



## SBSG e-Newsletter July 2016

### Recent Highlights (May - Jun 2016)

#### May

May got under way with some good birds from the previous remaining in the area, notably the male **Dotterel** at Peat Pits, the **Shag** at Linacre Res and the singing **Cetti's Warbler** near Rotherham, while the unusually long-staying **Greenshank** at Orgreave was joined by two **Black-tailed Godwits** on 1st, as well as an accompanying cast of single **Common Tern**, **Hobby** and **Shelduck**, five **Dunlin**, three **Common Sandpiper**, eight **White Wagtails** and three **Yellow Wagtails**.



Black-tailed Godwit (Orgreave) – R. Twigg

Equally significant to the observer involved was a pair of **Stock Doves** in a Millhouses garden, only the second record there in 37 years! Following a promising start to what can be an exciting month the dull **Dotterel** at Peat Pits was joined by a resplendent female on 2nd before both departed, and single **Arctic Tern** and **Red Kite** at Middleton Moor provided a timely reminder of this site's credentials for passage migrants. A 'cream-crown' **Marsh Harrier** delighted an observer at Wharcliffe Chase on 4th, when a Brent Goose visited Orgreave Lakes, and an evening visit to Redmires Res provided an impressive count of 12 **Common Sandpiper**. A **Red Kite** over a Fulwood garden on 5th was the observer's second of the spring there,



Arctic Tern (Middleton Moor) – R. Scally

and further sightings of this species over Brincliffe and Mickleden Edge the following day reflected the increasing presence of this species locally. Single **Turnstones** at Thrybergh CP and Orgreave Lakes on 6th were typical in date and location, but no less welcome for that, and also on 6th a pair of **Grasshopper Warblers** at Shirecliffe were of note, as were three male **Cuckoos** at Wharcliffe Chase.



Turnstone (Orgreave) – M. Reeder

A party of six **Grey Plover** at Middleton Moor on 8th was the largest group in the area for some years, with single **Greenshank**, eight **Ringed Plover** and a **Reed Warbler** representing bonus birds at the same



Black Tern (Damflask) – A Deighton

site, while two **Black Terns** at Damflask Res on the same day were decidedly atypical in terms of location. Orgreave Lakes hosted three **Turnstone**, three **Grey Plover**, 13 **Common Sandpiper** and 13 **Ringed Plover** on 10th in a veritable wader fest; Middleton Moor scored again with a rare upland **Black Tern**.



Grey Plover (Middleton Moor) – A. Deighton

Favourable weather conditions resulted in an exciting few days, and 11th saw at least 30 **Arctic Terns** through Orgreave Lakes, two **Grey Plover** and a **Whimbrel** at Middleton Moor and a Little Stint at Rother Valley CP that remained through the following day, when Thrybergh CP was visited by four **Black Terns**, three **Common Terns** and two **Arctics**, and Orgreave got in on the tern action too, with one **Black** and three **Arctics**.



Black Tern (Thrybergh CP) – M. Smethurst

The tern passage continued on 13th in the shape of a single **Arctic** at Orgreave Lakes, another there on

14th and eight at Thrybergh CP on the latter date, when the **Shag** remained at Linacre Res and three **Grey Plover** continued to find Middleton Moor to their liking. A **Little Egret** graced Orgreave Lakes on 16th May, when two **Whimbrel** fed in fields on Soughley Lane, Redmires and a notable count of 40 **Crossbill** was made at Mickleden Beck, where a **Red Kite** was almost to be expected, with further sightings at Renishaw Park on 17th and at Orgreave Lakes the following day. A visit to Middleton Moor on 21st revealed that two **Grey Plover** remained there, and had been joined by a **Sanderling** and a **Yellow-legged Gull**, while the following day brought another **Little Egret** to Orgreave Lakes and – even better – a **Great White Egret** S over Redmires Res early that morning, as well as further **Red Kite** sightings over Stanage Edge and Rawmarsh. Evidence of a good breeding season for **Starlings** came with a party of 350 feeding in fields at Green Moor on 27th, and on 28th a single **Marsh Harrier** passed over Rawmarsh, the same day seeing yet more **Red Kites**, this time at Hurlfield and Intake. A flurry of activity on 29th brought the third **Little Egret** of the month to Orgreave Lakes and a report of two **Little Terns** at Dog Kennel Pond, Wentworth, while the long-staying **Shag** remained at Linacre Res to the end of the month, as did the **Cetti's Warbler** near Rotherham.

## June

June began with an intriguing record of a **Hawfinch** at Hathersage, part of a tentative pattern in recent years of odd summer records from the Peak District, and a **Little Ringed Plover**, a pair of **Oystercatchers** and three **Common Terns** at Orgreave Lakes also raised hopes of breeding success for these scarce breeders. A **Ring-necked Parakeet** brought some colour to Norton Lees on 3rd, the same day seeing the three **Peregrine** chicks fledge from their nest at St George's. The following day saw **Red Kites** at Greave's Piece and Bradfield Moors, with another at Westend Valley on 5th, where seven singing **Tree Pipits** represented a notable concentration.



Hobby – (Thrybergh CP) – M.Smethhurst

A single **Black Tern** visited Orgreave Lakes on 5th but was upstaged by a **Golden Oriole** at Bee Wood that would have proved popular had it stayed beyond its initial sighting. Confirmation that a pair of **Teal** had bred at Midhope Res came with three chicks seen there on 9th, when two **Red Kites** were at Margery Hill, presumably the same as singles seen also that day at Hathersage and White Lee Moor. Wyming Brook hosted two calling **Wood Warblers** on 11th, one of very few sites to record this declining species, but by contrast there were a fair number of **Cuckoo** records, mostly from the moorland fringe. The combination of poor weather and equally poor birding resulted in the quiet spell of the preceding few weeks continuing mid-month, with a party of five **Crossbills** at Midhope Res on 15th one of few noteworthy sightings, although a female **Teal** with six ducklings at Langsett Res the following day was a welcome sight.



Wood Warbler (Wyming Brook) – P.Thomas

The first indication of autumn passage came on 17th, when six **Black-tailed Godwits** arrived at Middleton Moor, with a singing **Quail** located at Strines Moor the same day and present again on 18th, when a **Water Rail** calling at Blackburn Meadows provided similarly tantalising hints at breeding. With breeding always difficult to prove, two successful pairs of **Grey Partridge** at Silverwood Lagoon proved the worth of dedicated patchwork, while a singing **Crossbill** at Moscar on 19th

was another good breeding season record. A **Hobby** over Attercliffe on 20th was attracted by the now established **Sand Martin** colony, and at nearby Effingham Street ten **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** and a **Herring Gull** loafed on the river. A good count of five 'churring' **Nightjars** was made at three different sites on the moorland fringe on 21st, and **Tufted Duck** and **Oystercatcher** were proved to breed at Redmires Res and Redmires conduit respectively on 22nd, with **Curlew** and **Lapwing** chicks also in evidence at the latter site. A **Ring-necked Parakeet** enlivened a Handsworth garden on 23rd, and another was at Millhouses on 25th, when **Red Kites** were at Damflask Res and Freebirch and the long-staying **Shag** continued its sojourn at Linacre Res.



Red Kite (Freebirch) – P. Brown

Mid-summer can be a good time for the passage of **Common Scoter**, so a party of nine males at Redmires Res on 26th was not unexpected, but no less welcome for that, especially in light of the generally disappointing spring for passage migrant species.



Common Scoter (Redmires Res) – P.Brown

A fine second - summer **Mediterranean Gull** was on rooftops by the R. Don at Attercliffe on 28th, when a **Little Ringed Plover** at Underbank Res may have been an early migrant. Another **Little Ringed Plover** visited Middleton Moor the following day, and a single **Wigeon** and three **Teal** at the same site provided intriguing summer records.



Mediterranean Gull (Attercliffe) – A .Deighton

The last day of the month saw a series of breeding records confirmed, in the shape of **Lesser Whitethroat** at Poolsbrook Marsh, **Oystercatcher**, **Redshank**, **Mute Swan** and **Great Crested Grebe** at Orgreave Lakes, **Siskin** at Blacka Moor and family groups of **Tree Sparrows** with five and six juvs at High Riggs, Stannington. An exceptionally wet month proved largely to be a washout for birds, but surely with autumn passage around the corner, things can only get better!



Oystercatcher – (Ladybower Res) – S.Davies

## Ring Ouzel Update

### Eastern Edges - Ring Ouzel Monitoring Update

We are just past the mid-season point for most of the area's Ring Ouzels, with successful first broods having fledged and some pairs now with second broods underway. The overall survey of the Eastern Edges has confirmed the strongholds of Stange, Bamford and the Burbage Valley, with some records from outlying areas. The numbers given below should be taken as approximate for the time being, until the final data have been analysed.

Starting in the north, the Jarvis Clough-Bamford area holds seven

territories, all but one of which succeeded in raising a first brood. Along Stange Edge, there are eleven territories, with five successfully fledging a first brood – failures appeared due to a mixture of disturbance and predation. Many of these are now on second broods /attempts. One additional pair at Callow Bank had a successful first brood. A pair may also have tried and failed at Carrhead Rocks.

The Burbage-Houndkirk-Millstone area holds eleven territories, of which six have successfully fledged a first brood, with failures again due to a mix of likely disturbance and predation. Many of these pairs too are now on second attempts/broods.

On the Eastern Moors, one pair nested at Curbar Edge but the nest was predated. Occasional sightings on White Edge have not turned up a confirmed territory.

Other areas surveyed where no territories have been recorded include White Stones, Wragg's Quarry area, Baslow Edge, Birchen Edge and Barbrook Valley.

Kim Leyland - Eastern Moors Partnership.

## Sheffield Parks Survey 2015-16 Update

Please submit your records as soon as possible via the website and don't forget to include breeding information.



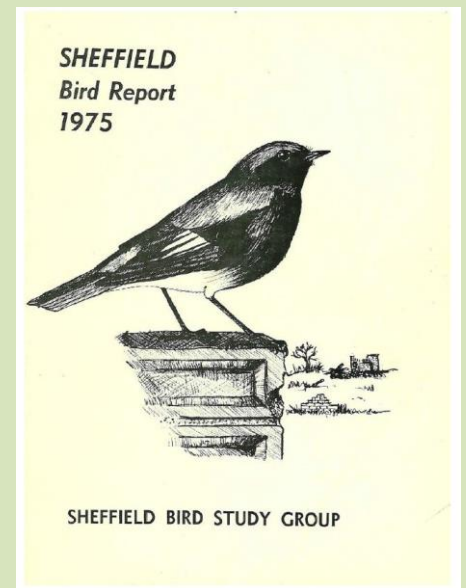
Kingfisher in Endcliffe Park (David Wood)

For full details of the methodology please visit [here](#).

## On-line Membership Application Forms

On-line application forms for Adults and U21s can be found [here](#). The form can also be used to submit changes in personal details. The PDF printable versions are still available

## A Journey back to 1975



Richard Hill looks back to the archives focussing on 1975, topically including our decision as a country to enter the EU, picking out some significant UK birding highlights in terms of spring/autumn migrants and rarities and also touching on more memories of the Group, a new improved annual report and developing membership. You can find his latest detailed account [here](#).

## What to look out for in July and August

Click [here](#) to read an informative article by Ron Blagden which outlines some of the target birds for the next two months which might be found in the area.

# Whooper Swan Update

## Middleton Moor Whooper Swans

A full review of the incident and outcome by **Dan Sidley** of Yorkshire Swan Rescue below:



Back in April, I was contacted in my capacity as founder of Yorkshire Swan Rescue, regarding a flock of Whooper Swans at Middleton Moor in the Derbyshire Peak District.

By the time I was informed of the situation at Middleton, considerable concern was mounting for the 15 or so Whooper Swans by which time had been on the site for some weeks on their attempt at migration. Witnesses reported dead and dying swans at a lagoon used in a mining process for Fluorspa. One of the elements found within this particular lagoon is lead; a highly toxic metal which is fatal to birds if ingested. Tragically, several dead birds were observed upon my first visit with a further nine sick and lethargic swans remaining, all displaying the classic symptoms of lead poisoning.



A rescue plan was formed with assistance from the RSPCA, Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, a Veterinary Surgeon and Yorkshire Swan Rescue. A successful rescue of all nine sick birds - six adults and three juveniles - was soon completed, and the birds were quickly transported for care and treatment to our swan sanctuary and wildlife hospital near Selby, North Yorkshire, with the blood samples taken from the birds soon confirming lead poisoning.



Sadly, one swan was so sick it did not make the journey back to the sanctuary in time for treatment. But with daily injections, feeds, shelter and warmth, the remaining eight birds slowly responded to the prescribed treatment, as they began to stand, walk again and feed themselves once more. Soon, they were able to be moved from our indoor care facilities to our outdoor pens where they grew further in strength, and even began taking flight several feet off the ground before stopping short of the fencing!



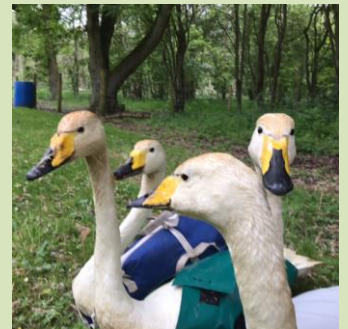
Of interest, one of the rescued Whoopers was already ringed as part of the Icelandic ringing scheme. This bird was ringed as an adult female in August 2014 at Sigurðarstaðatjörn in Southern Iceland.



In May, the swans were deemed fit enough for release. With prior permission granted from the BTO, the birds were ringed upon release, which included the use of colour rings to better assist any potential future sightings. It is hoped these birds will continue forward their migration as all had left the release site within 24 hours of returning to the wild once more.



I would like to recognise Sorby Breck members Alan Kydd and Roy Frost for originally reporting the birds to me, and to Geoff Mawson and David Williams for their help and advice. In particular, I would like to extend my thanks to Derbyshire Ornithological Society, Ogston Bird Club and Sheffield Bird Study Group, all of whom made contributions toward the cost of caring and treating the swans. A good example of local groups, organisations and individuals coming together in support of local wildlife, with the successful outcome a credit to all.



Finally, the long term future of the lagoon is now being pursued with it's owners to prevent such an incident from ever happening again.

**Dan Sidley**

## Indoor Meetings 2016

Visit [here](#) to see the complete list of indoor meetings for 2016. Location is **Sheffield University Hicks Building, Lecture Theatre 5 and the meetings will commence at 7.15pm**. Please keep an eye on the web site for any further changes.

### Forthcoming Meetings:

**Wednesday 14th Sept at 7.15pm**

**Birding the Tibetan Plateau**



**Andy Deighton** - Birds and mammals of the Tibetan Plateau. A journey across the roof of the world from Qinghai province in China to Lhasa in Tibet, taking in many rarely seen species, in spectacular landscapes.

**Wednesday 12th October at 7.15pm**

**Mongolia**



**John McLoughlin** - Mongolia land of blue skies sat between the vast Siberian Taiga and the Gobi desert.

John has made four visits to the country over the last few years so is well versed in both the culture and its birds and wildlife.

## Optical / Photographic Equipment for sale

If you have any equipment to offer for sale that someone in the group might be interested in please contact [me](#) or any other committee member to include in the next e-newsletter.

## National Trust Press Release

Following the recent incident involving an armed man allegedly using a decoy to attract Hen Harriers on moorland in Derbyshire the National Trust issued a statement which can be found [here](#)

## Tiny Birds, Massive Suffering

Acknowledging the continued plight of migrating songbirds through Cyprus due to the continued trapping and slaughtering practices carried out there; please consider supporting the campaign against this [here](#)

## Sheffield Peregrine update



**Sheffield** Peregrines at St George's Church have fledged three young and their trials and tribulations can be followed [here](#) on the blog. Visit [here](#) for the Sheffield University webcams.

## Local Field Trips - 2016

Visit [here](#) for details of the local field trips for 2016. These may be subject to change so please keep an eye on the web site for updates.

### Next Field Trip:

**October – Date & Time TBC**  
**Redmires Reservoir – Visible Migration**

### Field Trip Reports:

## An account of the Padley Gorge field trip in May

See Ron Blagden's account of the trip [here](#).

## Crepuscular Creep Wednesday 22 June 2016



Woodcock

Delayed from the original date as a result of the poor weather that has plagued the spring, a group of 15 met at the head of Wyming Brook at 8:30 p.m. on 22nd June, equipped with binoculars, as well as raincoats, gloves, a range of head/ face coverings and insect repellent. Everything you could need for an evening's birding! A walk up the road to the reservoirs revealed the usual on the water, i.e. almost nothing, although Andy Deighton rescued three Tufted Duck chicks that had been pushed down the overflow channel from the middle reservoir. At the top reservoir, the breeding Grey Wagtails and Common Sandpipers were in evidence, but no owls or raptors could be spotted over the moors.

A walk along the conduit was productive, the rough fields holding several pairs of Lapwing and Curlew



**Grey Wagtail**

with chicks, 'chipping' Snipe, some fine Golden Plover and a pair of Oystercatchers with at least two tiny chicks among the long grass. This really is one of the best places locally for a density and variety of breeding waders, and clear evidence of the impact of 'improving' grassland on the moorland fringe and lowlands alike, where breeding waders have been lost to the 'green deserts'. In addition, the resident water voles put in an obliging appearance and a mountain hare ambled across the heather, where Red Grouse were to be seen.



**Common Sandpiper**

Dropping down back towards Wyming Brook along the paths, a party of 30 Lapwing rested on a short-cropped patch of moorland and the first Woodcock squelched and croaked its way overhead. As the light faded, the midges really began to mass, many of us 'enjoying' our own personal swarm around our heads; anything that fed on them would certainly be flourishing! Despite their close attentions, we hung around listening for Nightjars, but after several years of excellent views there was no sign of any of these magical birds. As we headed back towards the car park, Tawny Owls began to call, yet more Woodcocks passed close overhead and a single Nightjar 'churred' briefly. A series of torches and mobile phone apps ensured that we negotiated

the steps back down to the car park and had no call on the Group's public liability insurance policy. The Nightjars had – for once – disappointed us, but the range of breeding waders (and the lack of rain!) made for a good evening nonetheless: thanks for those who supported the evening.

**David Wood**