSOMELIDAE

Aphthona venustula Kuts. Chaffcombe, on *Euphorbia amygdaloides*,
May. Local.

CURCULIONIDAE

Ceuthorhynchus mixtus Muls. and Rey. Minehead, on *Fumaria
officinalis*, June. Rare, only once previously recorded from
Porlock, Bennett, *V.C.H.*

Ceuthorhynchus melanostictus Marsh. Woodcombe, on *Mentha
aquatica*, September. Local.

SCOLYTIDAE

Hylastes opacus Er. Minehead, swept from vegetation under Elm.
May. Local.

STEEP HOLM TRUST, 1960

TRUSTEES:

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History Society*

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The 1960 season, our seventh since the establishment of the Trust, again proved to be in all respects a satisfactory one. Applications to visit the island were received from a number of fresh sources, including one from the Wiltshire A. & N. H. Society. As a result of this, two specialists spent four nights on the island in July and made

a very valuable contribution to Steep Holm entomological records with a Lepidoptera count of no less than 51 species, while 34 other insects were also noted. Identification of all specimens was checked by the British Museum. It was suggested that the visit might be repeated at a different season.

Return visits have been paid by a number of Societies, Colleges and Schools and among these we have been able to find competent leaders, who will accept the responsibility of taking parties over; for we adhere strictly to the condition that no party shall land without an authorised leader. Fortunately there has been very little evidence of casual landings and no pilfering or damage has occurred. Visitors have become more familiar with requirements, and the Barracks procedure for those staying overnight is working well. The derelict atmosphere, which for several seasons had to be endured, has been eliminated and there is now an impression of good order and cleanliness. To quite an extent this applies also to the general state of the island. Having only spasmodic assistance from visiting parties (for which we are indeed grateful!) we have realised the impossibility of clearing the whole area of Alexanders and Privet. But the perimeter path, the path from the Barracks over the crown of the island and the important South Landing path can now be said to be under control. The priority target otherwise is, of course, the regularly repeated clearance of the Paeony area. These plants continue to flourish and increase in numbers, and, when the blooms were at their best — never unfortunately for more than a matter of days — there was a really remarkable show of colour. Steep Holm is generally cited as the only habitat of the Wild Paeony in Britain, and it has undoubtedly been there for a long period. It is said to have been “naturalised”, but, if so, there seems to be no evidence as to what human agency was responsible for bringing it to the island.

During our tenure of the island it has been noted that in some years certain flowers will be particularly fine, while in others it will be different ones which provide the better show — it seems that there is a kind of sequence in this matter. During the season under review the Henbane was strikingly conspicuous; one large, bushy plant near the Tombstone Battery had many long flower spikes and stood five feet high. In the proximity of the Summit battery a forest of Hemlock was in bloom like a sheet of driven snow. The Wild Leek alongside the Tower Rock and on a newly noted site above the

landing beach is thriving. There is now a prolific growth of the Rock Sea Lavender on the slopes above the Split Rock, but the amount of flower is, we notice, influenced by the season's weather. Growth of Golden Samphire at the South Landing continues good, but we could wish that the Thrift on the Rudder Rock were more in evidence.

We conclude with a summary of the work of the Steep Holm Gull Research Station (a fuller report by Mr. Hugh Boyd is printed in the Ornithological Section's *Somerset Birds*, 1960).

The main research in 1960 dealt with the causes of death of fledgling and adult gulls. Associated with this, nearly 400 young chicks were marked with wing-tags in June in a preliminary study of fledgling survival by the capture-recapture technique. In addition 229 Herring, 28 Lesser Black-backed and 10 Great Black-backed Gulls were ringed, though no catching trip in April was possible.

Migration watches were made in spring and autumn, a visit from 1st to 10th October being particularly successful and resulting in the ringing of over 360 passerines, including 129 Swallows, 101 Hedge Sparrows and 74 Blackbirds and, amongst the scarcer species, a Firecrest. The first three recoveries away from the island of species other than gulls were of a Kestrel found in Dorset a few days after ringing in October, a Blackbird at Clevedon and a Greenfinch at Penarth.

The Trust were able to make an increased grant this season to the Station for materials and maintenance of quarters.

HARRY SAVORY,

Hon. Secretary, Steep Holm Trust.