



SBSG e-Newsletter May 2016

Recent Highlights (Mar - Apr 2016)

March

An unremarkable start to March had few highlights however these included good numbers of **Jack Snipe** which remained at Woodhouse Washlands with 11 recorded on the 1st, 17 **Whooper Swans** were reported from Middleton Moor on the same day and 17 were at Howden Res on the 3rd.



Whooper Swan – E. Yeomans

Moderate numbers of winter thrushes continued to reside in the area with 300 **Redwing** at Linacre Res on the 3rd and 120 **Fieldfare** in the Barbrook valley on the 7th. The Pit-house West **Bittern** made another appearance to roost on the 6th and incidentally this location produced the only other report of this species in the area this month when a single bird circled before flying off E on the 12th. At Poolsbrook Marsh on the 6th a 120 strong group of **Herrings Gulls** was accompanied by a single **Caspian Gull** and on the same day one of only two reports in the month of **Lesser Spotted Woodpecker** was received from Wentworth Park when a single bird was heard calling. **Curlew** numbers continued to rise on the uplands with 100+ reported at Windy Bank, Agden on the 7th whilst nearby on the 8th at Ughill 100+ **Golden Plover** were circling over fields before settling in to roost.

Lakes and reservoirs were productive during this period when the long-staying **Shags** at Linacre Res were down to two in number on the 9th, a **Kittiwake** was reported from Langsett Res on the 10th and another was at Orgreave Lakes on the 11th when an excellent count of 13 **Common Scoter** were also present on the same day. An apparent purple patch for **Whooper Swan** records commenced on the 11th when 15 were reported at Middleton Moor, 11 were at Orgreave Lakes, 19 were at RVCP and at least singles were reported over Aston and Silverwood. On the 12th a max of 44 were at Agden Res and 17 were confirmed at Middleton Moor. Also at Middleton Moor on the same day were 2 **Pintail** and a single **Red Kite** flew over fields to the W of the lagoons. An early singing **Chiffchaff** was reported from Thrybergh CP on the 13th whilst elsewhere there were 400 **Wigeon** feeding on grassland at Denaby Common and 300 **Golden Plover** at Peat Pits. Further **Whooper Swan** highlights included 40 over Carr Vale NR on the 14th, 46 at Thrybergh CP on the 15th, 11 at Broomhead Res on the 16th and 16 at Middleton Moor on the same date.



Whooper Swan – M. Smethurst

Elsewhere on the 16th there were two **Pintail** reported from Orgreave Lakes and a calling **Cetti's Warbler** from a site in the S of the area. On the 17th an **Osprey** was seen flying over Rawmarsh/Wentworth finally heading

off NW over Nether Haugh and on the same day **Whooper Swans** were also moving across the area with seven NW over Rawmarsh and 25 leaving N from Thrybergh CP.



Black Redstart – M. Reeder

The Waverley **Black Redstart** appeared again on the 19th and then made a final appearance it seems on the 20th when on the same day late in the afternoon came the news of a **Glossy Ibis** at Carr Vale NR, although it was thought to be outside of the recording area at the time.



Glossy Ibis – P. Ridsdale

Other highlights on the 20th included a **Red Kite** flying low over the Botanical Gardens towards Broomhill and the appearance of a **Great Grey Shrike** at Greave's Piece late in the afternoon. The **Glossy Ibis** had a brief stay up to the 22nd and was

confirmed as an area record during that time, whilst conversely the **Great Grey Shrike** proved to be a stayer with reports through to the end of March.



Great Grey Shrike – J. Hornbuckle

A single **Common Scoter** was reported at Rivelin Res on the 21st and nearby on the same day a **Red Kite** was at Fox Hagg. Following this the frequency of Red Kite records intensified as a further 8 reports were received up to the end of the month. An adult **Kittiwake** at Thrybergh CP on the 23rd was followed by another adult (possibly the same bird) at Orgreave Lakes on the 24th whilst elsewhere the first reported **Ring Ouzel** of the year was in the Burbage Valley on the same Day.



Kittiwake – M. Reeder

The 25th of March proved to be an interesting day with a number of good records. These included a single **Green Sandpiper** at Aldwarke, the first **Sand Martin** at Orgreave Lakes, the first **Swallow** at Low Moor, Upper Midhope and a single **Hawfinch** at Birchill Bank Wood near Pilsley. Disappointing news came from Linacre Res on the 26th when the last two remaining **Shag** had reduced to a single bird after one was found dead, entangled in fishing line. Good **Fieldfare** numbers were still being recorded towards the end of the month with 150 at Edge Mount on the 27th and 250+ at Green Moor on the 28th. On the same day the Peat Pits **Golden Plover** flock had risen to over



Shag – P. Stoppard

900 birds and an excellent record of a **Grey Plover** came from Orgreave Lakes in the early morning. Only the second record for the month of **Lesser Spotted Woodpecker** came from Sheephouse Wood when a bird was heard drumming on the 30th and on the same day the first **House Martin** of the year was reported at Thrybergh CP. The final day of the month brought two **Osprey** records with the timings of the reports suggesting different birds. The first was flying E over Thrybergh CP at 8.35am whilst the second report came from Cutthroat Bridge-Whinstone Lee at 9.00am.

April

A good start to the month with another **Osprey** sighting at Baslow on the 1st, the first **Yellow Wagtail** of the year at Orgreave Lakes on the 2nd and a **Marsh Harrier** at Middleton Moor on the 3rd.



Yellow Wagtail – R. Twigg

On the same day a singing male **Cetti's Warbler** was reported from a Rotherham location for the third year running. The Greave's Piece **Great Grey Shrike** was reported again on the 3rd and stayed through to the 17th with numerous records in between. **Red Kite** continued to cross the area, the first report of the month received on the 4th and regular sightings followed throughout the month. At least one **Lesser Spotted Woodpecker** was heard at Wentworth Park on the 4th and on the same day the first report of a **Tree Pipit** was

received from Grenoside. Interesting reports on the 5th included two **Jack Snipe** at Blackburn Meadow NR, 16 **Whooper Swan** at Middleton Moor and the appearance of a **Black-necked Grebe** at Thrybergh CP.



Black-necked Grebe – M. Smethurst

The Linacre **Shag** was reported again on the 8th and remained until the 25th (final report at the time of writing) whilst elsewhere on the same day a **Black Redstart** was visiting a garden at Treeton and the first report of a common **Redstart** was received from Padley Gorge.

The Rotherham **Cetti's Warbler** was still singing on the 10th and during the day the first report of the year of a male **Pied Flycatcher** came from Chatsworth Park. The 11th turned into a remarkable day with an influx of **Little Gulls** across the region a phenomenon echoed in other areas of the UK. In the morning (7.50-12.05) 14 were at ThryberghCP along with a single **Mediterranean Gull**. These were followed by 12 at Orgreave Lakes (from midday) which may have been part of the same group, two birds at Silverwood Lagoon in the mid-afternoon and a single bird at Underbank Res.



Little Gull – M. Smethurst

Elsewhere two **Grey Plover** were at Middleton Moor and the first **Grasshopper Warbler** of the year was reported from Wharnccliffe Chase. The 12th also turned out to be an interesting day with four **Little Gulls** reported at Orgreave Lakes

along with a single **Whimbrel** and two **Sandwich Terns**. There were also four **Little Gulls** reported from RVCP (possibly the Orgreave birds) and the first reported **Common Tern** of the year at the same location. A single **Common Tern** at Thrybergh CP on the same day coincided with the brief visit of two **Arctic Terns** in the afternoon along with the first reported **Whitethroat** and the first reported singing **Lesser Whitethroat** of the year. The first **Cuckoo** of the year was also reported from Ramsley Moor on the 12th.

Concerns relating to the long-staying **Whooper Swans** at Middleton Moor culminated with a rescue attempt on the 15th and then a follow up to recover the final birds on the 19th (See David Wood's note under "Committee Matters").



Whooper Swans – DWT

A **Little Egret** was seen at Middleton Moor on the 16th and on the same day the regular Peat Pits **Golden Plover** flock had swelled to an impressive 700+. Disappointingly, **Twite** records are becoming more infrequent these days, with the only report received this month on the 17th when four birds, one colour ringed, were seen in the White Peak. A report of a single **Whimbrel** on the 18th at Thrybergh CP was followed on the 19th by the first **Whinchat** of the year at Stoke Flat and the first **Sedge Warbler** at Poolsbrook Marsh. Another welcome report of a **Black-necked Grebe** this month came from Orgreave Lakes on the 20th where a single **Green Sandpiper** also made an appearance on the same day. Arrivals of summer migrants continued with an earlier than average appearance of three **Swift** at Thrybergh CP on the 21st followed by a singing **Reed Warbler** at Orgreave Lakes on the 22nd. The Peat Pits area and surrounding fields has been a popular location in recent years for various species however the

regular **Goldie** flock is always worth some attention and on the 24th good work by Andy Deighton unearthed a **Dotterel**.



Dotterel – A. Deighton

Although this was a dull plumage male, the bird was a popular attraction and although elusive at times, stayed for the remainder of the month. Amidst all the excitement on the same day an **Osprey** was reported from nearby Rocher Fields heading towards Broomhead Res and elsewhere the Rotherham **Cetti's Warbler** continued to sing. The Linacre **Shag** was reported, it appears, for the last time on the 25th whilst a **Greenshank** reported on the same day at Orgreave Lakes remained until the 29th.

Hirundine flocks had been building over the regions lakes and reservoirs over the period and an impressive 450 **Sand Martin** were recorded at Thrybergh CP on the 26th. Summer arrivals again featured on the 27th with two **Cuckoo** at Blacka Moor and two **Whinchat** at Orgreave Lakes. Unusually on the same day a **Raven** was also recorded at Orgreave. The final highlights of the month (excluding the continued presence of the **Dotterel**) included a **Hobby** at Rawmarsh on the 28th, the Sheffield **Peregrines** with three hatched chicks and at least six **Pied Flycatchers** at Padley Gorge on the same day. Coincidentally a **Hobby** was seen at Orgreave Lakes on the 29th and finally the first **Wood Warbler** was reported from Wharncliffe Woods on the 30th.

**Stange & Burbage
birding events - 11th &
15th June**

Please see our [home](#) page for full details.

On-line Membership Application Forms

Our new on-line application forms for Adults and U21s can be found [here](#). Membership application/renewal is now easily done with one click of a button. Fill in the on-line form and click submit. Payment instructions are shown on the form. The form can also be used to submit changes in personal details. The PDF printable versions are still available

Membership Renewal

May is the final month for paying the current year's subscription if you are to remain a member and have continuing access to the members' area of the website.

Those who are still to pay their 2016 membership fee can click [here](#) to complete an online renewal form.

John Linton-Smith

We are sad to learn of the death of John Linton-Smith from cancer – John was an active member of the Group in its early years, joint recorder for the SBSG in the mid-70s, WeBS counter for Catcliffe Flash, Treeton Dyke and Ulley Country Park from 1973 to 2004 and also a long-time stalwart of the Sorby Natural History Society. John will be best remembered for his local studies of Lapwing – his favourite bird, as well as his great expertise as a wildlife photographer. Our condolences go to his family and all his friends at the SNHS.

Committee Matters update by David Wood

Rotherham Biological Records Centre

Back in February I worked with Bill Ely, ex-recorder of the Rotherham Biological Records Centre (BRC), to produce a letter of protest at the proposed closure of the BRC. The

letter was signed by 70 representatives of local, regional and national organisations and presented to the Chief Executive of Rotherham Council at a full council meeting, as well as being sent to all Rotherham Councillors. The outcomes are not yet known.

Middleton Moor Whooper Swans

Following the death of a number of the Whooper Swans that took up residence at Middleton Moor, the Yorkshire Swan Rescue team worked together with Derbyshire Wildlife Trust to capture the remaining birds, which are now recovering in care. Further details can be read [here](#).

We agreed to contribute £100 to the Yorkshire Swan Rescue centre towards the costs of the operation, which are well over £400 to date.

Elections and Officers

At the March AGM David Williams stepped down from the committee and was presented with a book in recognition of his sterling work, particularly as manager of the Group's database and records. David was replaced on the committee by Martin Hodgson (known to many of you as the Group's Membership Secretary) and Charles Stack, bringing the committee to its full complement of nine members for the first time in a while. At the following committee meeting, the Group's officers were appointed to continue, with David Wood as Chair, Richard Hill as Honorary Secretary and Ron Blagden as Honorary Treasurer.

Martin Hodgson

"For almost all my working life, birding was very much something I squeezed in to the limited time not spent at work, which usually meant only when I was on family holidays. That changed after I'd moved to Sheffield in late 2006 and lighted on a copy of an SBSG Annual Report in the Weston Park Museum. Impressed by what I saw I joined SBSG shortly after, and began some serious late-life learning! I took over Membership Secretary duties in 2010 and Annual Report Distribution duties a little while later. It's in those

capacities that most of you know me. I'm delighted to be joining the Committee. I haven't been invited on account of my birding knowledge, thank goodness. I shall instead concentrate on supporting good outcomes for our membership".

Charles Stack

I have lived in Sheffield for 22 years and am retiring shortly from working at the Children's Hospital. I therefore thought it was time to join the committee of the Group after so long attending and enjoying the meetings.

I began birdwatching since childhood in Essex where my grandfather used to take me to the local reservoir and was inspired by a teacher who was particularly knowledgeable about birdsong especially of summer visitors. I have been a member of the SBSG since moving to Sheffield. I have mainly bird watched abroad on holiday in the last few years but regularly visit Wyming Brook as my local patch. Here Wood Warbler has been a particular favourite sighting. Hopefully I will be able to spend more time looking for birds in the near future.

Website

As you'll have noticed, the website has suffered some major crashes in the last couple of months. These have been the result of someone hacking the website, apparently 'just for fun', leaving it so badly infected with viruses that even once it had been reinstated our webhost became concerned that it could infect his whole domain and took it down. We are indebted to Andy Mills, who worked with Simon Bailey to develop the website back in 2008-9, for getting it up and running again, now with the latest software, which should offer protection from future hacking attacks. Andy, however, is not able to continue working on our website and we are exploring options to ensure the website's future. Mark Reeder, Andy Deighton and Pete Garrity do a great job with the day-to-day running and updating of the website, but we are in need of technical support in case of future problems. If anyone in the Group has expertise in this direction (the website operates with Joomla as its content management system), and may be able to offer assistance, do please get in touch with any member of the committee.

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 11th May at 7.15pm.**

Romania & China



The final indoor meeting before the summer break. Martin Hodgson steps out of Membership Secretary role to recount travels in Romania and China in 2015.

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 Trips:
Saturday 14th May - 8.30am
Padley Gorge Migrants**

Local field trip to Padley Gorge. A walk down Padley gorge with Ron Blagden to see (and hear) summer migrants of the wooded cloughs and moorland fringe. Specialities of the site include Pied Flycatcher, Redstart and Tree Pipit, with Wood Warbler and Cuckoo also possible. See [here](#) for full details.

**Wednesday 15th June at 20:30
Crepuscular Creep**

Local field trip to Hallam Moors. Our annual 'Crepuscular Creep' will walk from the top of Wyming Brook, up to Redmires and out onto Hallam Moors in the hope of seeing breeding waders and perhaps owls. See [here](#) for full details.

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.

What to look out for in May & June

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.

Account of the March field trip to Derwentdale

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

A Journey back to 1974

SHEFFIELD BIRD REPORT 1974



SHEFFIELD BIRD STUDY GROUP

Richard Hill looks back to the archives focussing on 1974, once again reflecting on momentous world events at the time, picking out some significant UK birding highlights and also touching on more memories of the evolving Group, its ambitious plans for the future and the development of the annual report. You can find his latest detailed account [here](#).

Sheffield Peregrine update



Sheffield Peregrines are doing well at St George's Church with three chicks hatched. Visit [here](#) for the Sheffield University webcams.

Elsewhere in the region.....

Nottingham Trent University's Newton and Arkwright building is home to a pair of peregrine falcons, who are currently nesting on an outside ledge near the top.



©Nottingham Peregrines - [here](#)

Wakefield Peregrines are nesting on the Cathedral tower and can be viewed on [Twitter](#) or [YouTube](#)



©Wakefield Peregrines

Derby Peregrines have nested on the Cathedral in recent years. The Council's web-site link is [here](#).

Sheffield Parks Survey 2015-16 Update

With spring finally here and the breeding season under way, please get out there to record the birds in Sheffield's parks and submit your records via the website.



Kingfisher in Endcliffe Park (David Wood)

The minimum requirement is at least one visit in each of the four seasons, with a minimum of two visits in the breeding season. For full details of the methodology please visit [here](#).

BIG Biodiversity Challenge

This initiative encourages construction companies to support the targets of Biodiversity 2020 strategy in the built environment by making enhancements to their construction sites, developments or existing buildings. Details can be found [here](#) but as an example Kier Services in Sheffield installed 14 nest boxes to the areas around their office location at Manor Lane earlier this year.

