

# Sheffield Bird Study Group

# BULLETIN



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**[www.sbsg.org](http://www.sbsg.org)**

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**Bulletin**

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## Dates for your diary

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### INDOOR MEETINGS

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**Wednesday, 12<sup>th</sup> November – 7.15pm – Sheffield University Arts Tower, Lecture Theatre 5**

**Graham Appleton** will talk to us about the **BTO New Bird Atlas of Britain and Ireland**. Fieldwork began in November 2007 and will run for 4 winters and 4 breeding seasons. This is obviously an enormous undertaking and will require all hands on deck. Graham will cover previous atlases, why we need a new one, and how people can get involved.

**Wednesday, 10<sup>th</sup> December – 7.15 pm – Sheffield University Arts Tower, Lecture Theatre 5**

**Roy Croucher** will talk to us about “**Managing Britain’s Habitats**”. Roy was involved with the RSPB until 1982. He then worked on wildlife projects in Essex before being appointed Senior countryside Ranger by Sandwell MBC in the West Midlands. Since 2002 he has been Director of Northern France Wildlife Tours Ltd and has led birdwatching groups on tours of Britain, Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. His talk will be based on his 25 years experience in wildlife management and what can be achieved in the various habitats of lowland Britain using traditional methods and modern scientific techniques.

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### FIELD MEETINGS

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**Saturday 25<sup>th</sup>/ Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> October. Visible migration at Redmires.**

A fixture on the programme in recent years, late October is a peak time for passage of winter thrushes, finches and geese through our area, and the right weather conditions can provide one of the great birding spectacles of our area with thousands of birds on the move in the space of a few hours. Following unfavourable weather the last couple of years, we'll again try to hedge our bets and offer both days on the last weekend in October: 0730 on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> and 0700 on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> (clocks go back), meeting at the blue bridge (NE corner of top res). Ideal weather conditions would be clear skies with a light breeze from the SW, especially if the days before have been wet or foggy. Conditions last year were far removed from this ideal, but nevertheless produced a first for Redmires, with a hard-weather movement by Ian Wallace, the legendary birding figure, who came to see what vis-mig is all about, livening up the morning for all present.

**For information on minibus field trips contact Paul Medforth on 01246 418120**

## The Lecture

### Mauritius

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The May speaker was Richard Dale, the esteemed Secretary of SBSG, who was talking about two breeding seasons he spent on Mauritius working with the Mauritius Kestrel conservation project.

Mauritius is an island in the Indian Ocean, about 850 Km to the east of Madagascar. It is about 55 Km from north to south, and 45 Km west to east, and is mostly covered in sugar plantations but with some remote and inaccessible forests, mountains and gorges. The human population numbers about 1.2 million, which are mainly concentrated in the plains on the western side of the island. There are several smaller offshore islands, the largest of which is Rodrigues.

Because of its isolation, the truly indigenous flora and fauna of Mauritius have followed their own evolutionary paths, and many species are unique to the island. The most (in)famous of these is the Dodo which became extinct in the seventeenth century and, in fact, out of a total of 18 endemic bird species, 9 have become extinct, whilst most of the others are far from secure. In other words, only 9 bird species are endemic to the island, and the rest have come relatively recently from elsewhere; some, such as Red-breasted Bulbul and Common Mynah are quite abundant. The chief conservation body is the Mauritian Wildlife Foundation, and this runs a number of projects, including some that specialise in conservation of a particular species.

The Mauritius Kestrel is the only raptor species on the island. It is similar in appearance to the European Kestrel, but with slightly shorter wings and longer legs; the male is only very slightly smaller than the female. Clutch size is 2-5, with 3-4 being the norm; it is relatively common for one or two eggs not to hatch. The species inhabits two regions on the island, one on the east coast and one on the west coast. The east coast ones normally use nest boxes provided for them, or cliff ledges, and the west coast ones, which inhabit the forested gorges where there are no nest-boxes, use cliff ledges or tree cavities. They mostly eat arboreal geckos and small birds.

Historically, the Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust (based in Jersey) has been much involved with conservation projects on Mauritius. The Kestrel seemed to be a lost cause in 1974 when the population dropped to just four individuals, all living in the Black River Gorges area in the south-west of the island; consequently, Dr. Carl Jones was sent to collect these four, and bring them back to Jersey for a captive breeding programme. However, instead of doing this, he set about trying to conserve the species in situ and, by 1979, he had established the Mauritius Kestrel Project to try to achieve this. The procedure involved collecting eggs (leaving the birds to re-lay), artificially incubating the eggs, raising the chicks in captivity, and then releasing them back into the wild.

By the end of the 1980s the population was strong enough to start re-introducing birds to the Bambous Mountain area on the east coast of the island, and these birds are monitored intensively by a team including research students from Reading University. Some 95% of the birds are colour ringed, and this enables the

researchers to build up a database of virtually all individuals and their complete ancestry. In 2006 there was a vacancy for a researcher, and Richard was invited to join the project. Unfortunately, delays with visa etc. meant he was a little late in getting there, and had a very steep learning curve involving not only ringing techniques, but also motorbikes and abseiling. Most of the birds now use the nest boxes provided, but some nest on inaccessible cliff ledges requiring climbing up and abseiling down. Chicks are ringed at 14-20 days, and isometric data taken. There is the occasional deformity, such as an extra hind claw, but the inbreeding does not appear to have caused undue problems. It is thought this is because the population was only at its very low point for a relatively short time, so the four individuals had a reasonable genetic spread between them.

In addition to the Kestrel project, similar work has been carried out on the Pink Pigeon and Echo Parakeet by their respective teams, and both populations are growing. The Pink Pigeon population is sufficiently stable to think of releasing some birds to the offshore islands, but first the rats will have to be eradicated. Attention is now turning to the Tomb Bat, and to passerines such as the Olive White-eye. There are less than 100 of the latter, and the project team is engaged upon a similar programme to that used with the Kestrel: collection of eggs, artificial incubation and rearing in aviaries, acclimatisation and release, with supplementary feeding.

An additional experience in 2006 was a spell at a field station on Round Island, about 20 Km off the north-east coast of Mauritius. Round Island was designated as a nature reserve in 1957, and is administered jointly by the National Parks and Conservation Services and the Mauritian Wildlife Foundation. Here, the original hardwood forests were destroyed by non-native goats and rabbits – introduced to provide food for shipwrecked sailors – and this has led to soil being washed away to expose the volcanic rock underneath. The goats were eradicated by 1978, and the rabbits by 1986, so now there is a massive programme of re-vegetation, with seedlings being grown under controlled conditions, and then transplanted. The associated watering requirement is very labour intensive. There have never been any rats on the island, and the thousands of seabirds (including tropic birds, shearwaters and petrels) provide nutrients for a flourishing reptile population.

In 2007, Richard was able to arrive in Mauritius in good time, and recruited a team to carry out a full survey of the Kestrels - not just the Bambous Mountain ones – the first for ten years. Unfortunately the team of four was subsequently reduced to two following a football-related toe injury to one member, and rather more serious injuries following a motorbike crash to another. To carry out the survey in the wilder parts of the Black River Gorges National Park, they had to hack their way through the forests where no tracks existed, and machete was the only way. The Kestrels here were all cliff nesters, as there were no nest boxes, and again it was a case of climbing and abseiling. There are huge problems in these forests, with native tree species being overcome by exotics such as Chinese Guava and Privet,

and the native species would all become extinct without a huge conservation effort. The survey showed there to be about 600 Kestrels altogether, which was down on the estimated 800 of ten years ago. There are an estimated 40 territories in the gorges.

Mauritius does not support a huge number of bird species, and Richard's list for the two years comprised 62 species; Richard had some impressive photographs (and, of course, drawings) of most of them.

Richard was thanked for a most enjoyable first-hand

account of bird conservation at such a very "sharp end" – and it is not often that we get a talk covering the entire avifauna of an area! It was also a very pleasant change to hear some good news of species expansion. Also of note, of course, were Richard's excellent photographs and drawings. And we learned something of the migration habits of avian researchers (as promised by Helen Hipperson in her inimitable introduction).

*Wendy Thomson*

## South Peak Raptor Study Group Annual Report 2007

The South Peak Raptor Study Group (SPRSG) was formed in 1998 to monitor breeding success of raptors in the South Peak. In general, the study area extends into the Upper Derwent Valley in the north, and also parts of NE Derbyshire that are not in the Peak District, but does not include those parts of South Derbyshire that are outside the Peak District. There is some variation in this, as indicated below. The following is a summary of their Annual Report for 2007.

Mick Taylor introduced the Annual Report by describing 2007 as the year of the floods which, he said, certainly had a detrimental effect on some of our breeding species, especially the later nesting ones such as Merlin

and Hobby. Mick also drew attention to the failure of the Hen Harriers to breed again, and the lack of breeding success of Goshawks in Derwentdale. The group has also been involved with the North of England Raptor Forum, an umbrella organisation for all raptor groups from the Scottish borders in the north to themselves in the south. The Group has supplied them with data for a paper on relative breeding success of Peregrines, to be published in late 2008, and further papers on other species are planned.

The table below summarises the data for breeding success over the past five years. In general, the number of fledged young can be assumed to be the minimum.

	Number of Sites					Number Successful					Number Fledged				
	'03	'04	'05	'06	'07	'03	'04	'05	'06	'07	'03	'04	'05	'06	'07
Hen Harrier	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	10	-
Goshawk	17	15	16	18	23	10+	8+	11	12	14	23+	16+	18+	25+	26+
Buzzard	c40	c43	44+	69+	75+	c24	17+	17+	25+	30+	c55	42+	30+	35+	40+
Merlin	6	11	9	9	7	4	5	5	4	3	17	17	21	13	8
Hobby*	6	23	35	40	44	4	17	31	32+	28	11	41+	72	73+	55
Peregrine**	16	18	17	23	28	12	10	11	14	11+	25	26	30	32	23+
Barn Owl	3+	3+	8	10+	10+	3	3	5+	10	10	11	11	24	28+	37
LE Owl	3	3	2	3	3	3	2	1	2	2	4+	6	1	5	5
SE Owl	9	8	11+	1	1	6	2+	7+	1	1	6+	7+	?	2+	4
Raven	24+	27	31+	31+	33	22+	19	15+	19+	20	51+	40+	47+	46+	64+

\* includes South Derbyshire from 2004 onwards.

\*\* includes North Staffordshire sites.

It will be recalled that in 2006, two pairs of **Hen Harrier** bred successfully for the first time in the SPRSG recording area, but the event was marred by the unexplained disappearance of both adult males. In 2007, birds were present in suitable breeding areas early in the season but, for some reason, did not stay to breed.

During the autumn passage period, up to three birds were seen on the Eastern Moors, and occasional sightings continued until the year-end. Interestingly, a female fledged from one of the 2006 nests bred in the Yorkshire Dales, fledging one chick. However her mate also disappeared during the nesting period, and

supplementary feeding was again undertaken. There are a number of wing-tagging projects for this species, and any sightings should be sent to David Sowter ([davidsowter@freenet.co.uk](mailto:davidsowter@freenet.co.uk) or tel 01777 2749220) giving details of location, date and colours on each wing.

This was a very mixed year for **Goshawks**, with complete failure in the Derwent Valley area, but over 80% success elsewhere; the Derwent Valley failures were extremely surprising given the excellent habitat and prey availability. Thus of the six sites that were occupied there, three sites failed at the small young stage, and the adult birds mysteriously disappeared from the other three. The SPRSG Report asks if persecution is becoming a problem.

**Sparrowhawks** are not under close scrutiny by the group but the population appears to be more or less stable, with sightings in urban areas becoming the norm.

**Buzzards** continued to spread and infill, and the species can now be seen in most areas of the Peak District. The group did not target this species in 2007, so figures in the table are estimates. Five broods, totalling ten chicks, were ringed.

**Kestrels** had a very poor breeding season in 2006, mainly due to a lack of voles, but 2007 proved to be a slightly better year. Two broods, each of five young, were ringed. Overall, the population appears to be fairly stable.

**Merlins** suffered their worst year for breeding success since 1997, mainly due to exceptionally cold wet weather at times when the chicks were most vulnerable. There is some concern that if the pattern of wet summers continues, the future of this species could look bleak.

The **Hobby** continues to increase, with a record number of sites occupied. However, breeding success was lower, presumably due to the poor weather. A total of 29 chicks were ringed and colour-ringed, and any sightings would be welcomed by Anthony Messenger (01332 665257). Interestingly, a pair nested in a limestone dale which is an unusual site for this species.

**Peregrines** overall enjoyed a fairly successful breeding season in 2007. This was despite some adverse weather in April and May, which may have contributed to failure of first clutches at the laying stage, and mortality of young birds shortly after hatching. The numbers in the table includes two new sites: a new quarry site in the White Peak fledged two young; a site on the Roaches in Staffordshire failed, probably due to poor weather, and despite the Peak Park restricting climbing activity in the vicinity. In addition, an immature pair summered at another new White Peak quarry site. As with Goshawks, success in Derwentdale was hard to come by. Five sites were monitored in the Upper Derwentdale area, but only the Alport Castles site was successful, fledging one young; there was no evidence of birds at any of the four previously successful sites in the area. Evidence from the White Peak quarries suggests that pairs are very site faithful, and will willingly move to another ledge if one becomes unsuitable (e.g. because of quarry workings). There is no explanation for the disappearance of pairs in Derwentdale, other than suspected human interference. In addition to the 28 sites shown in the table, one pair fledged at least one young in lowland Derbyshire, and the Derby Cathedral pair fledged 2 young (an article about the prey species at the Cathedral appears in the 2006 Annual Report of the Derbyshire Ornithological Society (DOS)).

There was continuing good news for the **Barn Owl** in 2007, where breeding success was assisted by sympathetic landowners and farmers who allowed nest boxes to be erected on their property. At least 10 pairs bred, all successfully, and fledged 37 young, all of which were ringed. Three adults were also ringed at suitable nest sites. The table shows how this species has flourished in the last five years. Prior to 2003, there was only occasional breeding by at most one pair. One ringing recovery was of a bird ringed on 30th June 2005 near Baslow, found freshly dead at the same site on 8th March 2006.

**Little Owls** are not intensively studied by the group but continue to thrive, mainly in the White Peak where they frequent old farm buildings, drystone walls and dead trees. One brood of two was ringed. One or two pairs have also been found adjacent to moorland fringes.

The **Tawny Owl** is by far the commonest owl in the area and, again, is not intensively studied. It is often heard calling in large suburban gardens, as well as in most woods and parks. Three chicks from one brood, together with a juvenile at another site, were ringed.

As in 2006, three pairs of **Long-Eared Owl** were located early in the year: two pairs reared five young between them, three of which were ringed; the third pair failed in April due to accidental human disturbance, and then their second attempt was thwarted by poor weather in June. A fourth pair did not appear to breed. Late in the year, a winter roost of up to four birds was found.

After a "vole crash" year in the uplands in 2006, the vole population was only beginning to recover, and only one pair of **Short-Eared Owl** was proved to breed, fledging four chicks, of which three were ringed.

As was reported in 2006, the population of **Ravens** appears to be stabilising, with only two additional sites found in 2007. Breeding was proved at 20 sites, whilst 8 were known to have failed; the outcome of the remaining sites is not known. At one of the failed sites, the nest was destroyed in a manner indicating human intervention; this site was adjacent to a grouse moor.

Two other non-breeding species are also mentioned in the SPRSG report. There was an increase in **Red Kite** sightings throughout the study area, and it is hoped that this species may stay to breed before too long. The various re-introduction schemes have been very successful, despite some losses to illegal poisoning, and our area has some ideal habitat for this species. The **Marsh Harrier** is also generally increasing as a breeding species in some areas of the UK, but numbers moving through the Eastern Moors in spring and autumn were slightly down compared to 2006, possibly due to bad weather.

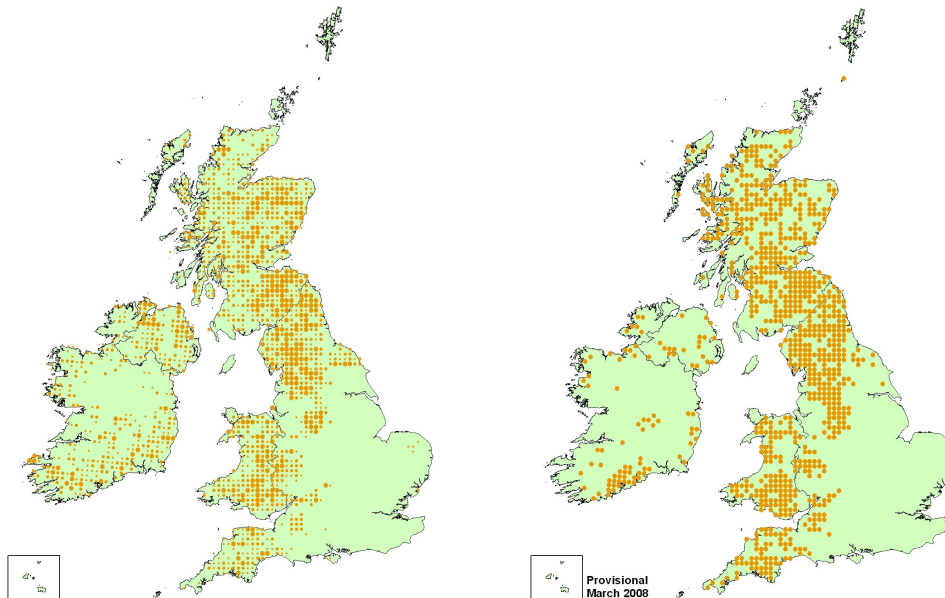
**Some Acknowledgments:** The membership of the group in 2007 was: Mick Taylor (Coordinator), John Atkin, Matthew Capper, Roy Frost, Trevor Grimshaw, Mick Lacey, Geoff Mawson, Anthony Messenger, Stephen Moores, Steve Samworth, Jack Street and Paul Tooley. In their Annual Report, Mick Taylor expresses his thanks to all the members of the group who put in so many hours of fieldwork throughout the year, and hence enable the building of a database of habits and behaviours of our region's raptors. He also lists, and expresses his thanks to, the landowners who allow access to their property.

**Wendy Thomson**

## BTO BIRD ATLAS 2007-11

The Bird Atlas 2007-11 has got off to a flying start in its first year with about 45 million bird records for 456 species so far. Across the SBSG recording area we have almost met the minimum tetrad coverage (i.e. 8 out of 25 tetrads within a 10-km square) in the first year, and very much better in some squares. The least surveyed square at the moment is SK48, e.g. Beighton, Aughton and Killamarsh.

Already, provisional maps are showing exciting results about some of our birds. For example, if we compare the latest provisional map for Dipper with the one in the last winter atlas (1981-84), its distribution looks largely unchanged. The birds in the east were most likely of continental origin and these could turn up in any winter given the right conditions. Note, the sparse distribution in Ireland for the latest winter may simply reflect the lower survey coverage achieved up to now.



The second winter survey period, November to February, is approaching and so we are looking for skilled birders to complete TTVs in tetrads that have not yet been covered, particularly in SK48. As a reminder, timed tetrad visits (TTV) involve two visits to a tetrad, which is a 2 km x 2 km square, with each visit lasting one hour but with the option to do a second hour. The idea is to record all the species you see and hear along with their numbers. These timed counts will give us information of the relative abundance of species at the 10-km square level. You can choose to survey a tetrad in the winter, the breeding season or ideally both.

If you are unable to do a TTV, any of the equally valuable Roving Records that you can provide will be very welcome. These provide information for the distribution maps with the aim of compiling a list of every species in each 10-km square. The way you can contribute is by recording the birds you see and hear while out birding, walking the dog, shopping or whatever. These records may be complete lists of birds you have seen on a field trip or just one-off records of elusive birds, like Lesser Spotted Woodpecker. You may submit your records online at [www.birdatlas.net](http://www.birdatlas.net) or you can fill out a Roving Records form, which is available from your BTO Regional Representative, BTO HQ or by download from the website.

Finally, if you have already contributed to the atlas, thank you, your time and effort are greatly appreciated.

If you can help out, look at [www.birdatlas.net](http://www.birdatlas.net) for where help is needed or contact David Gains, BTO Regional Representative, at: 28 Raleigh Road, Sheffield, S2 3AZ. Tel. 0114 2557075. E-mail: [bto-rep@fireflyuk.net](mailto:bto-rep@fireflyuk.net)

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## BREEDING ATLAS – CALL FOR OUTSTANDING RECORDS

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With the fieldwork for the Breeding Atlas completed over the course of this summer, a mammoth effort that has seen 1200 square kilometres surveyed over the last 5 years, this is a request for all breeding records for the 2008 breeding season (and for any outstanding breeding records from the past 5 years) to be submitted by October 31<sup>st</sup> 2008 so that they can be incorporated onto the Group's database. Not only will this ensure that we can move onto the next stages of data analysis and preparation of species accounts for our breeding species as the key stages of the work towards publishing our findings, but it will also mean that we have as complete a picture as possible of the status and location of our breeding birds, a crucial component in conservation efforts and in responding to planning proposals or commercial data requests. Breeding records can be submitted either by record slip, by e-mail to [sbsgsightings@googlemail.com](mailto:sbsgsightings@googlemail.com) (preferably as an Excel or access file), on a Breeding Atlas tetrad recording form (available via the website if all of your records relate to one tetrad) or simply on a sheet of paper to me at 23 Crimicar Drive, SHEFFIELD, S10 4EF.

Needless to say, we have got to where we have with this project as the result of a huge amount of voluntary effort

by many members of the Group, and beyond, and I would like to extend a very big vote of thanks to all those who have been involved in the Atlas project in one way or another over the past five years. The efforts of Richard Dale, Helen Hipperson, Paul Leonard and David Williams have been particularly valuable and cannot pass without special mention.

While the fieldwork is complete, there will be plenty of opportunity for involvement in preparing analyses of the data, writing species accounts, mapping distribution and changes in distribution from our original Atlas in 1975-80, and planning funding bids for publication, among others. If you can be involved in any way on the next stages of bringing the Atlas to completion, please get in touch with me, or any member of the committee. Irrespective of whether or not you get involved, I trust that the Atlas will have formed lasting habits as to the recording of our breeding birds, and that you will continue to submit such records in future years.

Many thanks,

*David Wood*

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## A 'TOP TEN BIRD BOOKS'

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I joined SBSG back in about 1980 I think, although it may have been a couple of years earlier. Finally, in 2008, I decided not to renew my membership; not through dissatisfaction with the group but because, since late 2005, I've been spending most of my time in Andalucia. Gradually the moment has arrived where it makes far more sense for me to be a member of the Friends of the Cabo de Gata-Nijar Natural Park and the Amigos de Sorbas (Sorbas is our local town) than the SBSG.

Despite my distance from the heart of the group, well over a thousand miles as the bee-eater flies – just a matter of time with climate change - and despite the fact that I'm technically no longer a member, I wanted to offer a final piece for the bulletin. Having already written something about our experiences here (A Garden List with a Difference, Bulletin 185, November 2006), I can't add substantially to that, even though the 'garden list' has advanced in the meantime from 38 to 49. I suppose mention of Short-toed Eagle and Great Spotted Cuckoo might be deemed showing off, so I'll leave them out of it. The final catalyst to do something was arriving back three days ago, after a two-month trip to the UK, to find a superb piece of natural architecture in our porch; a Red-rumped Swallow's nest. But I'm not intending to write about that either.

For a while I've fancied putting together a Top Ten Bird Books list. This would exclude field guides and anything that might be considered 'academic' - BWP, New Naturalist guides - on the basis that, whilst saluting the excellence of such volumes, I'm thinking more about the

somewhat subjective, arbitrary concept of 'a good read'. This idea is instantly compromised because there are doubtless many fine bird books that I haven't read or am not even aware of. I should admit also that I don't subscribe to or read any of the birding mags (other than the RSPB's Birds) or internet sites. So we seem to be veering at speed towards something more idiosyncratic: Ten Bird Books I've Enjoyed and Would Recommend.

The notion of ranking now rears its ugly head. Having just seen in the weekend newspaper an illustrated list of 'The 50 best beach scenes in the movies', and been mildly bewildered by how they ranked, for example, From Here to Eternity in pole position, Quadrophenia 21st and Nanook of the North 35th, the answer to my dilemma struck me between the eyes with an intensity like the Andalusian sun in late July (which is, incidentally, why we were in the UK then); don't bother with the ranking. So, in alphabetical order of author, here we go:

**Adventure Lit Their Star by Kenneth Allsop:** I don't have a copy of this book; I simply have a strong recollection of being impressed when I read it, quite possibly more than 30 years ago. I recall it as the rivetingly-told fictionalised story of the first UK nesting of Little Ringed Plovers. Birds Britannica mentions that it was a John Llewellyn Rhys Memorial prize winner in 1950, and the positive comments about it in BB suggest it was as good as I remember.

**Birds Britannica by Mark Cocker and Richard Mabey:** Indispensable. In a review when this hefty tome came out, Philip Marsden said of it and its companion

volume *Flora Britannica*; "Between them, sitting on the shelves throughout the land, these two constitute a national monument." Tim Dee says of the book: "It is a triumph," and of lead author Mark Cocker: "In him British bird life has found its perfect encyclopaedist."

**Crow Country by Mark Cocker:** Vividly written, blending research, especially on rooks and jackdaws, with autobiography, reflection and pen-portraits of earlier naturalists. Best for me was the more personal writing early and late in the book, but an absorbing read throughout. Also high on this list, if I was not trying to avoid particular writers dominating it, would be Cocker's excellent *Birders: Tales of a Tribe*. Highly entertaining and informative. His *A Tiger in the Sand: Selected Writings on Nature* is very good too.

**Adventurer's Fen by Eric Ennion:** My copy is a 1949 'revised and extensively enlarged edition', which nevertheless, in barely more than a hundred pages, gives a rich portrait, a memorial of the fens as they were, and may be again if current plans by the RSPB and others come to fruition. Illustrated with many Ennion vignettes. Wonderful stuff.

**Wildlife in a Southern County by Richard Jefferies:** Knowing of Jefferies' reputation, I snapped this up for next to nothing on a recent trip back to the UK. Packed with detailed observations of natural history and rural life in Wiltshire, corncrakes for example. Published in 1879 when the author was 31. I was amazed to find a reference to feng shui in here. Fascinating stuff, though slightly stilted and abrupt in places. A classic nature text, with, in my 1949 edition at least, despite it being 'produced in complete conformity with the authorized economy standards' of the post-war years, superb wood engravings by Charles Tunnicliffe.

**To See Every Bird on Earth by Dan Koepfel:** An absorbing tale of the author and his father, the latter an obsessive lister. Unusual, well-informed, insightful.

**Portrait of a Wilderness by Guy Mountfort:** This handsome hardback is the story of three expeditions to Spain's Coto Doñana (in 1952, '56 and '57). It was published in 1958 and bought for me soon after that by my Dad. He had already enthused me with his interest in birds and no doubt the purchase involved an ulterior motive. This book was on his shelves for many years before I reclaimed it a few years ago and re-read it, having by then been to the Doñana myself. The place is no longer quite the wilderness it was but it's still stunning and this book, well written by Mountfort and liberally illustrated by (mainly) Eric Hosking's photos, is both a glimpse into a strangely distant, privileged world and a memorable tribute to the place itself.

**The Big Bird Race by Bill Oddie and David Tomlinson:** Essential reading for those who have ever done a 'big day'/'bird race'/'24-hours maximum species list. Also ideal if you want to find reasons to avoid one (after twenty years of 'big days' or 'tickhunts' as we more prosaically called them, I had to move to Spain to avoid the boundless enthusiasm of one Pete Brown, identifying pre-dawn song each mid-May before we'd even emerged from our sleeping bags, let alone our tent). Bill Oddie is his usual self: very knowledgeable and mildly amusing but slightly naff and strained at times.

**Beguiled by Birds by Ian Wallace:** Thirty pounds worth of hardback picked up for £10 in Galloway & Porter in

Cambridge. Dense, enthusiastic, quirky. A combination of overview and close detail from the archetypal 'purposeful amateur', though I imagine DIMW knocks most amateurs into a cocked hat. Slightly stodgy in places but overall a thought-provoking and informative read. Intriguing photos and typically fascinating 'dimw' illustrations.

**Bird Haunts in Southern England by G K Yeates:** Another of those post-Second World War hardbacks that you can pick up for £1 or so if you search hard enough and are lucky. Bittern, Montagu's Harrier, Crossbill, Hobby, Stone Curlew, Cirl Bunting and even the Black Redstarts of Lowestoft. Many b&w photos at the nest, as was the fashion then. Absorbing stuff.

As for books that didn't quite make it into the ten, **Blokes and Birds edited by Stephen Moss**, a collection of 40 blokes with brief tales about each and a mention of their favourite bird, was fun but deemed too lightweight for inclusion. **How to be a Bad Birdwatcher by Simon Barnes** also failed to make it. In the book he overdoes the conversational tone that is usually so effective in his articles. Worthwhile in terms of the main message but to me it seems too padded out.

"When I first saw him he was a round thing like a clothes basket covered with sacking. But he was tumultuous and frightening..." So begins **T H White's The Goshawk**, another book I remember being struck by at a young age, but memory has faded to the point where a re-read would be required for a genuine assessment.

Part of the luxury of early retirement, offset somewhat, admittedly, by the reduced pension, is having the time not only to trawl charity shops and the internet to find unexpected book delights but also to read them (except, in our case, when the aubergines need weeding, the olives have to be picked, or I have to put up a small shelf in the porch to help the swallows in their frankly incompetent efforts to start building a nest).

Next on my reading list, **This Birding Life by Stephen Moss** awaits, the best of his monthly Guardian 'Birdwatch' column. The same author's **A Bird in the Bush: A Social History of Birdwatching** is also on my notional list of Books to be Read at Some Point in the Future. **J A Prince's The Peregrine** is a classic whose path has not yet intersected mine but which I suspect I ought to read. When any of this might happen is another matter. One shelf in our study is piled horizontally with books; this constitutes the 'Waiting to be Read' section. It currently holds 35 books, only one of which, the first in this paragraph, is a bird book.

No doubt all of you will know some and some of you may know all of the above books. Nevertheless, if this list suggests new paths, happy reading. I'd be delighted to read a 'Ten Bird Books I've Enjoyed and Would Recommend' article by other members. One of the joys of life is to read books, listen to music, or for that matter drink wine, that other people have recommended. Should I hear of other members' book lists in the bulletin - and Pete Brown is a very reliable grapevine - I guess I'd have sufficient incentive to renew my membership.

**Kevin Borman**  
**Sierra Cabrera, Spain**

## BIRDS WILL BE DESTROYED – OR SAVED – BY POLITICS!

I wonder if members have noticed the huge differences between their gardens this year and in 2006, in terms of insects. With record sunshine recordings, low rainfall and weeks of temperatures above the long-term average, 2006 was a vintage one for insects.

My very ordinary plot was full of White butterflies, Red Admirals, Peacocks and Tortoiseshells, Blues, Walls, Gatekeepers and Meadow Browns. The highlight was the number of Hummingbird Hawk-moths, dozens hovering before Red Valerian and Honeysuckle into the dusk and into October, their two-centimetre tongues unfurled!

The Independent spoke of the reversal of long-term lepidopteral declines that global warming could bring. There were hoverflies, too, catching the sun wherever you looked, and the harsh drone and thundering flight of shield bugs; even the occasional Devil's Coach-horse. All these wonderful in their own right, but of course their nutritious adult bodies, eggs, caterpillars and pupae also provide food for insectivorous adult birds and for the young of all our garden birds.

Then came 2007, with constant cloud, record rainfalls and little heat. Insects no doubt did their best, but the September and October sun that followed the abysmal preceding three months came too late to aid breeding success. There were pitifully few adults to over-winter, or eggs and pupae to wait until 2008 to grow into adults.

Consequently, Bradway this summer has been empty of Peacocks, Tortoiseshells and Red Admirals, all the more so as May and June failed to provide any long sunny spells as respite. Not a Hummingbird Hawk-moth in '07 or '08, perhaps three hoverflies, the occasional Gatekeeper and Wall, only a scattering of even the Whites; that is the position as July makes way for August.

Insects are invaluable environmental indicators, and so too are birds, as the Government recognises in its list of measures to show that the quality of national life is being maintained.

The present and past summers have played havoc with insects, which will have an impact on birds. These weather patterns are beyond our ability to correct, even if they were the result of global warming and rising greenhouse gas emissions. Nevertheless, we love and record birdlife and other facets of nature. I believe very strongly that we need to do more, to make our observations inform our opinions, and our opinions have some effect on halting environmental degradation. To put it differently, our expressions of opinion might have no effect, but if they are unexpressed, they cannot possibly have any effect at all.

Our governments have never done much more than a measly minimum, over the decades, for anything green. Gordon Brown seems to think our natural setting is a pretty backdrop of some leisure interest to others but not to him; he doesn't see it as being full of organisms with

their own rights, which well pre-date ours, or as a network of productivity and relationships that we cannot survive without. As soon as our finances are threatened, our "right" to endless growth and accumulation of possessions put on hold or reversed, environmental awareness is pushed even further back.

The economy has to have more airports – we have to grow more biofuels, regardless of their impact. As they occupy more cropland, food prices rise, so we have to intensify arable farming still further. Rather than conserve energy, we have to build huge turbine collections in areas loved by birds.

The list goes on, all these haves being treated as imperatives, when they are actually greedy and short-sighted lifestyle choices.

These pressures, intensified by the credit crunch, will result in a failure to reach public targets on birds as indicators. This is despite the welcome increase of protected raptors, the incipient colonisation by Cattle Egrets and Purple Herons, and the future inroads to be expected by Black Woodpeckers.

What we as members can and should do is to try to ensure that indicator birds are treated as such, that legislation all has to be tested against its impact, that not just this location but the very existence of development projects has to have regard to the government's own environmental laws.

Hillary Benn has, I think, made a reasonable fist of being environmental minister. He seems to care, if not in a particularly knowledgeable way. Our job is to write to him as often as possible, to strengthen his hand over DEFRA, and DEFRA's over all the Ministries that make environmental decisions. We have to push the decision-makers to take overall perspectives rather than pursue a narrow and destructive set of objectives.

Letters do make a difference. To count, they need to reach the Minister rather than a civil servant. To do this, write to your MP, asking for questions to be answered by the Minister. If an MP asks the Minister has to answer, and the answer will be forwarded to you. If you suspect the letter to be a standard one (management speak – it smells a mile away), signed by the Minister rather than a civil servant, write back and repeat or ask further questions.

I have been told on good authority that politicians regard letters as tips of icebergs of opinion, that it takes a lot to write to an MP and that many other people will think the same.

If we let birds (and butterflies, hoverflies and Devil's Coach-horses) drop off the political agenda, they will also drop off the population counts.

**John Kirkman**  
31<sup>st</sup> July 2008



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## SUMMER AT SPURN POINT

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For six weeks this summer I have been working on the large gas importation plant site at Easington, right on the edge of the east coast, "yes just up the coast from Spurn Point". Having to stay away I found myself free most evenings during the week after leaving the site so I immediately took advantage and visited the reserve at Spurn point every evening during the week. Most of this time included the whole of July and into the middle of August, by local standards the quietest time of the whole year. However when the tides were right, many hundreds of different waders congregated on the estuary side of the point, some of which still maintained most of their full summer plumages. Over the course of my time there 18 different waders were identified, with possibly an odd one or two missed. The bushes and the shrubbery areas were very quiet by local standards with just the odd early migrants including Willow Warblers, Blackcaps, Common and Lesser Whitethroats. Swifts appeared to be plentiful one day and gone the next only for several hundreds to appear days later coming in off the sea. The most common gull along the tide line was usually the Common Gull, a welcome sight for an inland birder like me.

The "highlight" of my time spent with the local bird recorders, warden and experts was counting the southerly passage of Terns most evenings from the sea side of the reserve at the sea watching hide. An average count was between four and six thousand birds within a two hour period. The maximum counted one weekend evening up to me leaving was just over thirteen thousand birds. The record count a few years ago amounted to over thirty thousand birds over one evening. Being an inland birder, identifying the "odd" tern out of the groups of Common Tern streaming through varying from between about ten individuals to about one hundred individuals, sometimes several groups together, seemed a daunting task as each bird appeared to be slightly different, due to presence of juveniles, sub-

adults, adults, moulting etc. However as the evenings progressed even I could identify the odd Roseate Tern by its smaller size and generally all over even very pale colouration, which in some cases appeared almost all white. Black Terns became easier as the time went on by their almost wader like flight pattern when mixed within the flocks. Arctic Terns were very difficult to pick out even when pointed in the right direction by the local experts; the usual things to look for were a very buoyant flight and shorter front end; not very easy to spot even in the best lighting conditions. If seen alone at any distance to identify any one of the above Terns can be very difficult, however it was a wonderful sight and a terrific experience.

Other birds passing through in small numbers were Arctic Skua, the odd Shearwater, Kittiwake, Fulmar, Common Scoter, Gannet, Most wader species, etc. but the high point were when three Sabine's Gull passed closely by just a few days apart, but I only managed to catch two of them. Other birds at Spurn included Merlin, Red-backed Shrike, Shore Lark, Glossy Ibis, Marsh Harrier, Cattle Egret, Short-eared Owl, Wheatear, a possible Gyrfalcon and many more.

Time spent at lunchtime most days just outside the gas plant included sightings of Osprey, Black Redstart, Little Egret and Sand Martin sometimes actually resting on the sand.

We all have been to Spurn point during the "High" season, but with all the above I found it very rewarding during the "Low" season.

Many thanks to the local birdwatchers for their hospitality and patience in adopting an inland birdwatcher for several weeks and passing on a lot of seabird identification information.

*Tom Minskip*

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## DIPPERS IN AND AROUND SHEFFIELD

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When you can watch dippers from a tram in the middle of Hillsborough, or at the side of the road in Malin Bridge, there is little doubt that this species has become well urbanised! Indeed, it can be seen in some of the most built up regions of the city, as well as along sections of the rivers that are most heavily used by people. But, are these urban territories just as good as the rural ones, are they only occupied by younger and more inexperienced birds, and how do they cope with the levels of disturbance? These are some of the questions I want to answer in my PhD research. As part of this work a number of the birds on the rivers Don,

Loxley and Rivelin, and a bit further afield, have been colour ringed, and I am monitoring their movements, both seasonally and between years. If you see any of these birds, I would be very grateful if you would please let me know. They each have two colour rings on one leg and one colour ring and a BTO metal ring on the other. The birds seem to move around a great deal more than I imagined at the outset of my studies, and clearly travel much greater distances than their sedentary image would suggest. You might thus encounter them far from where they were originally ringed.

Many thanks for your assistance.

Khaled S. Etayeb

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# RECENT SIGHTINGS

1st June – 30th September 2008

These records are largely unchecked. Those in bold require submission of full supporting details.

<b>Pink-footed Goose</b>	138 NW at Bramley on 22nd Sept, 40 NW at Ecclesall on 23rd, 40 E at Haywood Farm on 24th and 100 at Loxley on 28th
<b>Barnacle Goose</b>	30 in from N left to the E
<b>Pintail</b>	Singles at RVCP on 24th Aug and 15th Sept, also Redmires Res on 19th Sept and Thrybergh CP on 21st
<b>Common Scoter</b>	A male was at Linacre Res on 27th Aug and a fem/imm at Redmires Res on 13th Sept.
<b>Black Grouse</b>	At Moscar five were present on 21st Sept with four there on 27th
<b>Quail</b>	Singing birds were heard at Sheffield City Airport on 4th June and at Ulley on 2nd July
<b>Little Egret</b>	One flew N at Thrybergh CP on 8th Aug, a first site record at Redmires Res flew NW on 23rd Aug and three were reported by a local angler at Barlborough Park in early Sept
<b>Black-necked Grebe</b>	A juv present at Thrybergh CP on 4th Aug
<b>Shag</b>	An imm was at RVCP on 24th Aug
<b>Honey Buzzard</b>	<b>An excellent period of passage through the area in Sept following a large influx of raptors to the E coast. Birds were seen at RVCP on 14th, Ulley CP on 16th, Thrybergh CP on 18th, Treeton on 19th and 23rd, Rod Moor also on 19th with another having earlier lifted out of Redmires Plantation at Redmires Res at dawn and flown off SE, Canklow on 20th, Woodthorpe on 21st and finally Thornhill on 28th</b>
<b>Red Kite</b>	Singles at Alport Castles on 5th June, Broomhall on 10th June and New Whittingham on 23rd July
<b>Marsh Harrier</b>	Cream-crowns (unless stated) on the moorland fringe included one at Hobson Moss on 26th July, two juvs at Emlin Ridge on 3rd Aug, one at Barbrook Pools on 21st Aug, two at Big Moor on 23rd Aug, one at Hallam Moors on 6th Sept, one at Ramsley Res on 8th and one at Bamford Moor on 13th Sept. Elsewhere a juv flew E at Thrybergh CP on 3rd Aug and one flew W at RVCP on 7th Sept.
<b>Hen Harrier</b>	Ringtails reported from Big Moor on 23rd Aug and Redmires Res on 16th Sept
<b>Montagu's Harrier</b>	<b>A juv flew SW at RVCP on 7th Sept, with probably the same bird at Ogston Res, Derbys an hour later</b>
<b>Common Buzzard</b>	The raptor passage in Sept included a max of 18 through RVCP on 13th, with 15 of them in the air together at one point
<b>Osprey</b>	Singles moving through the area were recorded at Morehall Res on 4th Sept, RVCP on 15th, Redmires Res on 20th, Waverley Opencast on 21st and Moscar also on 21st
<b>Red-footed Falcon</b>	<b>An adult female was in the Upper Derwent Valley on 26th June</b>
<b>Common Crane</b>	<b>Three flew low SE over Ravenfield on 26th Sept</b>
<b>Oystercatcher</b>	Six were at Ulley CP on 1st and 2nd June, with two at Upper Midhope on 5th, Langsett Res on 11th, Hooper on 22nd June and Redmires Res on 13th July, with six at the latter site on 19th Aug
<b>Little Ringed Plover</b>	Passage birds included two at Waverley Opencast on 7th Sept
<b>Ringed Plover</b>	Passage birds included one at Redmires Res on 8th Aug, two there on 10th Aug with one present on 22nd, while one was at Thrybergh CP on 14th Sept
<b>Golden Plover</b>	The fields at Peat Pits – a regular passage site – were ploughed for crops in the summer and the highest count was just 52 birds on 1st Aug. Elsewhere 20 were at Ulley CP on 21st Sept, 16 were at Thrybergh CP on 28th and 32 flew S at Redmires Res on the same day
<b>Sanderling</b>	One was at Waverley Opencast on 7th Sept
<b>Dunlin</b>	Singles were at Thrybergh CP on 20th July and 8th Aug, Redmires Res on 8th Aug, Middleton Moor on 31st Aug and Waverley Opencast on 7th Sept. In addition, a party of four were at Middleton Moor on 23rd July
<b>Black-tailed Godwit</b>	One at Middleton Moor on 1st Aug, 15 flew S at RVCP on 28th Aug and one passed through Middleton Moor on 31st

<b>Whimbrel</b>	Three flew SW at Waverley Opencast on 23rd June, four flew W at Redmires Res on 19th Sept with one there on 22nd, one was at Middleton Moor on 26th July and another single flew SW at Stanage Edge on 29th Aug
<b>Greenshank</b>	Five flew S at Thrybergh CP on 16th Aug with a further five S/SE there the following day. All further records relate to singles, including regular reports from Ulley CP through late Aug/early Sept, with the exception of two at RVCP on 7th Sept
<b>Green Sandpiper</b>	Reported in small numbers, with max of six at Aldwarke SF on 13th July with five there on 27th July and also 24th Aug. Elsewhere, three were at Thrybergh CP on 3rd Aug
<b>Arctic Skua</b>	<b>A dark-phase adult flew NNE at RVCP on 15th June</b>
<b>Black-headed Gull</b>	400 were at Gulthwaite Common on 22nd Aug, 300 were at Ulley CP the following day and up to 20 roosting at Middleton Moor through Aug
<b>Lesser Black-backed Gull</b>	Numbers began to build up through Aug with a max of 960 at Middleton Moor on 14th. Birds showing characteristics of <i>L.f.intermedius</i> were reported from Redmires Res on 3rd, 10th and 25th Aug and Waverley Opencast on 7th Sept
<b>Yellow-legged Gull</b>	A number of different individuals reported from Middleton Moor and Redmires Res in late July, Aug and early Sept. Singles were also at Blackburn Meadows NR on 29th Aug and Rod Moor on 19th Sept
<b>Black Tern</b>	Singles juvs were seen at Thrybergh CP on 6th Sept and RVCP on 13th Sept
<b>Turtle Dove</b>	A rare breeding record involved two mating at Barlborough on 6th June while one sang at Ulley CP 28th June and 28th July-2nd Aug. There were four further records from Ulley CP until the last on 7th Sept
<b>Short-eared Owl</b>	Two pairs bred in the Upper Derwent Valley. Elsewhere the only other record was of two at Kirk Edge on 30th June
<b>Nightjar</b>	Churring birds were reported from a number of sites on the moorland fringe in the NW of the area in June-July and one or two males churred at Wharncliffe Heath in July
<b>Swift</b>	The last record was of one at RVCP on 3rd Sept
<b>Wryneck</b>	<b>One was at Ramsley Res on 8th Sept</b>
<b>Lesser Spotted Woodpecker</b>	One was at Silver Wood on 11th Sept
<b>Yellow Wagtail</b>	Breeding was confirmed at Carr Vale NR. Migrants included one S at Aldwarke SF on 20th July, one at White Lee Farm and one SW at Redmires Res on 31st Aug, singles S at Ulley CP on 13th Sept and Redmires Res on 18th, two S at Ulley CP on 20th and one SE at Ecclesall on 26th Sept
<b>Pied Wagtail</b>	On 26th Sept roosts at Meadowhall and Millhouses held 80 and 40 birds, respectively
<b>Black Redstart</b>	<b>A juv was at Strawberry Lea Lane on 25th July</b>
<b>Redstart</b>	A juv male was present in a Handsworth garden on 29th Aug
<b>Wheatear</b>	19 were on recently ploughed fields at Peat Pits on 21st Aug
<b>Ring Ouzel</b>	Flocks of 20 at Abbey Brook and 15 at Stanage Edge on 31st Aug were evidence of a successful breeding season. Elsewhere, two were at Moscar on 13th Sept
<b>Song Thrush</b>	An influx at Thrybergh CP on 28th Sept produced a count of 13
<b>Redwing</b>	Six were at Fulwood in low cloud on 25th Sept
<b>Mistle Thrush</b>	Post-breeding flocks included 27 at White Lee Moor and 43 at Redmires Res on 27th Sept
<b>Dartford Warbler</b>	<b>A singing male was present at Blacka Moor through July</b>
<b>Yellow-browed Warbler</b>	<b>One was at Uppertorpe on 28th Sept</b>
<b>Wood Warbler</b>	Singing birds were reported from Langsett, Padley Gorge, Ditch Clough, Gores Plantation, Wyming Brook, Upper Rivelin and in June
<b>Firecrest</b>	<b>Two sites in the NW of the area were occupied during the breeding season, with a singing male at one locality and up to four males and two fledged young seen at the second in July</b>
<b>Goldfinch</b>	Max of 67 at Stubley Hollows and 90 at Ulley CP on 23rd Aug
<b>Siskin</b>	Passage in late Aug/early Sept included 19 W on 26th Aug and 33 SW on 2nd Sept at Redmires Res, 25 S at RVCP on 3rd Sept, 220 NE at Redmires Res on 7th Sept and 30 S at Thrybergh Banks on 21st Sept. A max of 330 were present at Ramsley Res on 10th Sept
<b>Linnet</b>	Max of 180 at Ulley CP on 23rd and 25th Aug and 103 at White Lee Moor on 24th

- Lesser Redpoll** An influx in mid-Sept included 180 at Ramsley Res on 12th building to 480 on 16th, with 40 at Redmires Res on 14th and at Moscar on 21st. Later in the month four flew W at Redmires Res on 27th and two flew W at Thrybergh CP the following day
- Crossbill** Following a good breeding season an influx saw good numbers in June, including 60 in the Upper Derwent Valley on 14th and 52 at Langsett Res the following day. Passage birds elsewhere included 11 SW at Aldwarke on 29th June and three at Treeton Dyke on 27th July, while at Redmires Res five flew W on 17th Aug, four flew SW on 25th, two flew W on 27th Aug and four flew W on 19th Sept
- Corn Bunting** A single record, of a singing bird at Harthill on 18th June

*Records were received from the following observers, with apologies for any omissions:*

CD Abell, MG Archer, S Ashton, S Bailey, W Bailey, P Baines, SJ Barnes, RP Blagden, K Bower, PL Brown, B Burdett, DM Bye, J Clarke, R Dale, A Deighton, S Draper, M Dyson, M Earle, G Featherstone, MG Fenner, D Gains, M Garner, KR Gould, R Greasley, D Herringshaw, A Hill, RD Hill, H Hipperson, I Hodge, M Hodgson, J Hornbuckle, J Hunt, C Hurst, Alan Johnson, Ann Johnson, K Knowles, JM Laskey, P Leonard, P Mella, J Middleton, M Miller, TH Minskip, J Mortimer, J Mowbray, M Pearson, NR Porter, B Priest, MN Reeder, L Sanders, J Sherwin, M Sherwin, MA Smethurst, D Smyth, M Snook, B Spencer, D Stables, CB Stride, SG Tebbut, W Thomson, M Timms, R Twigg, R Watkinson, RDR Williams, D Wood, D Woodriff, P Wragg, BTO BirdTrack, Rotherham and District Ornithological Society, Sorby-Breck Ringing Group, Thrybergh CP Bird Log.

## DATES TO NOTE – OTHER GROUPS

Time/Date	Group	Location	Speaker	Title
7.30pm 21 <sup>st</sup> October	DOS	Hognaston Village Hall	Andrew Sherwin	Goa
7.30 pm 6 <sup>th</sup> November	RSPB Local Group	Central United Reformed Church, Sheffield	Andy Hirst	Diary of a Bird Watcher
7.30 pm 10 November	DOS	Friends Meeting House, Bakewell	Alan & Sue Parker	A Scottish Winter Safari
7.30 pm 28 November	DOS	Evergreen Club, Allestree	Simon Gillings	BTO Bird Atlas 2007-2011
7.30 pm 4 <sup>th</sup> December	RSPB Local Group	Central United Reformed Church, Sheffield	Geoff Simpson	Visionworld

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## BULLETIN BY EMAIL

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More members have now agreed to take their Bulletins by email. This is now about one-third of membership and will help funds in cutting down the cost of sending out Bulletins. It is appreciated that not all members have the email facility but many thanks to those who have and are willing to receive their copies in this way. All other members will continue to receive their Bulletins either by hand at the meeting or through the post.

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## COPY DATE FOR DECEMBER BULLETIN

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The next Bulletin will be issued at the December Meeting. Please note that any items for inclusion in the December Bulletin must be received by Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> December. On this occasion, please send to both Margaret Miller at 14 Worcester Close, S10 4JF or by email [margmiller@talktalk.net](mailto:margmiller@talktalk.net), and also to Peter Mella, 396 Loxley Road, Sheffield S6 4TJ or email [peterjmella@gmail.com](mailto:peterjmella@gmail.com).