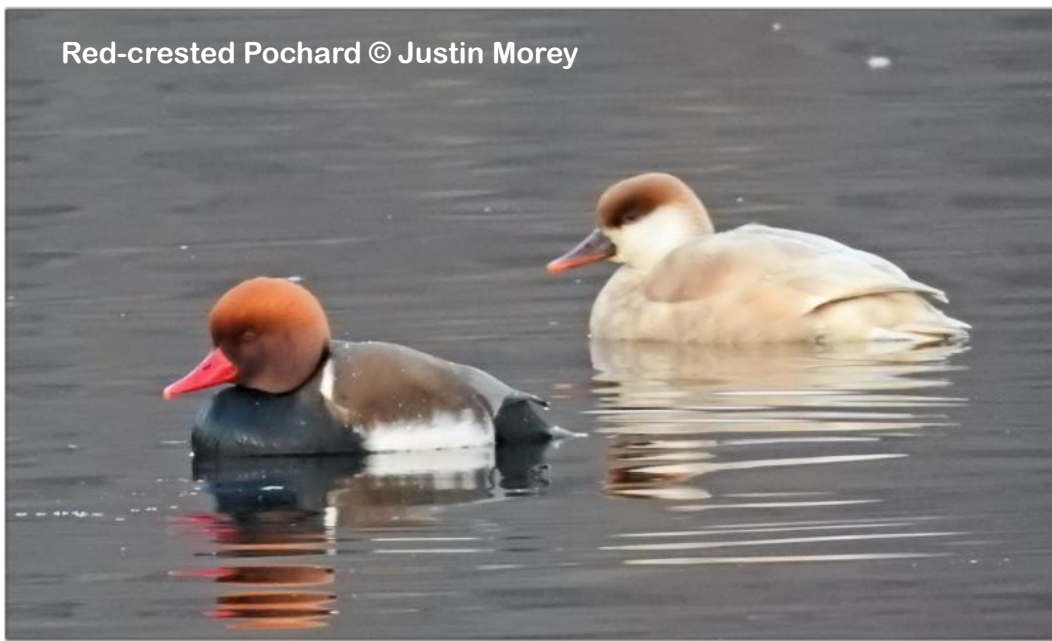


JANUARY 2019

# SBSG E-newsletter



Red-crested Pochard © Justin Morey



“Look Back”  
article by  
Richard Hill  
**This edition 1986**



“What to Look  
Out For”  
by  
Ron Blagden  
**Jan - Feb**



“Pit-house  
West Field  
Trip”  
by  
David Wood  
**Pit-house West**

## Welcome to the SBSG E-newsletter!

We hope you enjoy this edition which includes the birding highlights & images from Nov - Dec, details of forthcoming meetings & events and much more.....

Please use the “smart links” to key **news articles** to the right hand side of the “Welcome” page and **regular topics** at the foot of the page. Click on a link to be quickly directed to a PDF version of the article or to the particular topic you are interested in! We are happy to receive your comments and suggestions so that we can continually improve your membership experience



### LATEST NEWS

A pick of the birding news from recent months



### INDOOR MEETINGS

Don't miss out on our forthcoming indoor meetings



### PHOTO GALLERY

Enjoy the most recent images submitted to the SBSG web-site

# Recent Sightings

with Mark Reeder  
For the period Nov-Dec 2018



## Bittern

The regular wintering bird was seen at Pit-house West on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> December.

## Little Egret

A single bird frequented RVCP during the period and into the New Year. One was at Thrybergh C.P on the 9<sup>th</sup> November.

## Great White Egret

Two birds were found at Pebley Pond on 1<sup>st</sup> November, where they remained (apart from a brief visit to Queens Park Chesterfield on the 3<sup>rd</sup>) until the 4<sup>th</sup>.



Great White Egret - David Wood

## Bewick's Swan

On 9<sup>th</sup> December, a party of 7 adults were seen to leave Langsett Reservoir,

subsequently paying a brief visit to nearby Underbank Res', before heading southeast at dusk.

## Whooper Swan

At Thrybergh C.P on the 19<sup>th</sup> November 21 were present between 08:00 and 10:50, with 8 departing at 09:40 followed



Great White Egret - M Sherwin

by the remaining birds an hour later. A further 4 were at Thrybergh C.P on the 24<sup>th</sup>, with 2 north through Orgreave on the 27<sup>th</sup>. On the 9<sup>th</sup> December 4 were at Orgreave until 09:20 and another 9 were nearby at Treeton Dyke, these latter birds being seen heading southwest over Pit-house West at 15:40.

## Pink-footed Goose

On the 17<sup>th</sup> November skeins of 180 and 120 were seen heading north over Midhope at 10:45 and 10:55 and 130 (possibly the latter flock) were seen heading north west over the Shirebrook Valley at 10:30. On the 24<sup>th</sup> 150 went northeast over Heeley City Farm. The following day 100 were seen going northwest over Barlow Common, with 140 heading east over Middleton Moor then Baslow late afternoon.

Typically during December movements increased with total counts (allowing for duplication) through the area of: 940 east on the 9<sup>th</sup>, 370 west/northwest on the 11<sup>th</sup>, 470 mostly northwest on Christmas Eve, 55 east at Thrybergh on the 29<sup>th</sup> and lastly 132 over Fulwood on the 30<sup>th</sup>.

## Mandarin

A maximum of 113 were at Agden Res' on the 10<sup>th</sup> November.

## Wigeon

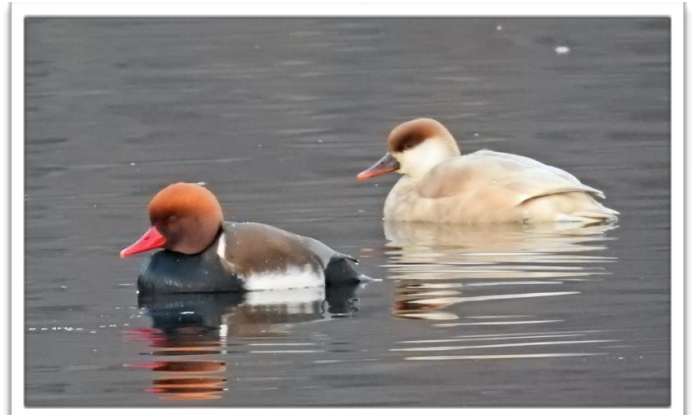
Peak counts of 203 and 351 at RVCP on the 15<sup>th</sup> November and 13<sup>th</sup> December respectively.

## Gadwall

A total of 104 were at Catcliffe Flash on the 21<sup>st</sup> November.

## Red-crested Pochard

A single female was present at RVCP throughout the period. Two drakes and a female were at Treeton Dyke on the 14<sup>th</sup> December.



Red-crested Pochard - Justin Morey

## Smew

A drake and two equally socially awkward red-heads were found at RVCP from the 29<sup>th</sup> December until the year end. Choosing to spend their time apart with single red-heads on the Fishing Lake and Intermediate Lake (Scree Pond), whilst the drake spent his time on Meadowgate Lake.



Smew - R. Mellor

## Red-breasted Merganser

At Stocksbridge 2 flew east on the 11<sup>th</sup> November, with a single briefly at Thrybergh C.P the following day. These represent the only records in our area this year!

## Red Kite

Just one record during the period at Redmires on the 13<sup>th</sup> November.

## Golden Plover

Peak gatherings of 300+ at Onesmoor on the 11<sup>th</sup> November and 200+ at Peat Pits on the 16<sup>th</sup> December.

## Jack Snipe

There were reports of singles from; Woodhouse Washlands (19<sup>th</sup> Nov), Kiveton Community Woodland (23<sup>rd</sup> Nov), Silverwood Lagoon (4<sup>th</sup> Dec) and Aldwarke and Blackburn Meadows on the 9<sup>th</sup>. Two were at Blackburn Meadows on the 27<sup>th</sup>.

## Little Gull

An unseasonal 1<sup>st</sup> winter was briefly at Orgreave on the 17<sup>th</sup> November.

## Yellow-legged Gull

At Attercliffe 2 adults were at Warren Street on the 5<sup>th</sup> November. Four were present at Middleton Moor on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>, with 2 there on 11<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>. During December 2 were at Middleton Moor on the 1<sup>st</sup> with 3 there the following day. At Orgreave 2 (adult and 3<sup>rd</sup> year) were in the pre-roost on Christmas Day, with 2 finishing the year off on the 31<sup>st</sup>.

## Caspian Gull

During November, an adult was in the Attercliffe area between the 20<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>. What was presumably the same bird was seen again at Stevenson Road on the 2<sup>nd</sup> December. On the 6<sup>th</sup> December, an impressive 6 (2ads 3cy



Caspian Gull - Andy Deighton

2cy 2x1cy) at Poolsbrook were reported. A different adult was seen at Stevenson Road on 19<sup>th</sup> and a single adult was at Poolsbrook on the 27<sup>th</sup>.

## Waxwing



Waxwing - Andy Deighton

A smattering of birds began to appear in the area from late December with the first at Ecclesall on the 19<sup>th</sup>. At Heeley 8 were seen on Christmas Eve, with 4 over there on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 7 at the junction of Richard's and Ann's Road on the 30<sup>th</sup>. A single at Malin Bridge on 25<sup>th</sup> remained until the following day when 2 were also seen on Shoreham Street. The final report of the year was of 2 at Bolsover on 30<sup>th</sup> which were still present the following day.

## Cetti's Warbler

A single record of one calling at Pit-house West on the 9<sup>th</sup> December.

## Bearded Tit

Two were at Markham Vale North Tip on 12<sup>th</sup> Nov.

## Brambling



Brambling - Martin Hodgson

An excellent winter for this species with large flocks recorded at; Longshaw – 200+ 11<sup>th</sup> Nov, Stanage Plantation - 500+ 18<sup>th</sup> Nov, Sugworth – 100 4<sup>th</sup> Dec, Longshaw – 150+ 26<sup>th</sup> Dec' and Ramsley Moor 26<sup>th</sup> Dec.

## Twite

A single was heard calling at Middleton Moor on the 11<sup>th</sup> Nov'.

## Mealy Redpoll

Up to 4 were present at Orgreave during November, with at least one remaining through December.

## Arctic Redpoll

A 1<sup>st</sup> winter Coues Arctic Redpoll was found at Orgreave on 3<sup>rd</sup> November and remained until the 24<sup>th</sup>, though it's identification was not confirmed until the 18<sup>th</sup>. This is the first record in our area since the famous 'invasion' during the winter of 95/96.



Arctic Redpoll - Mark Reeder

## Crossbill

Reported at ten sites during the period. Large flocks were reported from several localities during November with; 50 Hollingdale 3<sup>rd</sup>, 70 Thornseat Delf 17<sup>th</sup> and 30 at Broomhead Res' on the 18<sup>th</sup>. Highest counts in December came from Langsett Res' 31 on 17<sup>th</sup> and Broomhead Res' with 30 on the 28<sup>th</sup>.

## Hawfinch

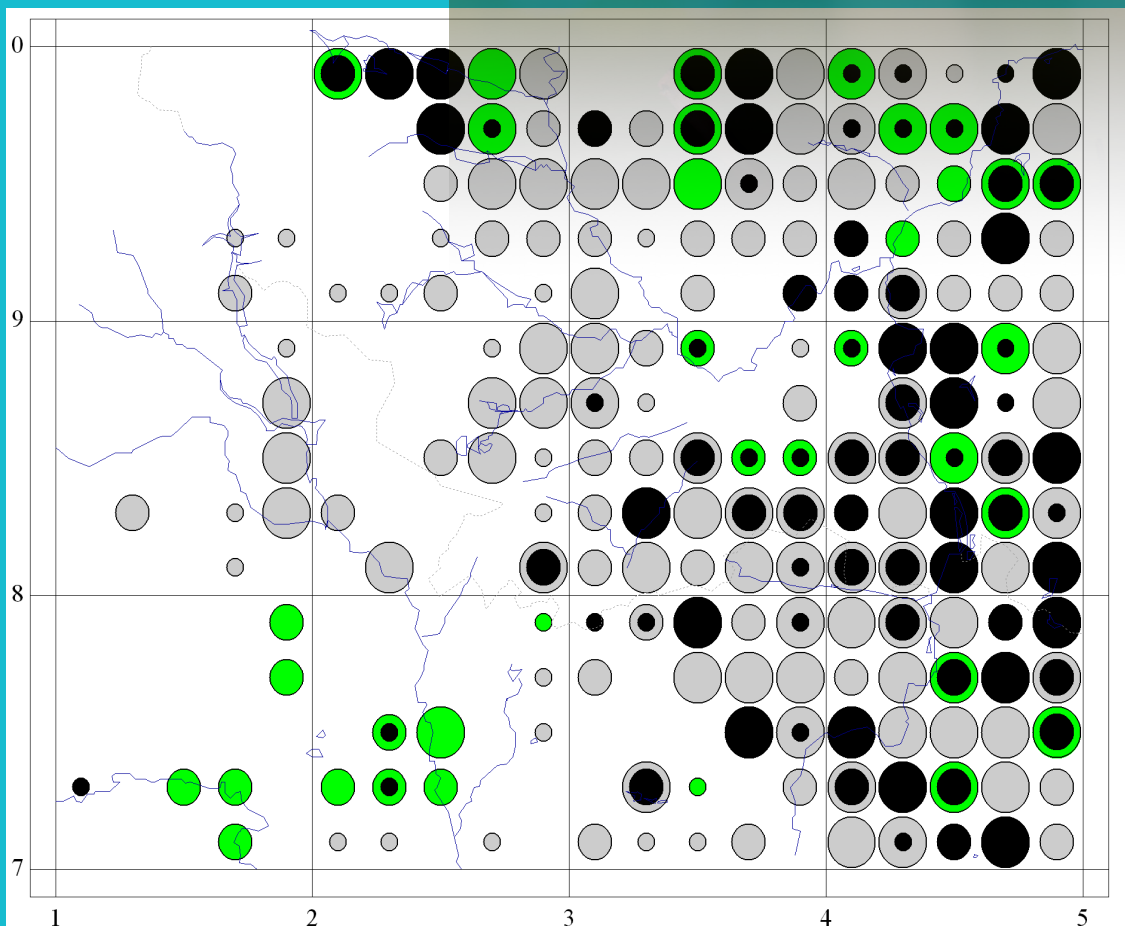
Singles (possibly the same) were seen during November at Agden Side (10<sup>th</sup>) and Low Bradfield (26<sup>th</sup>).

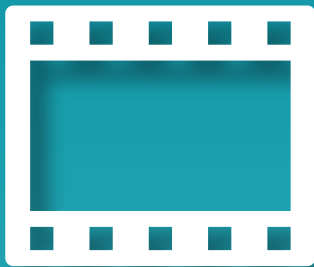
# SBSG WILLOW TIT SURVEY - 2019

We are appealing for volunteers to help the SBSG undertake a survey to assess the changes since the 2003-08 local atlas and help contribute to the RSPB / BTO National Survey.

For information please see [here](#) and volunteers can contact the SBSG secretary [here](#).

The atlas map showing the last known distribution in the recording area is shown below.





## Featured video

Little Owl Dust Bath at Green Moor by Peter Garrity

Our video feature spotlights our members recent efforts within the recording area. Please note that at the moment media is hosted by YouTube and therefore the video will open in your web browser. After watching the video simply close your browser to return to the newsletter.

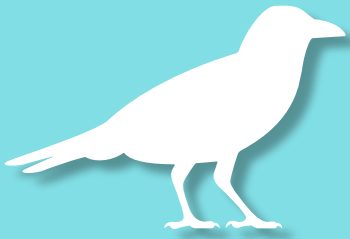


## Featured video

Coues Arctic Redpoll at Orgreave by Mark Reeder



# LATEST NEWS



## RESPONSE TO THE SBSG MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

### SBSG MEMBERSHIP SURVEY 2018:



- ONLINE SURVEY CLOSED 31.12.18
- 113 RESPONSES RECEIVED
- 32% OF THE SBSG MEMBERSHIP
- RESULTS SHARED IN THE NEXT E-NEWSLETTER & MARCH AGM
- COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER THE RESPONSES IN LINE WITH THE GROUP'S FUTURE PROPOSALS
- £25 CASH PRIZE ANNOUNCED AT THE JANUARY INDOOR MEETING

THANK YOU FOR TAKING PART !

**"FANTASTIC ACHIEVEMENT"  
AS BIRDWATCH BIRDERS' CHOICE  
AWARDS 2018 ANNOUNCE RARITY OF THE  
YEAR IS THE AUDOUIN'S GULL FOUND BY  
SBSG STALWART ANDY DEIGHTON**

#### 6 Rarity of the Year

Another neck-and-neck category, the winner – the Audouin's Gull in Sheffield – was as much about the location and



circumstance as it was the bird in question. Of course, as it was only the eighth Audouin's for Britain it was a true mega, but found inland, outside the migration season and in one of Britain's biggest cities, this proof that anything is possible in birding clearly shone through in your votes. In close second place was the well-twitched American Bittern in Suffolk.

## Membership News

Please note that membership subscriptions for 2019 are now due. Payment can be made at the indoor meeting on 9 January, by bank transfer or by cheque to the Membership Secretary. It's £14 for single and £16 for household membership. Full details [here](#).

## SBSG 2019 Calendar

Final copies of the Calendar will be available at the January indoor meeting - or please contact a committee member to obtain a copy



**Indoor Meetings**  
 Visit [here](#) to see the  
 complete list of  
 indoor meetings for  
 2019.



## Wednesday January 9th Stuart Davies Spring in Michigan

Stuart has been a member of the SBSG since the early 1970's, certainly 40 years. He has always been interested in Natural History and started serious bird watching about the same time, after joining the R.S.P.B., when he was at a loose end after graduation. In later life he started going overseas birding and acquired the necessary camera gear to record his sightings. He has always had a camera, but not long focus lenses suitable for the job.

Since retirement from the N.H.S. in 2008 he has become a volunteer with the P.D.N.P. ranger service and has worked a lot in the Upper Derwent Valley, also doing wildlife surveys with the Eastern Moors partnership (Spring migrants and Dragonflies).

One of his last overseas trips was with a group to the Great Lakes of the USA, mainly to the spring migration hot spot of Magee Marsh, on the shores of lake Erie. He spent a week in and around the reserve and adjacent areas, plenty of migrant warblers and other birds on show, but has never been to such a busy place when birding in the USA. His visit coincided with their so called Big Week when it seems every birder in the USA goes there. After that he moved up in to Michigan to the shores of L. Huron and also to explore the wooded areas for the endangered Kirklands Warbler in its protected habitat.

**Venue - Sheffield University Hicks Building, Lecture Theatre 5 and the meeting will commence at 7.15pm**



## Wednesday 13th February

# Keith Clarkson - Iceland

## Land of birds, fire and water

### Keith Clarkson

"I am a passionate birder. I was brought up in Sheffield with the Peak District as my playground. Here I got into birding and ringing at an early age, becoming an active member of the Sheffield Bird Study Group since its founding years. I went to Sheffield University to study Zoology. Whilst undertaking my PhD on the behavioural ecology of the Magpie, I was lucky enough to work on seabirds with Prof. Tim Birkhead in both the Canadian High and Low Arctic, Yellow-billed magpies in California and Zebra Finches in Australia before settling down to spend many years working for Sheffield City Museum and the Peak District National Park Authority where I was the Assistant National Park Officer. After which I achieved my lifelong ambition, of joining the RSPB, in the role of Public Affairs Manager for North West England. Since when, my career has successfully spiralled downwards. Prior to my retirement in 2017 I was the Senior (old) Site Manager, responsible for the RSPB's Bempton Cliffs and Coquet Island nature reserves - my dream job! Now having retired I am leading wildlife tours for Naturetrek to Iceland and Yorkshire and the Caribbean with 'Birding the Islands'. Throughout, I have been passionate about bird migration and have spent a lifetime studying visible migration both through the Southern Pennines and now on the East Coast of Yorkshire. I am an active member of the RSPB, BTO and both Flamborough and Filey Bird Observatories, but I keep my feet on the ground by following The Owls - Sheffield Wednesday!"



Situated on the edge of the Arctic Circle on the Mid-Atlantic ridge, where America meets Europe, Iceland's turbulent geological history has created a stunning wilderness where wildlife still abounds. In 2018 I was lucky enough to make three separate visits to Iceland, in March, June and July, a rare chance to cover large areas of the country at different stages in the breeding season. This talk will introduce you to the wonderful birds, wildlife and landscapes of Iceland, capturing their arrival, breeding and the start of their departure to wintering grounds in the the UK and further south.

Areas featured include the Iceberg lake Jökusárlon, the glaciers of the southern ice caps, the famous 'Golden Triangle, the remote Snaefellsnes Peninsula in the north-west and, of course, the Lake Myvatn area in the north.

**Sheffield University Hicks Building, Lecture Theatre 5 and the meeting will commence at 7.15pm**

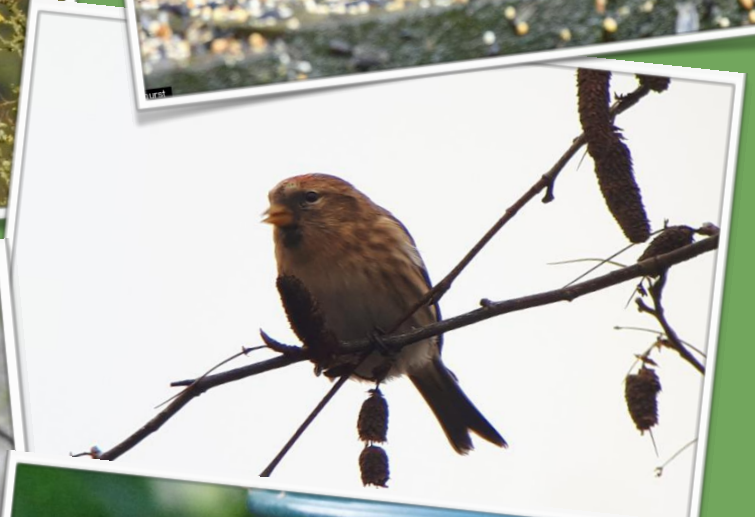
[Back to Welcome Page](#)



## Photo Gallery

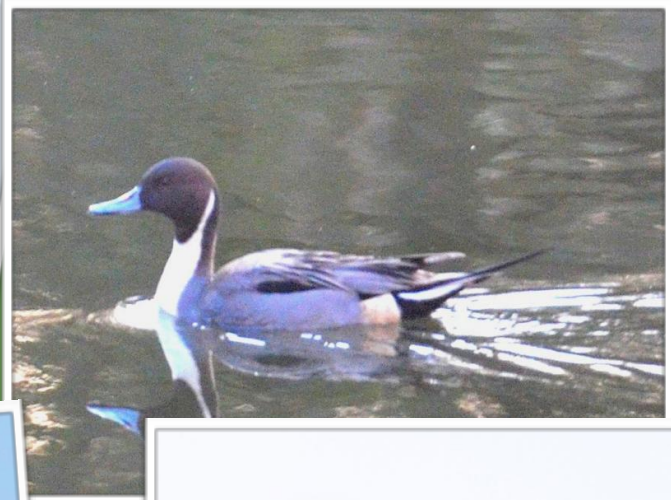
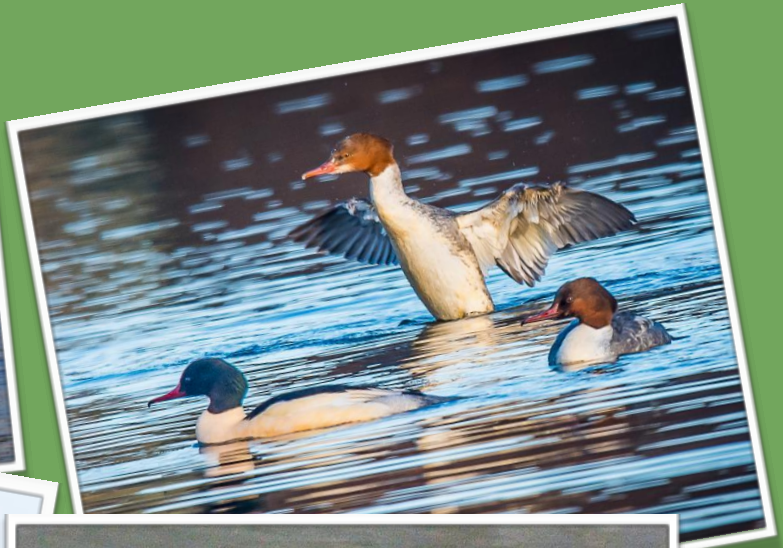
A selection of the latest images submitted to the SBSG web-site











[Back to Welcome Page](#)



## Raptor Persecution in the Peak District



Images copyright RSPB Investigations

In the Summer me and my 13-year son Theo enjoyed a modest tally of Peak District encounters with birds of prey – buzzards soaring below Bamford Edge, a Hen Harrier on Totley Moor, more Kestrels than you could shake a stick at and the pair of Peregrines hanging out at Kinder Downfall. All special.

After RSPB's Mark Thomas and his colleagues' talk to the Bird Study Group in November – 'Raptor Persecution in the Peak District' I had to do something and contacted National Trust, Peak District National Park Authority (PDNPA) and Severn Trent Water. I asked, *"As someone who enjoys accessing the Peak District, can you tell me how you are responding to the evidence that RSPB has gathered, that shows raptor persecution associated with land managed for driven grouse shooting, in particular in the Dark Peak?"* To date I've heard back from National Trust and PDNPA. I've shared all the responses with SBSG. I think my query to Severn Trent has got lost in the burst water pipes backlog!

Rhodri Thomas at PDNPA says *"We will be holding a meeting early in the New Year to discuss whether we continue with the Bird of Prey Initiative. Whether or not we continue I think we will need to consider other approaches to tackling the problem of bird of prey persecution."* He has invited talking with SBSG about the issue. Also, I've noted in some recent posts that the Bird of Prey Initiative has attracted criticism from some raptor persecution groups in respect of one of the partner's position. Please read the responses received and if you have any observations or recommendations please share them.

### Jon Bradley

National Trust response can be found [here](#)  
Jon Bradley follow up email and further NT response [here](#)  
PDNPA response can be found [here](#)



## Birds of Prey

### Wednesday 23rd January

Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust - 37 Stafford Road, S2 2SF Sheffield

Mike Price of the Peak District Raptor Monitoring Group will be talking about this group's important work and the concerning decline of some of our best-loved birds of prey. We will also be sharing information about the Wildlife Trust's plans to try and redress this.

Booking is essential. This event is free for members of Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust and £5 for non-members. For more information on joining the Trust, visit <http://www.wildsheffield.com/join>

Please arrive at 6.45pm for a 7pm start. For booking issues and enquiries please email [mail@wildsheffield.com](mailto:mail@wildsheffield.com)

Wendy Birks



## Local Field trips

### Derwentdale - Raptor Watch

#### 8.30am - March date TBC

This site, known locally by South Yorkshire and North Derbyshire birders as Windy Corner, is on the road up Derwentdale, around two hundred yards north of the dam wall of Howden reservoir. There is limited roadside parking back towards the dam wall. The prevailing westerly winds mean that soaring raptors favour the hillsides of Cow Hey, Nether Hey and Howden Clough on the east side of the reservoir, and the spot also has good views north towards Ox Hey and Slippery Stones, and over the conifer plantations south towards Hollin Clough.

The main target is Goshawk, but there is a good chance of seeing other raptors, as well as Raven, the woodlands should have siskin and maybe crossbill, recent years have been good for whooper swan on more than one occasion, and it is probably one of the best places in the area to see mountain hare.

Meet at 8.30am on Saturday (date TBC) and bring warm clothing and a flask. The meeting normally breaks up by 11.00.



Sparrowhawk - Photo by Pete Garrity

# Photo of the Month

The winner chosen by the committee for the period Nov - Dec 2018 was:

**Grey Partridge covey by Pete Garrity**



**Equipment:** Canon 1DX mkii; Canon 500mm mkii F4; 2.0 x TC

**Settings:** 1/1000th; F8; ISO 400

## Notes:

Taken in an arable field just outside Green Moor village on the 11th November. I always keep one eye on the local fields for wildlife as I drive by and this day was no different. I noticed "Partridge like mounds" in the short vegetation and decided to park up and get the bins out. I realised these were greys and walked around the edge of the field to get the light behind me when I realised there were an astounding 11 number, a record for my local patch.

# Bird of the Month



## January's Bird of the Month – Hawfinch

Click [here](#) for the latest bird of the month article by Ron Blagden

# Mystery Bird ?



Mystery Bird for November 2018



[Click here for the answer](#)

## Mystery Bird January 2019

Here's another tricky challenge for you - Obviously a Plover, but which one? - Answer to be revealed in the next issue



## Your SBSG Needs You!

### A call for people to stand for the committee at the March AGM?

At the AGM in March, one of the key items of business is to hold elections to the SBSG committee. The Group's ongoing success is the result in large part of the efforts of the committee and we have been fortunate to have a series of active and engaged members join the committee in recent years. Needless to say, having a fully functioning committee is vital to the Group's effective functioning. The basic commitment is to attend as many committee meetings (7:30-9:15 last Wednesday of the month between September and April) and indoor meetings as possible; there will also be plenty of opportunities to get involved in different activities, according to interests. If you would like to stand to join the committee, or would be interested in knowing more about what is involved, please speak to any member of the current committee at an indoor meeting or contact the Group's Secretary, Richard Hill ([rdhill2001@yahoo.com](mailto:rdhill2001@yahoo.com)). According to the Group's Constitution, nominations must be made to Richard at least a week before the AGM, and need to have the consent of the person nominated (!), as well as the support of two SBSG members.

**David Wood (SBSG Chair)**





## e-Newsletter

We hope you enjoyed the January 2019 issue of the e-newsletter. We are always happy to include topical articles from members so if you have something for us to consider for future issues then please contact me. If you have videos taken in the recording area I would love to see them and perhaps include them in our regular video feature.

**E-newsletter Editor – [Peter Garrity](#)**

