

# SBSG E-NEWSLETTER

## MAY 2018



### Recent Highlights (Mar – Apr 2018)

**Black-necked Grebe:** There were four records during the period. The first at Orgreave on the 17th March, followed by a single at Thrybergh C.P on the 7th April, which stayed until the 16th. Another single was at Orgreave on the 14th April followed by a pair that spent two days there from the 20th.



Black-necked Grebe (Orgreave © M.Reeder)

**Whooper Swan:** A total of 17 records were received during the period. On 3rd March a family party of 6 were joined by another adult on the Main Lake at RVCP. On the 5th three groups were reported heading north with: 6 over Fulwood, 29 Chatsworth and 30+ over Millhouses some fifteen minutes after the Chatsworth birds. The following day 2 flew east over Grenoside. A party of 8 were at Orgreave on the 15th, which stayed overnight but were gone by midday.



Whooper Swan (Orgreave © P.Brown)

On 17th 10 went northwest over Priestcliffe Lees. Late March often produces large herds on their way north to their breeding grounds with the following reported: 64 at Dale Dike Reservoir (21st), 17 Underbank (22nd), Orgreave 42 (25th) and Strines (31st). Records continued into April with 22 northwest over Thrybergh C.P (1st), 21 northwest at Dore (7th), 6 at Thrybergh (7th) which left with a juv' **Mute Swan**, 21 at Langsett Reservoir (8th). The last record was of 9 over Harley on the 9th.



Red Kite (Green Moor © P.Garrity)

**Barnacle Goose:** A pair with irrefutable credentials was at Orgreave on 15th April. **Garganey:** A pair spent the day at Orgreave on 17th April. **Scaup:** The drake remained commuting between Orgreave and Ulley until 20th March.

**Red Kite:** With 28 reports received during the period it is surely just a matter of time before this species is added as a breeding bird. **Marsh Harrier:** A cream-crown flew east at Canklow Woods on 30th March.



©Mark Reeder

Garganey (Orgreave © M.Reeder)

**Osprey:** There were three reports during April: Strines Reservoir (3rd), Emlin Ridge (4th) and Harper Lees (15th). **Avocet:** Two spent the day at Middleton Moor on 29th March and a single was at Orgreave on 6th April.

**Little Ringed Plover:** The first was at Orgreave on 15th March.

**Sanderling:** One at Redmires on 31st was the first March record. **Ruff:** At Middleton Moor 3 were present on the 14th April. A transitional male (with a damaged leg) was at Orgreave from 26th – 29th April.

**Black-tailed Godwit:** Two were on the island at Orgreave on 17th April.



Avocet (Orgreave © A.Deighton)

**Whimbrel:** There were three reports during April: 4 at Orgreave (19th), 1 Middleton Moor (25th) and Orgreave again on 29th. **Greenshank:** Two reports of singles at Orgreave on 6th and 17th April. **Common Sandpiper:** First recorded at Orgreave on the 4th April. **Green Sandpiper:** Singles were reported from favoured locations Blackburn Meadows (13th and 22nd March) and Aldwarke (6th April).



Ruff (Orgreave © M.Smethurst)

**Little Gull:** An adult was at Thrybergh C.P on the 3rd April. A Midlands/inland Yorkshire influx occurred on the 15th April producing 8 at Orgreave (increasing from 4) and 2 at Middleton Moor. **Iceland Gull:** A juv was at Orgreave briefly on the 11th March, with a 2nd winter bird there on the 29th. What was presumably the latter bird was at Norfolk Bridge on 3rd April. **Kittiwake:** Singles were briefly at Orgreave on 13th and 28th March. **Sandwich Tern:** Three circled Orgreave before leaving northwest on 30th March. **Arctic Tern:** Just a handful of records received during April: At Orgreave 1 (8th), 2 (13th) and 1 (18th). At Thrybergh C.P 7 flew NNE on 29th). **Little Tern:** A very early bird was at Orgreave 17th April. With almost 23 years since the last 'twitchable' bird at Treeton Dyke this half-day bird was most welcome to those that could make it.



Little Gull (Orgreave © M.Smethurst)

**Cuckoo:** The first report came from Canklow Woods on 18th April.

**Sand Martin:** First reported on 12th March at Orgreave. **Swallow:** First reports were at Orgreave and RVCP on the 3rd April. **House Martin:** The first a single at Orgreave completed the set on 6th April. **Tree Pipit:** The first record came from Wharnciffe Heath on 8th April. **Rock Pipit:** A single littoralis was at Orgreave on 30th March. **Yellow Wagtail:** Singles east at Orgreave on 14th April were the first reports.

**Waxwing:** What were presumably the 3 recorded in the Crookes area earlier in the year appeared at Banner Cross on the 20th March – remaining until the 22nd and again outside Ecclesall Junior School on the 28th. **Ring Ouzel:** Away from the uplands a male favoured the tip at Orgreave from the 7th-13th April. **Fieldfare:** The last report was of 25 at Onesmoor on 16th April. **Redwing:** Two at Blackburn Meadows on 8th April were the last reported. **Cetti's Warbler:** Singing **Grasshopper Warbler:** First of the year was at Canklow Woods on 15th April. **Sedge Warbler:** A single in the tiny Orgreave reed bed, on 15th April, was the first report of the year. males reported from 3 localities.

**Reed Warbler:** One singing at Thrybergh Tip was the first report.

**Lesser Whitethroat:** The first report of the year came from Dalton on 15<sup>th</sup> April. **Whitethroat:** Two singing a Silverwood Lagoon, the first of 2018.

**Garden Warbler:** One singing at Blackburn Meadows was the first.

**Wood Warbler:** The singing male was back on territory at Wyming Brook on 17th April.

**Willow Warbler:** One singing at Thrybergh C.P on 3rd April, the first of the year.

**Firecrest:** One was in a Nether Edge Garden on 9th March.

**Pied Flycatcher:** A male at Chatsworth Park was the first report.

**Brambling:** Five including a singing male were at Agden Road, Nether Edge, the last to be reported.

Thank you to everyone who submitted their records during the period. Whilst not all records will appear here they are added to our ever-growing database.



Mark Reeder

## Photo of the month



The image chosen by members for Jan-Feb 2018 is this shot of a Barn Owl by **Andy Deighton**

**Equipment:** Canon 7D mkii, Canon 100-400mm F5.6 mkii Lens





## Committee News

### Data Protection

As you may know, the EU General Data Protection Regulation (<https://www.eugdpr.org/>) comes into force on May 25th. To ensure that SBSG conforms to this regulation, we have reviewed the ways in which the Group holds personal data in connection with our membership, and have agreed a data protection policy, which can be viewed [here](#). If you have concerns about the data that SBSG holds in relation to your membership, or the ways in which that is held and managed, please contact the membership secretary, [Martin Hodgson](#). In particular we identified the holding of your telephone number as desirable but not necessary. If you would like it to be deleted from your record, please contact Martin. We will assume that if you do not contact Martin on this front you are happy for your details to be held by the Group and used to manage your membership in the ways outlined in the policy.

### New Committee Members

We would like to welcome and introduce our new committee members to the SBSG and look forward to working with them to support and develop the group going forward.



**Emma Hughes** ([Read Emma's profile](#))



**Chris Greenwood** ([Read Chris's profile](#))

## AGM – Information

The March AGM was an opportunity to share with our membership news of the Group's activities and financial situation, via reports prepared by our Hon Treasurer (Ron Blagden) and Hon Secretary (Richard Hill). In subsequent questions, we started to consider good local conservation causes to which we could put some of the Group's healthy surplus, such as nest boxes for Pied Flycatchers; if you have ideas or suggestions on this front, do get in touch with any of the committee. These items were followed by a Review of the birds of the Sheffield area in 2017. For those unable to attend on the night, or if you would like to see the slides again, the Powerpoint used on the night can be viewed [here](#).

### Field Trips 2018



Visit [here](#) for details of the local field trips for 2018. These may be subject to change so please keep an eye on the web site for updates.

### Next Field Trip:

**Crepuscular Creep – Hallam Moors**  
**Provisional Date Weds 13<sup>th</sup> June**  
**(see SBSG Website for updates)**



Image © D.Wood

Local field trip to Hallam Moors

Our annual 'Crepuscular Creep' will meet up at Redmires Top Reservoir at 8.30pm.

We will walk out onto Hallam Moors in the hope of seeing breeding waders, Nightjars and perhaps owls.

See the web-site [here](#) for details as our plans may change dependent on weather conditions at the time.



Image © A.Deighton

## Membership Subscriptions for 2018

Thank you to all members who have now paid their subscriptions for 2018. This is a final reminder for those who haven't yet done so. From 10th May those who have not yet paid will be assumed to have given up their membership.

**Martin Hodgson**  
Membership Secretary

## Request for 2017 records

We will soon be commencing the annual report for 2017 and would appreciate if members could submit any outstanding records as soon as possible, thanks.

## Indoor Meetings – 2018



Visit [here](#) to see the complete list of indoor meetings for 2018. Location is Sheffield University Hicks Building, Lecture Theatre 5 and the meetings will commence at 7.15pm.

### Forthcoming Meetings:

**Wednesday 9th May at 7.15pm**

**Pete Brown**

**Birds of Central America**



Pete Brown is a long time SBSG member and former group chairman. During recent years Pete has made three visits to Central America. His travels have taken him to Guatemala, Belize, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Costa Rica.



The region contains a huge variety of ecosystems, some spectacular landscapes and a wealth of history. Above all it has some of the best birding on the planet.

Pete's talk will touch on all aspects but particularly on the wonderfully varied, abundant and accessible bird life in those countries.



**Indoor Meeting in association with Sorby Natural History Society.**

**Wednesday 12th Sept at 7.15pm**

**Iolo Williams**

**Birds of Wales**

The venue is Sheffield University Diamond, Lecture Theatre 3 (basement). Please keep an eye on the web-site for up to date information about this eagerly awaited presentation.



**Iolo Williams is a Welsh naturalist, broadcaster, public speaker and writer who's worked in conservation for over 30 years.**

He is most widely known as a popular member of the Springwatch, Autumnwatch and Winterwatch presenting team and for presenting series such as Wild Wales, Rugged Wales and Great Welsh Parks for BBC 2.

## Iolo's early years

Iolo was born and brought up in mid Wales and studied in London for a degree in ecology at North East London Polytechnic. After graduating he went on to work for the RSPB for almost 15 years as Species Officer for Wales, a job he loved as he worked with some of the country's rarest breeding birds.

Eventually this brought him to the attention of the media and BBC 2's Visions of Snowdonia and Birdman followed Iolo's work as an RSPB officer.

In the late 1990s Iolo left the Society to work full-time in the media. His series, in both Welsh and English, concentrated on the wildlife of Wales and the world and he co-presented several network series such as Nature's Top 40 and Countryfile.

Iolo has written several books on Welsh wildlife in both English and Welsh and he is a regular contributor to several magazines, including 'BBC Wildlife'.

The Diamond - 32 Leavygreave Rd, Sheffield S3 7RD





## Sand Martin Initiative

### River Don Sand Martins

Sand Martins were first noted breeding on the urban Don in 2009, when young were seen at Salmon Pastures. In 2010 birds were reported at four sites in the Lower Don. In the following years the population continued to grow at a number of sites using drainage pipes and holes in walls. In recent years millions of pounds have been spent on new flood defences, often this meant re-pointing wall and capping drainage holes.



This put the future of breeding Sand Martins in jeopardy. After concerns were raised a number of mitigation measures were introduced, some of these were thought to be of little use. After long deliberations, two secure sites were chosen for the erection of large Sand Martin boxes of a proven design. On the 23 March 2018 these boxes manufactured by a social enterprise company from West Yorkshire called Green Future Buildings.

<http://greenfuturebuilding.org.uk>

A delay in delivering the sand meant filling the boxes took until the 6 April to complete. Just as we were completing the box at Gripple, two Sand Martins flew over. Each box has 48 holes and access is possible via a locked door to maintain and inspect the holes. If as we hope they are successful, then some of the juveniles can be ringed and maybe even a camera can be fitted.

The Kelham Island box can be viewed from the bridge over the Don on Ball Street. The other box is behind the Gripple factory on Carbrook Street and is best viewed from the "Fiver Weirs Walk" path between Carbrook

Street and Weedon Street. Under no circumstances should the boxes be approached as they are on private land.



A lot of people have been involved in making all this happen including Andy Deighton, Bob Croxton, David Wood and David Williams at Sheffield Bird Study Group. Angus Hunter and Ziggy Senkans at SCC Ecology Unit. Dave Brown at SCC Capital Services. The staff at Kelham Island Museum. Gordon Macrae (Special Projects Manager at Gripple Ltd). Tom Grose, Dave Buttle and Vicky for the laborious job of sand filling. Lastly Jim Clark for his boundless enthusiasm in driving the project forward and being ever present at all times during the fitting and filling of the boxes.



**Bob Croxton.**

## Sand Martin Survey



Image © A Deighton

Following on from the good work on the installation of two Sand Martin nest banks on the River Don (see item by Bob Croxton), we are undertaking a survey of Sand Martins on the Don through Sheffield to Rotherham.

This is a species that has colonised the Don in recent years as water quality has improved, but we do not have a clear idea of population levels and numbers of breeding pairs. The flood prevention work that has deprived the birds of a number of breeding sites has brought home the need to have a better understanding of their breeding status. With 14 sectors of the Don to survey, and opportunities to be mentored, we hope for a good take-up to improve our knowledge of this species and feed into measures to ensure their ongoing breeding success. To take part, access the survey form in PDF [here](#) or the downloadable Word version [here](#) and follow the instructions.

### What to look out for in May & Jun



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.

## Mystery Bird - Mar 2018



Due to unforeseen circumstances the answer to our March mystery bird will be detailed in the next issue.

## Mystery Bird ???



Our May 2018 mystery photographs are shown below. Have a close look before you make a decision! The first image of a Warbler has at least one "classic" ID feature!!



Mystery Bird for May - 1



Mystery Bird for May - 2

## Report on the Derwentdale Field Trip

Following a period of awful weather, which resulted in the postponement of the trip from the previous week, our annual raptor watch finally took place on Saturday, 24 March at "Windy Corner", just beyond the Howden dam wall on the road up Derwentdale. The re-arrangement certainly seemed to affect the attendance, as only six members were present for a meeting which usually has well into double figures.

The weather was, by March 2018 standards, positively balmy, and almost immediately a pair of **Sparrowhawks** was seen. **Common Buzzard** was also soon added to the list, with birds seen periodically throughout the morning, and it was good to also hear, and see, **Raven** on a couple of occasions. Although not treated to the dive-bombing spectacular of the previous year, good views were obtained of **Kestrel** in the vicinity of the dam wall. Distant views were also obtained of **Peregrine** high up the valley towards Crow Stones Edge.

The main target species for most members was, of course, **Goshawk** and, after drawing a blank last year, it was with some relief that one was finally spotted moving from West End up the valley. For a couple of members, this was a new species and it really made their morning. (If only the logging programme in the valley could include the huge conifer blocking views of the West End valley!)

Thanks to all who attended, in particular Andy Deighton, whose ability to spot and identify distant specks, and help others "get on" the birds, was appreciated by everyone, particularly me.

Ron Blagden

## Bird of the Month



### Sanderling

May is the month when local birders visit their favourite reservoir and lake shore hoping to find passage waders on their way to the Arctic to breed. Although inland wader passage is sadly much reduced compared to past decades, one species that is still seen most years, and almost exclusively in May, is Sanderling.

Many of us have experience of wintering Sanderling on the east coast; a party of black and white birds scurrying along the tideline as waves roll in and out. Spring plumage is quite different. Now, you are likely to find a single, rather inactive, unfamiliar-looking small wader. The short dark bill is still fatter and straighter than the similarly sized Dunlin, but the upperparts are variably spangled black and rufous, with pale fringes to the feathers. Head and breast are spotted grey/ buff, with an obvious dark breast band contrasting with pale underparts. If the bird flies, the broad white wing bar is much more obvious than that of Dunlin. Regular sites for Sanderling are the "usual suspects" in the east such as Rother Valley CP, Orgreave Lakes, and Carr Vale NR. However, probably the best site is Middleton Moor which produces at least one record every year; perhaps the bird mistakes the desolate limestone plateau for the tundra.

Unfortunately, as for other spring waders, the perfect weather conditions are cloud, rain, and a north-east wind in mid-May!



Ron Blagden



## Photo of the Month



Below are the shortlisted images taken between the months of Mar - Apr which were submitted by SBSG members.

Please select your favourite photo via the e-Newsletter link. The image with the highest number of votes received before the September indoor meeting will feature in the next issue along with a note from the photographer describing how the image was achieved. To give all photographers a chance showcase their images the winner will not be considered for the following issue.

**Please Vote** [here](#) or click on the link at the foot of the final page (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. Kingfisher



### 2. Fieldfare



### 3. Black-necked Grebe



### 4. Mandarin



### 5. Lapwing



### 6. Robin



### 7. Black-necked Grebe 2



### 8. Reed Bunting



### 9. Red Grouse



### 10. Pied Flycatcher



### 11. Waxwing



### e-Newsletter

We hope you enjoyed the May 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.



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



VOTE FOR PHOTO OF THE MONTH