

## Aquatic Day, 21st September 2019

MIKE AVERILL



Typical tray with alderfly and damselfly larvae Mike Averill

What a super day to go pond dipping! September 21st was probably the last shorts and suntan day of the year. We couldn't have known at the time, that later that very night, it would begin to rain like it hadn't rained for 35 days. Not only did it start raining but it didn't stop for the rest of the year. Had we known it was the last summer's day I suspect most of would still have still gone pond dipping because Unclys Pool is as nice a spot as anywhere in the forest to be messing about in water.

Unclys is one of the few permanent pools in the forest and as such is a valuable refuge for any aquatic creature that needs year-round water. Some insects like dragonflies for instance require up to 3 years to complete their life cycles. We didn't identify any fish this day but Unclys does have a number of fish species which we know from a netting exercise carried out by the Wyre Forest Study Group in 2011. On that occasion a total of 597 fish were caught, 426 were counted and identified. The catch was comprised of: 7 Gudgeon, 24 Perch and 564 Roach. The Roach and Perch caught were generally very small and the results from the fish ageing showed that this was because they were very slow-growing. There is a small population of Fully Scaled Carp *Cyprinus carpio* in the pool.

Pond dipping doesn't very often catch fish in an open pool and today's samples were mainly insects and bugs. The weather was still fine so adult dragonflies like Southern Hawker *Aeshna cyanea*, Common Darter *Sympetrum striolatum* and Migrant Hawker *Aeshna*



*Notonecta viridis*

Mike Averill



*Ephemerella danica* larva

Mike Averill

*mixta* were very much in evidence. The Common Darters were very active and even landed on a few people's heads. Most of the samples taken were larvae and as it was in September those creatures like caddis and mayflies would not emerge as adults until the following spring.

Two Caddis fly larvae were identified and one, *Triaenodes bicolor*, constructs a case made from slender leaf pieces and swims around using the rear legs which stick out of the case. The other, *Cyrtus trimaculatus* doesn't make a case but lives in a mesh web or trumpet and will come out from time to time and then you can see the distinctive head markings.

Three mayflies were netted and one was the very common *Ephemerella danica*, the classic summer Green Drake Mayfly that is seen clustering in May on a sunny day. They live in the silts along brooks and ponds and their larvae can often be very numerous. *Ephemerella* have fine multi branched external gills but another mayfly found, *Paraleptophlebia submarginata* has thread like gills which only branch twice.

Some members went on down the Bell Brook which runs down through Hitterhill from Unclys. An adjoining wet flush with slight tufa deposits contained some interesting molluscs including *Carychium tricinatum* and *Vitrea crystallina*.

It is worth saying that we didn't find any signs of the Native Crayfish *Austropotamobius pallipes* which had



Mayfly larva *Paraleptophlebia submarginata* Mike Averill



Leech *Glossiphonia complanata*

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until 3 years ago been found in the Bell Brook. We know that this crayfish had succumbed to the crayfish plague and so everyone who entered the water was careful to disinfect their wellies.

By four o'clock we'd returned to Unclys Farm where, thanks to John & Linda Iles, we were able to enjoy a cup of tea. Finally, sightings of a Spotted Flycatcher near the cars completed a wonderful day.



Spotted Flycatcher, Unclys, 21 Sept. 2019

Mike Averill

GRID REF	LOCATION	SPECIES	SPECIES	NUMBER	RECORD TYPE
SO761751	Unclys Pool	Alder Fly	<i>Sialis lutaria</i>	5	Larvae
SO761751	Unclys Pool	Beetle	<i>Ilybius fuliginosus</i>	2	Adult
SO761751	Unclys Pool	Brown China-mark Moth	<i>Elophila nymphaeata</i>	1	Adult
SO761751	Unclys Pool	Caddis	<i>Cynus trimaculatus</i>	1	Larvae
SO761751	Unclys Pool	Caddis	<i>Trienodes bicolor</i>	1	Larvae
SO761751	Unclys Pool	Cow Wheat Shieldbug	<i>Adomerus biguttatus</i>	1	Adult
SO761751	Unclys Pool	Damselfly	<i>Pyrrhosoma nymphula</i>	5	Larvae
SO761751	Unclys Pool	Damselfly	<i>Coenagrion puella</i>	5	Larvae
SO761751	Unclys Pool	Dragonfly	<i>Aeshna cyanea</i>	2	Larvae & Adult
SO761751	Unclys Pool	Dragonfly	<i>Aeshna grandis</i>	2	Adult
SO761751	Unclys Pool	Dragonfly	<i>Sympetrum striolatum</i>	10	Adult
SO761751	Unclys Pool	Dragonfly	<i>Aeshna mixta</i>	1	Adult
SO761751	Unclys Pool	Flatworm	<i>Girardia tigrina</i>	1	live adult
SO761751	Unclys Pool	Lake Pondskeeper	<i>Aquarius paludum</i>	10	Adult
SO761751	Unclys Pool	Leech	<i>Glossiphonia complanata</i>	1	live adult
SO761751	Unclys Pool	Mayfly	<i>Cloeon dipterum</i>	1	Larvae
SO761751	Unclys Pool	Mayfly	<i>Paraleptophlebia submarginata</i>	1	Larvae
SO761751	Unclys Pool	Mayfly	<i>Ephemera danica</i>	1	Larvae
SO761751	Unclys Pool	Pond Snail	<i>Radix balthica</i>	5	live adult
SO761751	Unclys Pool	Shrimp	<i>Gammarus pulex</i>	lots	Larvae
SO761751	Unclys Pool	Water Boatman	<i>Notonecta glauca</i>	1	Larvae
SO761751	Unclys Pool	Water Boatman	<i>notonecta viridis</i>	1	Larvae
SO761751	Unclys Pool	Water Measurer	<i>Hydrometra stagnorum</i>	5	Adult
SO76117508	Unclys Pool	Mollusca	<i>Gyraulus albus</i>	1	live adult
SO76117508	Unclys Pool	Mollusca	<i>Hippeutis complanatus</i>	1	live adult
SO76117508	Unclys Pool	Mollusca	<i>Radix balthica</i>	1	live adult
SO76117508	Unclys Pool	Mollusca	<i>Discus rotundatus</i>	1	live adult
SO76167557	Bell Brook - wet flush	Mollusca	<i>Potamopyrgus antipodarum</i>	1	live adult
SO76167557	Bell Brook - wet flush	Mollusca	<i>Vitrea crystallina</i>	1	live adult
SO76167557	Bell Brook - wet flush	Mollusca	<i>Arion intermedius</i>	1	live adult
SO76167557	Bell Brook - wet flush	Mollusca	<i>Carychium tridentatum</i>	1	live adult
SO76167557	Bell Brook - wet flush	Mollusca	<i>Malacolimax tenellus</i>	2	live adult
SO76167557	Bell Brook - wet flush	Mollusca	<i>Arion subfuscus</i>	1	live adult
SO76887613	Bell Brook-Bottom Pond	Mollusca	<i>Limax maximus</i>	1	live adult
SO76887613	Bell Brook-Bottom Pond	Mollusca	<i>Radix balthica</i>	2	live adult
SO76887613	Bell Brook-Bottom Pond	Mollusca	<i>Sphaerium corneum</i>	1	live adult
SO761753	Unclys Farm	Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	1	

Records from Mike Averill, Rosemary Hill (Molluscs) Rosemary Winnall and Heulwen Plant

This article is an extract from the Wyre Forest Study Group annual Review 2019