

The Entomological Section.

President—The Rev. Preb. A. P. WICKHAM, East Brent Vicarage, Burnham.

Recorder—Mr. A. E. HUDD, F.E.S., 108, Pembroke Road, Clifton.

Treasurer—Mr. W. A. BOGUE, F.E.S., The Bank House, Watchet.

Secretary—Mr. H. H. SLATER, Brooke House, Cannington.

THE Annual Meeting was held at Taunton Castle on March 23rd. The membership keeps up,—38, including six dormant members absent on military service. Four new members were proposed, and two more since. There was a balance in hand of £6 12s. 5d. It was decided to inaugurate a late autumn or winter afternoon meeting (in Taunton, probably) at which specimens of interest taken during the season could be exhibited, or anything else of entomological interest, or papers read.

We had a tentative sort of field-day at Burnham on July 17th, at which we hoped to meet some of our new members. Thanks to the uncertain weather, it only produced a small muster. Those who did get there found the fine dark local race of *Aglaia* on the wing, but not much else about, apart from larvæ; a number of those of *Porcellus* were found, and of full-fed *A. fuliginosa*. But it was a cheerful and pleasant meeting, and quite worth while, in these days of abnegation,

when an entomologist dare not go out sugaring, and makes, or revises, his will before adventuring to try ivy or willow bloom.

The Ornithological Section.

President and Recorder—Dr. J. WIGLESWORTH, Springfield House, Winscombe.

Vice-President—The Rev. F. L. BLATHWAYT, Melbury Osmund, Dorchester.

Secretary and Treasurer (pro temp.)—Mr. H. ST. GEORGE GRAY,
Taunton Castle, Taunton.

IT is satisfactory to be able to report a substantial recovery in the bird population of the county from the holocaust which overtook it in the winter of 1916-17. All members of the Thrush family, Robins, and many other birds have increased remarkably, and will doubtless, in the absence of further adverse conditions, get back before long to their normal level. Not so, however, with respect to Goldcrests and Long-tailed Tits, which in this county suffered more severely than any other birds; although a little recovery has been noted in these birds, this is at present only slight, and it is to be feared that it will be many years before they again reach their former abundance.

A feature of the past winter was the great scarcity, amounting to almost complete absence, of Fieldfares, which was noted in all parts of the county.

Allusion was made in the last report to the fact that the Raven had almost certainly nested again in the Cheddar Gorge. This fact has been amply confirmed by the experience of last season, for the nest, with the young in it, was seen on more than one occasion both by the Recorder and other ornithologists, and the young were successfully reared. This return of the Raven to an old inland breeding-place is one of the most interesting ornithological events, which has taken place in the county in recent years.

The Little Owl continues to flourish. Additional records have been established during 1918, at Compton Bishop and Priddy on the Mendips, and the late Mr. R. H. Whitting dis-

covered a new nesting-site near Uphill. It is evident that the bird is now pretty generally diffused all over the Mendip district, and it appears also to have settled down in the country around West Monkton and Cothelstone, but, so far, no records are to hand from any place further west than Minehead.

Last winter was remarkable for the number of Bitterns that visited the county, no less than five having been reported from various places. Unfortunately only one of them apparently escaped, the other four having met their usual fate with the gun. This is all the more to be regretted as the effect of protection in Norfolk has been most encouraging, it having led to the re-establishment of this bird as a breeding species in that county; and though localities suitable to its habits are in Somerset now much restricted, it might perhaps under strict protection be possible to re-habilitate this interesting bird in this county also.

The most interesting record to hand this year, which although it dates back as far as 1901, has never hitherto been made public, is that of the Wall Creeper (*Tichodroma muraria*), a specimen of which was seen by Dr. Helps on the wall of his garden at Mells, in September of that year. This straggler from the Alpine regions of Europe is a very rare visitor to the British Isles, only about half-a-dozen instances of its occurrence having been reported altogether, and it has never before been recorded from this county.

Another interesting occurrence was that of a Hoopoe, a specimen of which uncommon visitor was killed at Knowle St. Giles, near Chard, on September 24th last.

The additions to the Museum Collections, given in greater detail on p. lxvi, include a Tengmalm's Owl, shot at Winscombe, 1859, and a Red Grouse shot on Blackdown, Mendip, 1884, both presented by Mr. C. L. F. Edwards; specimens of the Little Owl; a Ruff killed near Athelney, 1901, given by Mr. W. H. Rendell; a Great Northern Diver killed at Meare, 1916, from Mr. Stanley Lewis; and a four-legged Rook from Ruishton, presented by Mr. R. G. Sommerville.

Fourteen new members have joined during the eighteen months ended September 30th, 1918, making the total membership of the Section forty-six.

The Botanical Section.

President and Recorder—The Rev. E. S. MARSHALL, F.L.S.,
West Monkton Rectory, Taunton.

Secretary (pro temp.)—Dr. W. WATSON, A.L.S., Taunton School, Taunton.

THE annual general meeting was held at Taunton Castle on Thursday, February 28th, 1918, the Rev. E. S. Marshall presiding. There was a fair attendance of members but it was a matter of regret that the Hon. Secretary, Mr. W. D. Miller, was unable to be present owing to illness. The accounts for the preceding year showed a favourable balance of £2 19s. 10d. Mr. W. P. Hiern, F.R.S., of Barnstaple, was elected an Hon. Member and due appreciation of Mr. Cowan's admirable work in connection with the herbarium was shown. It was decided to arrange one local field-day, and, if possible, an autumn meeting for the discussion of the season's work and inspection of particular exhibits. Various methods of drying plants were discussed and Mr. H. S. Thompson's seven-penny handbook *How to dry Plants* was recommended, after which the members availed themselves of the invitation of the Taunton Field Club to hear Miss K. Sydenham's lecture and demonstration on "Medicinal Herbs and Herb-growing," which was much appreciated.

Contributions to the herbarium have been received from the President and others. Some common plants are still wanted and members are requested to examine the catalogue in the herbarium and note the desiderata. Mr. Cowan will be pleased to receive specimens of well-dried plants, which may be left at the Museum for him, for though he has changed his residence to Clevedon, he still continues his valuable work.

On Thursday, July 4th, a Field Lecture was given on "Aquatic plants and their modes of life" by Dr. Watson. There was a good attendance and the adaptations of aquatic plants were illustrated by means of plants collected in the ponds and streams between the Priory (Taunton) and Bathpool.

During the temporary residence of Mr. Miller at Exeter the

Society has been deprived of his valuable services and the secretarial work has been carried on during the summer by Dr. Watson. An autumn meeting for the discussion of the season's work is being arranged.

A member of the Society has expressed his willingness to present to the Library the *Journal of Botany* from Vol. I to XXXIII (1895), provided the Society is able to acquire the parts from 1896 to 1916 inclusive. Perhaps some of the members will be able to fill up the gaps.

A number of articles dealing with the botany of Somersetshire, have been contributed by members of the Section and others, to current botanical periodicals, and a summary of these is given below:—

Hurst, C. P. "North Somerset Mosses," *J. of Bot.*, Sept., 1918.

Marshall, E. S. "Somerset Notes for 1917," *J. of Bot.*, May, 1918. "*Plantago ceratophyllum*." A note on this plant which is found on Brean Down, *J. of Bot.*, June, 1918. A number of other articles and notes of general interest, *J. of Bot.*, 1918.

Roper, I. M. "*Cladium mariscus* in N. Somerset," *J. of Bot.*, Sept., 1918.

Thompson, H. S. "*Carex evoluta*," *J. of Bot.*, June, 1918. A note on a hybrid sedge from Glastonbury. "Brake Fern on an oak," *J. of Bot.*, Sept., 1918. "*Calamintha acinos*," *J. of Bot.*, Oct., 1918. An analysis of *C. acinos* Clairv. and *C. arvensis* Lamk., suggesting that they are distinct plants. "*Euonymus europaeus*." A note on the occurrence of the segregate *E. latifolius* Scop. in a wood on Tickenham hill—perhaps introduced by birds, *J. of Bot.*, Oct., 1918.

Watson, W. "Cryptogamic vegetation of the sand-dunes of the W. coast of England," *J. of Ecology*, June, 1918. A brief description of the Berrow dunes is given. "Sphagna, their habitats, adaptations and associates," *Annals of Bot.*, Oct., 1918. Somerset Sphagna are often mentioned.

Wheldon, J. A. "*Drepanocladus aduncus* v. *wheldoni*." An account of this moss and of its occurrence at Berrow.

White, J. W. "Notes supplemental to the Flora of Bristol,"
J. of Bot., Jan., Feb., Mar., 1918.

SOME SOMERSET PLANT NOTES FOR 1918.

The activities of the members of the Section have been greatly limited by travelling restrictions and other difficulties incidental to the war, but a fair amount of work has been done in the county, notably by the Rev. E. S. Marshall, Dr. H. Downes, Dr. W. Watson, Messrs. J. W. White and H. S. Thompson. In the following list of plants noted, the recorder is usually indicated by his initials. The bracketed number shows the county botanical division. New vice-county (N. and S. Somerset) records are indicated by asterisks:—

Papaver rhoeas v. *strigosum*. In a ploughed field with the type, near Bathpool (3). *W.W.*

Corydalis claviculata. Withypool (1). *E.S.M.* Cothelstone (3). *W.W.*

Arabis scabra (*stricta*). Abundantly on a stone wall between Bath and Wells, May 31st, 1731. In a herbarium (see *J. of Bot.*, Oct., 1918).

A. hirsuta. Combe St. Nicholas (6). *W.W.*

Draba muralis. Frequent on walls, Wambrook and Whitestaunton (6). *W.W.*

Hutchinsia petraea. On rocks near Bristol (10), Good Friday, 1918, "in a station known by Mrs. Sandwith and Mr. Green of Bath for several years." *H.S.T.*

**Viola segetalis*. Castle Neroche (4). *V. agrestis*. Near Wiveliscombe (3). *V. ruralis*. Crowcombe (2). *V. obtusifolia*. Quantoxhead (2), Buckland St. Mary (6). *W.W.*

Spergula arvensis. Simonsbath (1) and W. Monkton (3). *E.S.M.* Barle valley (1), Buckland St. Mary and Widcombe (6). *W.W.*

S. sativa. Turnip-field near Simonsbath (1). *E.S.M.*

**Hypericum perforatum* v. *angustifolium*. Quantoxhead (2), Buncombe (3). *W.W.*

**H. humifusum* v. *magnum*. Exford and Withypool (1). *W.W.*

Malva pusilla (*teste* Willmott). Waste ground, Horton (4).
H.D.

- **Erodium cicutarium* v. *triviale*. Berrow Hill, Newton St. Loe (10). *I. M. Roper. J. of Bot.*, April, 1918.
- **Ulex gallii* v. *humilis*. Exmoor (1). *E.S.M.* and *W.W.*
 Quantocks (2). *W.W.*
Lotus tenuis. Near Wrantage (3 and 4). *W.W.*
Ornithopus perpusillus. Withypool (1). *E.S.M.*
Vicia tetrasperma. Kilve (2). *W.W.*
Lathyrus nissolia. Ilminster (4). *H.D.* Badger Street (3).
W.W.
- **Rubus fissus*. Near Exford (1). *E.S.M.* and *W.W.*
- **Sedum dasyphyllum*. On wall, Kilton (2). *W.W.*
Myriophyllum spicatum. In R. Ile, Ilminster (4). *H.D.*
Peplis portula. Melcombe wood, near Mells (10). *H.S.T.*
- **Epilobium palustre* v. *lavandulifolium*. Withypool (1).
E.S.M.
Galium tricorne. Ilminster (4). *H.D.*
- **Carduus acaulis* v. *caulescens*. On cliffs east of Kilve (2).
W.W.
Lobelia dortmanna. Ponds at Culmhead—introduced there
 by Sir J. Mellor.
Polemonium coeruleum, Jacob's ladder, occurs as an escape
 at Ilminster (4). *H.D.* Near Trull (3). *W.W.*
Symphytum tuberosum. Well established in two woods near
 Mells and Whatley (10). *H.S.T.*
Cuscuta epithimum. This Dodder is frequent on gorse and
 heath on the hills above Kilve and Quantoxhead (2).
W.W.
Linaria spuria. Frequent in cornfields about Kilve (2).
W.W.
Euphrasia gracilis. Withypool (1). *E.S.M.* and *W.W.*
- **E. campestris* v. *neglecta*. Failand and Clevedon (9). *I. M.*
Roper. (See *British Euphrasiæ*, p. 21).
- **E. occidentalis*. *Sec.* Cedric Bucknall (*British Euphrasiæ*,
 p. 10). This occurs near Kewstoke and Cheddar (9).
E. fennica. Simonsbath (1), 900–1400 ft. *E.S.M.* On slopes
 of Dure Down (1), 1500 ft. *W.W.*
E. minima. On Nardus heath, Withypool Common (1).
E.S.M. and *W.W.* Near Simonsbath to 1480 ft. (1).
E.S.M.

- **E. minima* × *E. curta* v. *glabrescens*. Near Simonsbath, 1250 ft. *E.S.M.*
- Pinguicula lusitanica*, the western Butterwort, reaches 1300 ft. on Exmoor (1). *E.S.M.* Near Wambrook (6). *W.W.*
- Stachys palustris* × *sylvatica*. Near 'R. Ile, Donyatt (4). *H.D.* Knowle St. Giles (4). *W.W.*
- **Plantago lanceolata* v. *sphaerostachya*. Minehead and Quantocks (2). Cothelstone (3). *W.W.*
- **P. coronopus* v. *pygmaea*. Minehead. On the coast from St. Audries to Lilstock (2). *W.W.*
- Littorella lacustris*. Near Cow Castle, Barle valley (1). *E.S.M.*
- Scleranthus annuus*. W. Monkton (3). *W. D. Miller*. Castle Neroche (4) and Buckland St. Mary (6). *W.W.*
- **P. convolvulus* v. *pseudo-dumetorum*. Cultivated ground, Ilminster (4). *H.D.*
- P. persicaria* × *lapathifolium* is not infrequent. *W.W.*
- **Polygonum lapathifolium* v. *incanum*. W. Sedgemoor (3). *W.W.*
- Elodea canadensis* with pistillate flowers, June, 1918, Trull (3). *W.W.*
- Polygonatum multiflorum*. "A Solomon's Seal (probably this species) was observed by Mr. E. J. Piper in a small wood near Exford" (1). *E.S.M.* In a wood near Mells (10). *H.S.T.*
- P. officinale*. In two woods near Babington and Mells (10). *H.S.T.*
- Typha angustifolia*. Old canal between Chard and Ilminster (4). *H.D.*
- **Sparganium erectum* v. *microcarpon*. In the Barle about 950 ft. (1). *E.S.M.*
- Scirpus setaceus*. Old canal between Chard and Ilminster (4). *H.D.*
- Agrostis alba* v. *major*. Creech St. Michael (3). *W.W.*
- A. nigra*. W. Sedgemoor (3), Chard Common (6). *W.W.*
- **Molinia coerulea* v. *robusta* (major) and v. *viridiflora*. Bewley Down (6). *W.W.*
- **Athyrium filix-foemina* v. *convexum*. Withypool, etc.,

Exmoor (1) and near Clatworthy (3). *E.S.M.* and *W.W.*
 Castle Neroche (4). *W.W.*

**Polypodium vulgare* v. *serratum*. Rocky ground north of
 W. Monkton church. *E.S.M.* and *I. M. Roper*.

Ophioglossum vulgatum. Bickenhall (4). *W.W.*

**Equisetum palustre* v. *polystachyum*. Near Codsand (1).
E.S.M. and *W.W.* *Var. *nudum*. Culmhead and Bewley
 Down (6), Britty Common (4) and Berrow (9). *W.W.*

Lycopodium selago. Bewley Down (6). *W.W.*

Sphagnum acutifolium. On a peaty pasture at Weston-in-
 Gordano, at an elevation of 20 ft. *I. M. Roper*.

**Madotheca porella*. This rare liverwort occurs in the river
 Barle below Tarr Steps. *W.W.*

**Disocera*, a new genus of fungus, "discovered in Somerset-
 shire on the thallus of a lichen by W. Watson" has been
 described in the *Trans. Brit. Mycological Soc.* for 1917.