

## **Bamforth Farm Wild Things Visit August 2025**

Ten of us braved the edge of Storm Floris to explore Bamforth Farm in Wawne, run by Rob and his wife Sue and son Neil.

First we sheltered in their lovely wildlife garden as we explored the largely docile contents of Rob's moth trap. Richard Middleton, also from Wawne and another member of the Hull Natural History Society, came along to help ID the moths, and answer questions about moth life. They are short lived, to the point where many are without mouthparts as their adult lives are dedicated to procreation. Some females, like those of the Vapourers, have no wings and are found by males by scent alone.

The attrition rate in well-managed moth traps is very low. Richard described one species, the tiny Water Veneer, whose larvae live entirely underwater. The winged males mate with the females on the water surface and can live for less than a day. He described finding what he thought was chaff at the bottom of his traps until he realised that they were dozens of dead Veneers, which had flown into the traps then died a natural death. Bats and birds are key predators of moths, and Richard described how a tame robin would wait optimistically for him to open his traps.

Just as we were ready to go for a walk around the farm, the heavens opened so we retreated into the cosy kitchen for drinks and scrumptious flapjacks prepared by Sue and grandson Isaac. Afterwards we viewed an often-used barn owl nest in one of the barns, then granddaughter Tabitha led us around the farm on her bike. Rob armed us all with sticks to head off his curious cattle. "Just tap them on the nose," he said. Fortunately we didn't have to use them as Rob and Neil carefully shepherded us out of the way. The cattle were particularly jittery as they were hoping to be fed on spent grains from the brewery at the end of the lane.

It was far too windy for much wildlife to emerge but we saw a pair of heron and a few brave Gatekeeper and Holly Blues. The sun shone with startling clarity after the storm. We passed the Engine Drain, one of the oldest in Holderness, cut in 1675, then followed the River Hull down to Green Lane, where we walked back to the village. Barges were moored here up to the 20<sup>th</sup> century to carry coal, grain and other products to and from Wawne, the easiest way to carry heavy goods. A couple of us scavenged plums on the village pavements, blown down by the winds.

Thanks to Rob and his family and to Richard for a fun and enlightening day out, and for such welcome shelter from the storm.



Above: Poplar Hawk Moth. Below: Flame Carpet



Below clockwise: Gold Spot; Magpie; Swallow Prominent; Setaceous Hebrew Character; Vine's Rustic; Lime-speck Pug





Left: Lacewing, probably *Chrysoperla carnea*;

Below: a Gatekeeper;

Over: armed with sticks to fend off the cattle;

Walking downriver;

Richard Middleton examines a Keeled Garlic *Allium carinatum* growing by the Engine Drain.







Report and pictures HK August 2025