

SBSG E-NEWSLETTER MARCH 2017

Recent Highlights (Jan - Feb 2017)

January

The **Waxwing** invasion really took hold during the early part of January. A highly mobile flock containing (at times) several hundred birds favoured several areas particularly the Haggler's Corner area of Queens Road which held a total of 340 birds on the 1st. The flock even made it on to the big screen featuring later in the month on Winter Watch. At least 100 birds were still around at the end of February.

A 2nd winter **Caspian Gull** roosted at Orgreave on the 2nd the first of three roosting birds there during the period. Bird of the period was the adult **Tundra Bean Goose** found by Mike Smethurst at Ulley C.P. Found mid-morning on the 4th January, it subsequently disappeared before it was relocated late afternoon at nearby Orgreave. Continuing a pattern of early mornings at Ulley and afternoons at Orgreave until the end of January it remained in the former area until the end of February.



Tundra Bean Goose (Ulley © M.Smethurst)

At Leash Fen a **Great Grey Shrike** was seen distantly from Ramsley Gate on the 7th. On the 11th the first of several Iceland Gulls, a 2nd winter, was reported from Poolsbrook C.P.

Pink-footed Geese were on the move on the 17th with notable skeins of 100+ birds over Blackburn Meadows (130), Ecclesfield (120), High Green (400), Norwood Allotments (480), Rawmarsh (500), Rivelin (300), Brecks (100) and Silverwood Lagoon (390). An immature **Glaucous Gull** on the Hurfield Academy playing fields on the 17th was the only record received during the period, despite being the best winter nationally for this species for a while. **Whooper Swans** were also reported on the 17th with seven at Orgreave and nine at Rivelin Dams. The immature bird remained a Parkgate Canal Basin throughout.



© P. Leonard

Whooper Swan (Parkgate © P.Leonard)

On the 19th an immature drake **Scaup** was found at Thrybergh C.P, remaining until the end of February and joined by a second bird from 27th

to 29th. An **Egyptian Goose** was found at Rother Valley on the 20th and later that afternoon seen passing through Orgreave. An impressive party of presumed feral **Barnacle Geese** were at Thrybergh C.P on the 21st.



Barnacle Geese (RVCP © M.Smethurst)

At Longshaw a flock of around 100 **Brambling** in the vicinity of the lodge and car park on the 28th.

A **Yellow-legged Gull** on the former Sheffield Airport site was seen from 'Mount Darnall' on the 29th. At Attercliffe on the 30th two **Iceland Gulls** (juv and 2nd winter) and a 1st winter **Caspian Gull** had the larophiles drooling. The 2nd winter bird continued to make sporadic appearances throughout the period. Also on the 30th a **Little Egret** was reported from Kilnhurst Ings.



Iceland Gull (Attercliffe © A.Deighton)

February

At Wharnccliffe Heath LR a **Common Redpoll** was found among a small group of Lesser Redpolls on the 1st and a **Red Kite** was seen at Edge Mount. The wintering **Bittern** was seen at Pit-house West on the 4th with possibly two birds there on the 5th. Also there a **Cetti's Warbler** heard calling from the Bittern Pool.

A 1st winter **Caspian Gull** and 2nd winter Yellow-legged Gull were in the much reduced roost at Orgreave on the 7th.



Yellow-legged Gull (Poolsbrook 10th – M. Sherwin)

On the 11th a **Red Kite** was seen over Bradway, with what was presumably the same bird seen over Norton and Woodseats that morning.

A small movement of **Whooper Swans** took place on the 13th and 14th with; 40 at Redmires (13th), six Agden (14th), two Orgreave, two north at Silverwood Lagoon, eight adults at RVCP on Meadowgate Lake and seven over Kiveton.



Whooper Swan (Kiveton © A.Bateman)



Waxwing (Handsworth 16th © P.Garrity)



Barn Owl (Rotherham 18th © C.Tyler)

A **Common Redpoll** (possibly two) was at Orgreave on 17th among a small flock of Lessers. Nearby a **Little Egret** was at RVCP on Meadowgate Lake. A **Little Egret** was also seen heading north at 'Mount Darnall' on the 19th.



Iceland Gull (Orgreave © M.Reeder)

The **Iceland Gull** paid a brief visit to Orgreave on the 24th, and a 2nd winter **Yellow-legged Gull** was at Attercliffe, with presumably the same bird at the former Sheffield Airport at 17:45.



Yellow-legged Gull (Attercliffe © A.Deighton)



Mark Reeder

Membership 2017

Membership fees for 2017 remain as before - £14 for an individual and £16 for a couple/family. These are now overdue however our membership secretary Martin Hodgson will be available at the March indoor meeting to finally collect fees prior to individual reminders being sent out. If you can't attend the meeting, you can still renew by printing off and completing [this](#) form or following the link below.

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

Sheffield Parks Survey 2015-16

The survey has now concluded so please gather all of the records you have and submit them as soon as possible via the website. Alternatively your completed forms can be submitted at an indoor meeting to a committee member. Details of the survey and the sites covered are on the website [here](#).

What to look out for in March & April

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.

Free bird 2016



After just under 600 miles of walking and cycling and several hundred miles of bus travel during 2016 Pete Brown finished the year with a total of 156 species recorded on his SBSG area travels. Many thanks to all who supported the venture providing up to date information, occasionally company and even the odd sandwich and particularly to the many who kindly sponsored Pete in his efforts to raise funds for Cancer Research UK. The total currently stands at around £2,400.



Pete Brown

Winterwatch in Sheffield



Winterwatch (Series 5, episode 1) was aired on Monday 23rd January. The crew pictured (Ian, Gillian, Vicky & Scotty) were in Sheffield on the 10th & 11th of January filming Waxwings and Thrushes at various city centre sites and were supported by two SBSG members, Pete Brown and Pete Garrity. Although the episode should now have been removed from BBC iplayer it can be seen [here](#) on Youtube (see the visit 22.30 mins into the programme).

Pit-house West Proposals

Following a site meeting of council officers and councillors on Mansfield Road on 16th February a planning meeting was held to discuss the proposed Gulliver's Kingdom development. Notes taken by Nicky Rivers of the Sheffield Wildlife Trust can be found [here](#).

Local Field Trips 2017

Visit [here](#) for details of the local field trips for 2017. These may be subject to change so please keep an eye on the web site for updates.

Next Field Trip:

Sat 18th March

Derwentdale Raptor Watch



Peregrine © D.Wood

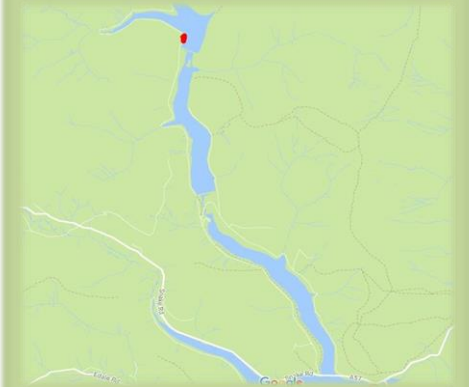
This site, known locally by South Yorkshire and North Derbyshire birders as Windy Corner, is on the road up Derwentdale, around two hundred yards north of the dam wall of Howden reservoir. There is limited roadside parking back towards the dam wall.

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 18/3/17 and bring warm clothing and a flask; often nothing happens for ages and then there is a ten minute activity burst which makes it all worthwhile. The meeting normally breaks up by 11.00.



Bird of the Month

GOSHAWK

March is probably the best month of the year for look out for this fantastic raptor, the emblem of Sheffield Bird Study Group. It is then that this large raptor, which can be difficult to see for most of the year, soars over local woodlands and, if you are lucky, gives the impressive "roller coaster" display flight. A much more powerful bird than sparrowhawk, looking like a "flying cross" rather than a "flying T", and with slower wingbeats followed by long glides, it is *the* target species for our annual Derwentdale field trip in March. Remember, if you cannot decide whether it is a "Gos" or a "Sparr", it is probably a Sparrowhawk; Goshawks really are that different.



Goshawk © Peter Garrity

Indoor Meetings - 2017

Visit [here](#) to see the complete list of indoor meetings for 2017. Location is Sheffield University Hicks Building, Lecture Theatre 5 and the meetings will commence at 7.15pm.

Forthcoming Meetings:

Wednesday 8th Mar at 7.15pm

AGM – Including the following:

- Review of the Year 2016
- Committee Nominations
- Rwanda – Neil Porter
- Goshawk/Sparrowhawk I.D.
- Accounts review 2016
- Secretary's Report
- Recorder's Report



Wednesday 12th Apr at 7.15pm

Esther Kettel



City Living? - Comparative Ecology of Urban and Rural Peregrines

Esther graduated with a BSc (Hons) in Wildlife Conservation from Nottingham Trent University in 2013 and then went on to study a Masters by....

Research in Biodiversity Conservation at the University of Nottingham. Whilst studying for her Masters she also worked for the Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust, carrying out water vole, water shrew and otter surveys. In 2014 she was awarded a PhD scholarship at Nottingham Trent University researching the ecology of peregrine falcons in urban habitats. Currently in her final year of the PhD, she aims to submit towards the end of summer 2017 and tonight she will share an insight into the research undertaken.

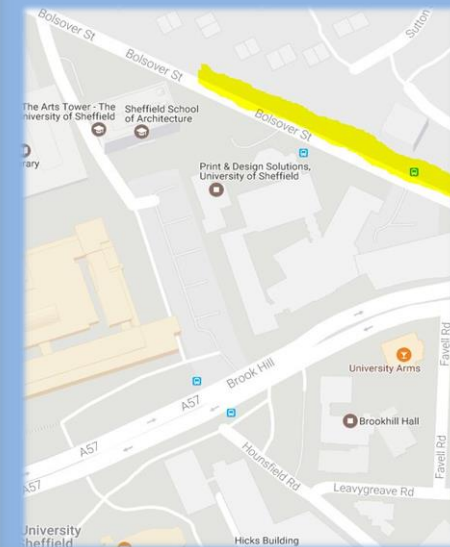
Urbanisation is rapidly increasing across the world, and the effects this has on wildlife can be detrimental. Some species, however, are able to adapt to these modified landscapes and even thrive in such habitats. The peregrine falcon is historically found nesting on tall, inaccessible cliff faces, yet increasingly it is found nesting in towns and cities...[read more](#)

Parking for Indoor Meetings

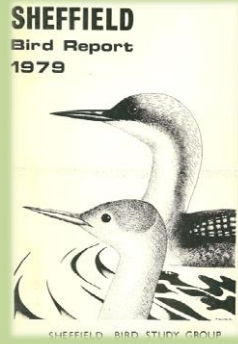
Please note the following in terms of the change in parking outside of the Hicks Building -

Sheffield University have changed their parking policy for Zone B. You will now require a University Staff Car Parking Permit to park in any of their car parks. Therefore there is no visitor parking in University car parks. The University do have the Q Park on Durham Road now open and there are special evening and weekend rates in place that can be found online [here](#).

Alternative free parking after 6.30pm can be found here on Bolsover Street. Please check local parking restrictions to ensure you comply with them.



A journey back to 1979



Richard Hill looks back to 1979 with incomers Margaret Thatcher at number 10 and Ayatollah Khomeini in Tehran. The first £1.0M footballer, Trevor Francis, arrived at Nottingham Forest which perhaps sparked the future financial insanity of the Premier League. Not so hot was the severe winter of 1978/79 but in birding terms highlights included a huge influx of divers, grebes and sawbill ducks. Rarities included Greater Sandplover, Aleutian Tern, Ruppell's Warbler and Belted Kingfisher. You can find his latest detailed account [here](#).

Diary Dates

Saturday 25th March, 10am - 12pm

Blacka Moor Nature Reserve Users Forum

Meeting at the Totley AC Pavilion, Penny Lane, Totley, S17 3AZ.

A poster detailing the event can be found [here](#). Meeting notes from the last meetings are [here](#).

If anyone is interested in helping with any of the Moors for the Futures surveys please see attached link [here](#). There is a Bumblebee transect on Blacka Moor and the Sphagnum survey also includes Blacka Moor so if you are out and about and would like to help survey that would be great.

The Nature Counts Project will also be running various ID and survey workshops that may be of interest, including Bluebells which will be on their website very soon. See [here](#).

Committee Matters

National Biodiversity Network (NBN).

SBSG has signed an agreement with the National Biodiversity Network agreement that means that our data will continue to be available via the NBN gateway for conservation purposes at a low resolution (10 km squares). Sensitive breeding species are excluded from this according to parameters we have set, and if anyone requires a greater level of detail for records (for example, environmental consultants) they have to come to us and we provide the data for a fee.

Virgin Money Giving.

SBSG has set up a Virgin Money Giving account as part of a drive with Sheffield University to raise funds for the Peregrine Project. Donations can be made via links from the webcam landing page, the Peregrine blog and the Sheffield Peregrine twitter account.

Off the beaten track

This new feature for the e-newsletter seeks to encourage members to visit less well-known sites, or establish their own patches. The idea is to enhance our coverage of the recording area and so generate richer holdings of data for future conservation purposes. In this first edition, David Wood shares his experience of the Crookesmoor Parks.

See [here](#) for his report.



David Wood.

Photo of the Month/s

Bird photography is consistently popular these days and we are introducing a new feature for the e-Newsletter. The committee will select a short list of images submitted to the SBSG website over the preceding two months that are interesting, well composed and good technically.

SBSG members will then select their favourite photo from the short list (see below) via the e-Newsletter. The image with the highest number of votes received before the **April** indoor meeting will appear in the next issue along with a note from the photographer describing how the image was achieved.

Please Vote [here](#) (one vote per member) but note that the form may not work on old versions of Internet Explorer (IE 8 or older). Alternatively use Chrome, Firefox or Safari and paste the link/address or email your vote [here](#). Many thanks.

1. Bean Goose



2. Iceland Gull



3. Mandarin Duck



4. Peregrine



5. Redwing



6. Goosander



7. Waxwing 1



8. Waxwing 2



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