Wyre Forest Study Group

Brand Wood and Dowles Brook 2nd July 2025

GRAHAM HILL

On Wednesday 2nd July, seven members of the Wyre Forest STudy Group met at Far Forest and walked down to Rudd's Bridge to see what summer had brought. It was another lovely warm sunny day, lovely for us although not for the little stream that flows down to Dowles Brook from Far Forest—it was dry. Dowles Brook was still running, albeit at a very low level (Figure 1), so we crossed over the stepping stones upstream of the bridge, which sits there rather forlorn and still unused.

Into Brand Wood and Shropshire, and time to see what birds are around. The Merlin Bird ID app. suggests that Coal Tit, Blackbird, Blackcap, Goldfinch, Blue Tit, Chiffchaff, Wren and Marsh Tit are all vocalising. That sounds plausible although I am not so sure about the Canada Goose. I can hear a Woodpigeon calling too.

John Cox came armed with pheromone lures for Lunar Hornet Clearwing and the White Barred Clearwing, hoping for a bit of success. The lures were hung from a convenient branch and we waited. Nothing appeared the first time, but the second deployment was more successful with a Lunar Hornet Clearwing attracted.

Butterflies were abundant (although maybe not as much as years ago) with Ringlet, Silver-washed Fritillary, Large White, Large Skipper, Meadow Brown, Comma, Holly Blue, White Admiral, Purple Hairstreak and Red Admiral all flying around the open ride in sunshine. A Drab Louper was seen on a few occasions too.

It was good to see a Golden-ringed Dragonfly patrolling the ride, along with a couple of sightings of Beautiful Demoiselles.

Lunch was eaten, sitting on the bank of Dowles Brook watching a Grey Wagtail searching for its lunch beside us in the shallow water. Rosemary Winnall noticed the remains of a Signal Crayfish carapace atop a streamside rock—perhaps victim to a Corvid? Later, Rosemary Hill found a small adult male Signal Crayfish under a rock as she looked for molluscs.

After lunch the group wandered back along the track keeping our eyes peeled, of course. There was very little standing water around, just one small puddle in a wheel rut. A suitable place for both Pond-skaters and Whirligig beetles to hang out, and at the edge of the puddle a Dark Giant Horsefly that seemed to be drinking, or maybe seeking dissolved minerals, the group weren't quite sure, but it had been there before our lunch and still there after. A Leaf beetle was dislodged from an Alder but on closer inspection it looked more like a Mint Leaf Beetle. The jury is out on that one for now.

The warm sunshine was good for butterflies; they seemed to be all around us. Another census included Peacock, Holly Blue, Silver-washed Fritillary and a Large White. A Drab Looper was noted again, and a Golden-ringed Dragonfly (or maybe two) was seen patrolling the brookside ride in the sunshine. Mid-afternoon, we returned to our starting point near Rudd's Bridge

This was a lovely day to wander in Wyre. Sunshine and warmth had brought creatures out for us to enjoy—and record. Many of our sightings were added to iRecord (Table 1), a total of 31 records have appeared as I write this— that is really useful.



Figure 1. Dowles Brook, showing the very low water level. Graham Hill

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Table 1. List of species recorded on iRecord following the field meeting.

Latin name	Common name	Recorder
Plagiosterna aenea		Wadsworth, O.
Argyresthia goedartella	Golden Argent	Wadsworth, O.
Cochylidia rupicola	Hemp-agrimony Conch	Wadsworth, O.
Hypera rumicis		Wadsworth, O.
Ischnopterapion loti/modestum agg.		Wadsworth, O.
Protapion apricans	Clover Seed Weevil	Wadsworth, O.
Anthonomus rubi	Strawberry-blossom Weevil	Wadsworth, O.
Polydrusus tereticollis		Wadsworth, O.
Volucella zonaria	Hornet Hoverfly	Winnall, R.
Paidiscura pallens		Winnall, R.
Tabanus sudeticus	Dark Giant Horsefly	Winnall, R.
Minoa murinata	Drab Looper	Winnall, R.
Rutpela maculata		Winnall, R.
Stenotus binotatus	Timothy Grassbug	Winnall, R.
Drymus (Sylvadrymus) ryei		Winnall, R.
Capsus ater		Winnall, R.
Macrodiplosis roboris		Winnall, R.
Pentatoma rufipes	Red-legged Shieldbug	Winnall, R.
Propylea quattuordecimpunctata	14-spot Ladybird	Winnall, R.
Nabis (Dolichonabis) limbatus	Marsh Damselbug	Winnall, R.
Leptophyes punctatissima	Speckled Bush-cricket	Winnall, R.
Evacanthus interruptus		Winnall, R.
Pacifastacus leniusculus	Signal Crayfish	Hill, R.
Aglais io	Peacock	Hill, R.
Tabanus sudeticus	Dark Giant Horsefly	Hill, R.
Poecilobothrus nobilitatus		Hill, R.
Celastrina argiolus	Holly Blue	Hill, R.
Cordulegaster boltonii	Golden-ringed Dragonfly	Hill, R.
Argynnis paphia	Silver-washed Fritillary	Hill, R.
Leiobunum rotundum		Hill, R.
Pieris brassicae	Large White	Hill, R.