

Sheffield Bird Study Group

BULLETIN



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www.sbsg.org

Bulletin

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Dates for your diary

INDOOR MEETINGS

Wednesday 11th March 2009 – 7.15 pm – Sheffield University Arts Tower, Lecture Theatre 5
Bob Croxton will give a talk entitled “**Texas Revisited**”. The talk is about Bob’s second independent visit to Texas USA in April 2008, following on from a visit in 2000. This time he went to the far south west of Texas to visit the deserts of the Big Bend National Park and then travelled down the Rio Grande Valley to the Gulf of Mexico, before travelling all the way up the coast to make a short visit to Louisiana. Improvements in photographic equipment in recent years will show the birds of this region in a whole new light. **This meeting will also be the group’s AGM.**

Wednesday 8th April 2009 – 7.15 pm – Sheffield University Arts Tower, Lecture Theatre 5
Mike McKavett will be the speaker, giving a talk entitled “**From Mitilini to Antalya – My Quest for the Balkan Ten**”. Mike, who has previously spoken to the group on “Birds of the Eastern flyway”, will be telling us of his recent visit to the Eastern Mediterranean in a quest for some of Europe’s most charismatic species, and will no doubt be sharing some of his stunning photography.

FIELD MEETINGS

Saturday 21st March - Upper Derwent Valley Raptor Watch – 8:30-11:00am at Windy Corner

March offers the best chance to see various raptors resident in the valley, since they display over the surrounding plantations and moorland. Display is affected by weather conditions, but if these are right we have a good chance of seeing Peregrine, Goshawk and Common Buzzard as well as Kestrel and Sparrowhawk. At this time of year there’s always the chance of something scarcer on the raptor front, as well as on the reservoirs themselves. Note that parking is limited at Windy Corner itself (SK168927), but further parking is also possible in a couple of pull-offs by the dam wall of Howden Reservoir, a couple of hundred metres before Windy Corner. Wrap up warm!

For information on this trip contact Ron Blagden on 01246 583522, or Richard Dale on 0114 2865213 or richarddale9@hotmail.com

For information on minibus field trips please contact Paul Medforth on 01246 418120

The Lecture

Managing Britain's Habitats

The October speaker was Algirdas Knystautas, a freelance writer and conservationist, and author of the acclaimed "Natural History of the USSR". Today, he spoke about the land birds of Indonesia, and their significance in our understanding of evolution, and also of the threats facing both the human and non-human populations.

At the time when Darwin was in the Galapagos islands, one Alfred Wallace was studying and exploring Indonesia, and coming to the same conclusions as Darwin, although he has never become so well known for it. The archipelago comprises many thousands of islands, the five largest being Java, Sumatra, Kalimantan (the Indonesian part of Borneo), New Guinea (shared with Papua New Guinea) and Sulawesi. They are of great interest to naturalists, as they offer such a clear demonstration of the evolutionary process. Wallace defined a dividing line between the distribution the Asian and the Australasian species, known as the Wallace Line, and running roughly north-south between Kalimantan and Sulawesi, and between Bali and Lombok. West of the line, the flora and fauna are more Asian, then moving east from Lombok, they are increasingly Australian. The term Wallacea refers to the transitional zone, and incorporates the island of Sulawesi, the Lesser Sundas and the Moluccas. The whole area has a remarkable variety of wildlife, with hundreds of endemic species. This is especially true of the east of the region, where almost every bird you see is different, and a persistent ornithologist can be almost certain of discovering a new species!

All the main islands have their own endemic species, but unfortunately, many are endangered. Although there is an ongoing programme of captive breeding and release, in some cases the required habitat has been destroyed.

Pressures on the environment come from logging, and from the capture of wild birds for the lucrative cage birds trade. The logging is supposed to be regulated, but it seems to be not too difficult to get around the regulations, and logging continues apace. There seems to be no way to stop the trade in wild birds, which involves many rare and endangered species. In addition to the cruelty of caging the species deemed to be suitable for interior decoration, others are caught, transported, and sold live in the markets for meat.

Algirdas also touched on the desperate plight of tribal peoples in West Papua, who inhabit a disputed area bordering on Papua New Guinea, which is also rich in mineral deposits. They suffer frequent attacks and atrocities carried out by the Indonesian Army, together with unrestrained plundering and despoliation by international mineral companies, and are labelled "terrorists" for attempting to resist them. This is a matter which Algirdas clearly finds deeply upsetting.

Algirdas was thanked for a memorable and instructive, albeit at times disturbing, evening. Needless to say, the photography did ample justice to the landscape and astonishing variety of bird species.

Wendy Thomson

The Lecture

The BTO Bird Atlas Project

The November lecture was given by the BTO's Simon Gillings who has been working on the Atlas Project for about three years. Simon described how the project started, how it is developing, and why we need a new Atlas.

The first ever comprehensive bird atlas was produced by the West Midlands Bird Club, and covered the years 1966-68. This pioneering work led to the BTO producing its first national breeding atlas, covering the years 1968-72, and this was followed by the winter atlas which covered three winters starting with 1981/82. Subsequently, the "New" Breeding Atlas covered the years 1988-91, and contained maps showing not only the then current distribution, but also a separate map indicating change from the previous breeding atlas; some species also had maps showing relative abundance. A map can show at a glance how large holes have opened up in a species' distribution, and proved immensely useful in demonstrating the decline in farmland birds, and thus helped to put the issue firmly on the conservation agenda. Conversely of course it also showed the increase of other species such as the northward spread of Hobbies and the eastward spread of Common Buzzards. Because there has so far been only one winter atlas, we do not have a comprehensive picture of changes for all species, although other studies, for example the WeBS, project have shown changes for certain species.

The atlases cover the whole of the British isles, thanks to cooperation between BTO, BirdWatch Ireland and the Scottish Ornithologist's Club.

The benefits of these nationwide atlases

are:

- they give total geographical coverage for all species and all areas
- they allow us to measure changes in range and abundance
- they assist the calculation of population estimates which are used by various government agencies
- they allow us to set conservation priorities for the next twenty years or so.

The required funding for the new atlas amounts to a total of about £1.2m. This has so far come from BTO appeals and a book auction, together with a sponsored species scheme which is mainly aimed at businesses but also has support from individuals. Response has been good so far, although more is needed!

As well as producing the distribution maps, the data is used as a baseline distribution for local planning projects. The BTO often receives requests for data from conservation and commercial organisations, and it is also used by the RSPB when drawing up their lists of Species of Conservation Concern. Defra uses the data to identify areas and particular species which should be targeted for agri-environment payments. Countryside agencies use the data to help designate areas in need of special protection. The data is also used for designating RAMSAR, SSSI and SPA sites.

The fieldwork for the new atlas will cover four winters starting 1st November 2007, and four breeding seasons starting with 1st April 2008. there are two methods of doing the fieldwork: Timed Tetrad Visits

(TTVs) and Roving Records (RRs). For the TTVs, volunteers are allocated a particular tetrad within a 10 Km square (normally the regional organiser ensures that at least 8 suitable tetrads are identified from within the square, such that all habitats in the square are covered). The volunteers are asked to carry out two pairs of one-hour timed visits, to the tetrad: the winter atlas requires the visits to be in November/December and January/February, whilst the breeding atlas requires visits to be in April/May and June/July. Ideally, a volunteer should keep the same tetrad for both breeding and winter, but this is not essential. During these visits, the observer counts all the birds that are seen or heard, and also notes evidence of breeding (possible, probable and confirmed). They may optionally continue for a second hour, sightings from which are recorded separately. For the RRs, anyone visiting the square, on any occasion, records the species that are seen. Thus the TTVs will give a picture of relative abundance, whilst the RRs should pick up the more elusive species which may be missed on the timed counts, whilst nocturnal visits would pick up owls and other nocturnal species.

In addition to the above standard techniques, different methods are used with colonial nesters, such as sea birds, Rooks, etc. Many species are seen to be breeding outside the normal breeding season, and observers are asked to submit such records whenever they occur. Another advantage of combining a winter atlas with the breeding atlas, is that it should provide some information about where birds get to outside their breeding times.

For some species, information about breeding is too sensitive to be published, and there are established procedures for dealing with these. The Atlas Team work closely with the Rare Breeding Birds Panel to ensure that sensitive data is protected.

A major part of the Atlas project is the maintenance of its web pages on the BTO website. Volunteers are encouraged to submit their records on-line in order to speed up the processing of them. The website also shows which tetrads are not yet taken, and gives interim results. A tetrad will be allocated only once for each of a winter and breeding season, in order to achieve maximum coverage overall. The Team will also incorporate records from their other projects such as Garden Birdwatch, etc. the team are about to launch their Review Validate Option which will be available to regional organisers so they can check data from their patch for obvious anomalies.

The final form of the data has not yet been decided, as all efforts are currently going into data collection.

Simon was thanked for a most interesting and useful lecture, at a time when we are also working on our own atlas. Anyone who is not yet involved with the BTO project, and wishes to join in, should go to the BTO website at www.bto.org/birdatlas to find out more. Our Regional Organiser is David Gains (bto-rep@fireflyuk.net, tel 0114 2557075).

Wendy Thomson

Keith Warrington

The group is very sad to hear of the death of long-time member Keith Warrington, who passed away in December. Our thoughts go out to Keith's family, and his contribution to the group will be sorely missed.

What's new about the SBSG website?

After a great deal of work from a lot of people the new website is close to launch, and I've outlined below the main changes you'll find when you see it. The design and content are based on views from the member survey last year, discussions within the web team and the Committee and countless emails. I hope you'll think it's been worth the effort.

Appearance

The first thing to hit you on opening the site will be the appearance. A lot of water has flowed under Cutthroat Bridge since Tony Morris launched the current website, and technology now allows more flexibility more easily. So you'll see more colour, more photos, more maps and more variety in layout. I hope this will make it more attractive and perhaps tempt you to explore areas you haven't visited for a while, as well as, crucially, encouraging casual visitors to stay for longer and decide to join the SBSG.

Revised

The new Homepage has more of a 'newspaper' feel to it, carrying outlines of stories and announcements with links to more detail. It also sports a weather application which allows you to see the current weather for Sheffield, as well as providing links to detailed hour-by-hour forecasts and longer-range views. Navigation is now all sited on the left-hand pane, and is constant on every page on the site, so you always know how to get to your destination easily.

Content

The current site has a great deal of good material on it, and much has been updated where necessary and retained. However, after much discussion we decided to limit the content to bird-related material, at least for the time being, so you won't find coverage of other aspects of wildlife.

There is also new material, the most substantial of which is the compilation of, so far, 13 Site Guides for our most worthwhile sites, each with location maps and interactive maps showing the details, facilities etc of the site. These are Google maps, so satellite imagery can also be seen, which gives a much

clearer picture of the habitats and land use than OS maps. Much of the text is edited/rewritten versions of the series of guides which were published in the Bulletin many years ago (many thanks for your efforts guys) while map creation and guide formatting have helped me to while away many dark afternoons and evenings! Each guide also has links to a powerful new 'Records by Site' function, which shows local records of interest from the site and any nearby 'satellite' sites.

There is also a Photo Gallery, which will display the cream of the growing number of digital photos being taken by members. Details of criteria and how to submit will be found on the Gallery page.

Sightings

And now to the most popular part of the site – Recent News. You'll find the Recent News page looks quite familiar, the only difference being that photos will appear on clicking a 'camera' icon next to a record, rather than being inserted within the text. The major difference is in the way they get there: instead of sending in emails detailing your records, you will submit them online to a new web database, where they will be checked and downloaded into the main database, and interesting records will be tagged for display on Recent News. Details of how this works are of course on the new site.

Why the change? Two reasons: to improve accuracy by eliminating most mistypings of species, locations, map refs etc, and because the volume of records now being submitted has grown so substantially. This is brilliant for our precious database, but not so brilliant for the poor volunteers who administer it! So we hope it will allow long-term continuation of this function.

SO – I'll get back to the task of preparing for the launch, and will look forward to constructive feedback from you in due course. I'll make one guarantee about the site: there will still be bugs that I've missed!

Simon Bailey

Local patch birding in the Loxley Valley

In 2007 I moved to a house very close to the Loxley Valley. I'd been living for a few years in Walkley, with a garden that always seemed to house a small army of neighbours' cats (despite the fact it wasn't big enough to swing any of them round...). Other than the odd nocturnal fly-by by tawny owls there was little in the way of birdwatching opportunities, and so I relished the idea of living in a slightly more ornithologically productive location.

The garden didn't disappoint. Very soon great spotted woodpecker, chiffchaff, blackcap, bullfinch and jay were on the garden list, which was brilliant as I'd been used to dancing a small jig if so much as a great tit landed in the garden. Bats fluttered round the house on summer evenings, and we were even lucky enough to have occasional visits by a badger, that gorged itself on wind-fallen fruit from a plum tree in the garden, and could be lured as far as the French windows with a trail of peanuts.

It didn't take long at all for me to discover the wider Loxley Valley was a very interesting location for birds, and I had acquired a productive local patch, right on my doorstep. The valley's features are largely the result of centuries of industrialisation, as the powerful, fast-flowing River Loxley was harnessed to turn water-wheels for Sheffield's industry from as early as the 17th Century. Water power was still used here as late as the 1950s, and remnants of this industry remain scattered along the valley today in the forms of derelict works and - most importantly for birds - a series of dams, those remaining resembling ornamental lakes. As well as these post-industrial areas the valley contains riparian habitats (of course), farmland, grassland and woodland, including a pocket of ancient woodland in Little Matlock Wood.

The birds of the valley reflect the varied habitats. The river itself is a good spot to

find dipper and grey wagtail, especially in the area around the triangular dam now used as Loxley Fisheries. As everywhere in the valley, grey herons hunt here, sometimes using the Fisheries themselves, much to the ire of the anglers. Kingfishers are also present but can be elusive, but sometimes show brilliantly as they hunt. The largest of the dams, Old Wheel Dam (also known locally as Wragg's Pond), is a good spot to occasionally find hunting kingfishers, and is also the best location for waterfowl. Mallards and Canada geese dominate, but there is usually a small number of tufted duck, as well as moorhens and coots. More interesting visitors have included teal and goldeneye, and in 1999 a long-tailed duck was present here for a few days one winter (sadly long before my time watching the patch!). In winter it's also worth keeping an eye open for siskin and lesser redpoll in the alders and birch that line the path.

Near to the dam is a road that passes Old Wheel Farm, which is a reliable spot to find little owl, although they can be very hard to see on the dry stone walls. Other birds that can be found in this area include sparrowhawk, kestrel, lapwing, meadow pipit, stock dove and linnet. Hundreds of hirundines and swifts occur in summer, that reel around the farmland and drink from the dam, and large flocks of redwing and fieldfare can be found in the fields in winter.

Further up the river, past the Fisheries, is a bridge where you can look out over the "steps" of Damflask Reservoir, where the reservoir overflows into the river. This area can be a great spot to wait for good birds to show up - this method has brought up good views of dipper and kingfisher, as well as bigger surprises such as green woodpecker, common sandpiper and curlew. The woodland here turns up long-tailed tit, goldcrest, treecreeper and nuthatch, as well as a small number of

spotted flycatchers in summer. From here Stacey Lane takes you to Loxley Road, which is home to a small population of tree sparrows, one of the few colonies remaining in the west of Sheffield.

Walking on the hillside to the south of the river is great in summer for warblers (but can be ridiculously muddy when it's been raining). The edge of the woodland is good for finding chiffchaff, willow warbler, common whitethroat, blackcap and garden warbler, with the occasional lesser whitethroat seen (or, more likely, heard!). This part is also good for great spotted woodpeckers, jays and bullfinches, and one day I'm confident it'll turn up yellowhammer - my biggest patch "bogey"!

In less than two years I've clocked up a total of 77 species of bird in the Loxley Valley, which isn't bad going at all. Surprises still occur - over Christmas some juvenile herring gulls joined the black-headed flock, and I got my first lesser redpolls of the area, both in the garden and the valley. Not rarities by any means, but it shows there's still new birds to be found! So I'll keep beating the same patch with every confidence something new with

turn up. My predictions? As already mentioned yellowhammer should turn up at some point, overhead ravens, hobbies and peregrines shouldn't be too much to ask for, and who knows what waterfowl will turn up on the dams. A hoopoe in the fields and a black-crowned night heron fishing by Old Wheel Dam wouldn't go amiss either... well, I can dream, can't I?!

On a less positive note, a large-scale housing application looms over the Loxley Valley like a dark cloud, with Bovis Homes owning much of the derelict land and having big plans for a massive "Loxley Valley Township". Hopefully the fierce local opposition will continue to put this project on hold, as its implications for the wildlife of the valley don't bear thinking about. And, from a selfish point of view, I'll have to find myself a new patch...

Pete Mella

If you would like to share details or stories about your local patch, or any other special birding site, then please send them to the Bulletin at peterjmella@googlemail.com

Your bulletin needs you!

We are always keen for members to submit articles for the bulletin. So if you want to share the secrets of your local patch, spread some of your wise ID tips to less experienced birders, recollect a special day's birding, review bird-related books or equipment, make your fellow members seethe with jealousy at your recent foreign jaunts, or simply write about how and why you got into birdwatching, we want to hear from you!

The copy deadline and contact details can be found on the back page of the Bulletin.

RECENT SIGHTINGS

26th November 2008 – 31st January 2009

These records are largely unchecked. Those in bold require submission of full supporting details.

Mute Swan	A max of 45 were at the Parkgate Canal basin on 11th Jan
Pink-footed Goose	120 NW at Eastwood on 18th Dec, 220 NW at Thrybergh CP and 150 NW at Charltonbrook on 23rd, 30 NW at Thrybergh CP and 40 NW at Green Moor on Christmas Day, 41 W at RVCP on 27th Dec, 120 E at Poolsbrook CP on 28th, 134 NW at Ringinglow and 1,000 W at Agden on 14th Jan and a very large movement on 21st Jan, with 274 NW at Thrybergh CP, 1,000 counted over Sheffield City Airport, 1,450 NW over Neepsend and an impressive 3,270 W at Moscar
Barnacle Goose	33 E at Thrybergh CP on 4th Dec, one appeared to have a neck collar
Brent Goose	One dark-bellied bird with Canada Geese at Waverley New Lagoons on 17th Jan, still present on 27th
Shelduck	Two at Waverley on 27th Jan
Wigeon	100 at RVCP on 30th Nov, 65 at Breck Farm on 14th Dec, 19 at Renishaw Park on 19th, 35 at Blue Man's Bower on 21st, 29 at Thrybergh CP on Christmas Day and 49 at Orgreave opencast and 28 at Catcliffe Flash on 25th Jan
Gadwall	36 at RVCP on 30th Nov, 35 at Thrybergh Banks on 14th Dec and 108 at Renishaw Park on 19th Dec
Teal	360 at RVCP and 260 at Breck Farm on 14th Dec were exceptional counts, with 18 at Harthill Res, 50+ at Thrybergh Banks and 40 at Orgreave NR on the same date.
Pintail	Four at Broomhead Res on 13th Dec, one at Harthill Res on 14th and one at RVCP on 3rd Jan
Shoveler	31 at Catcliffe Flash on 7th Jan with the flash 99% frozen and 26 at Treeton Dyke on 11th feeding in a small patch of ice-free water
Pochard	46 at RVCP on 30th Nov rising to a peak of 210 on 25th. 31 at Pebley Pond on 12th Jan and 21 at Catcliffe Flash on 15th
Goldeneye	Ten at Treeton Dyke on 30th Nov was possibly a site record, 13 at RVCP on 19th Dec and 12 drakes at Thrybergh CP on 25th

Smew	One at Silverwood Lagoons on 2nd Jan relocated to RVCP the following day
Goosander	19 at Treeton Dyke on 30th Nov, 26 at Elsecar Res on 2nd Dec, 35 at Harthill Res on 14th, 20 at RVCP on 29th, 12 at Broomhead Res on 10th Jan, 12 at Harthill Res on 12th Jan and 31 at Blackburn Meadows NR on 24th Jan
Great Crested Grebe	30 were at Thrybergh CP on 9th and 12th Dec, possibly a site record
Cormorant	48 at Thrybergh CP on 9th Dec and 29 there on 4th Jan
Bittern	One at dusk at Pit-house West on 30th Nov and one arrived from the E at Blackburn Meadows NR on 12th Jan
Hen Harrier	A grey male at Leash Fen on 3rd Jan
Peregrine	Birds in Sheffield city centre on 8th Dec, 17th Dec and 15th Jan and one seen to take a pigeon at Tinsley on 29th Jan
Water Rail	One at Pit-house West on 13th Jan
Golden Plover	Max of 400 at Ulley CP on 4th Dec, 400 at Woodthorpe on 27th Dec, 320 at Guilthwaite Common on 2nd Jan and 500 at Ulley CP on 11th Jan
Green Sandpiper	One at Harthill Res on 24th Jan
Redshank	One at Harthill Res on 12th Jan and three there on 25th Jan
Jack Snipe	Four at Waverley Pit Top on 8th Jan
Snipe	22 at RVCP on 19th Dec, six at Waverley Pit Top on 8th Jan and 12 at Blackburn Meadows NR on 12th
Mediterranean Gull	One in the roost at Broomhead Res on 6th-7th Dec
Black-headed Gull	950 in the Broomhead Res roost rising to 2,500 on 11th Jan
Common Gull	28-75 regular in the Broomhead Res roost, with a max of 90 on 25th Jan
Herring Gull	The Broomhead Res roost peaked at 454 on 17th Dec, declining after this with 70 present on 11th Jan; 130 at Waverley New Lagoons on 17th Jan
Caspian Gull	An adult at Poolsbrook CP on 27th Dec
Iceland Gull	A 2nd-winter in the Broomhead Res roost on 20th Dec and a 1st-winter on 8th Jan
Great Black-backed Gull	110 at Waverley New Lagoons on 17th Jan and 46 there on 25th
Barn Owl	Two hunting at Blackburn Meadows NR on 17th Jan
Short-eared Owl	One at Silverwood Pit Top on 20th Jan
Skylark	A flock of 80 at Pebley on 24th Jan

Waxwing	Numerous reports with max of 60 at Crosspool on 1st Dec, 105 at Hillsborough on 8th Dec, 300 in Sheffield city centre on 29th Dec, 80 at Walkley on 12th Jan, 50 at Chesterfield on 18th Jan, 62 at Newton Croft, Woodhouse on 22nd, 42 at Poplar Way, Catcliffe on 25th, 60 at the Morrison's roundabout, Catcliffe on 26th and 43 at the junction of Manchester Road/Coldwell Lane, Crosspool on 27th Jan
Stonechat	Two at Silverwood Pit Top on 7th Dec, Hathersage on 10th, Wharnccliffe Chase on 28th and Woodhouse Tip on 31st Dec, with three at Crookstone Hill on 29th Dec
Blackbird	50 at Thrybergh CP and 25 at Stublely Hollow on 28th Nov, 30 at Stublely Hollow and 24 at Poolsbrook CP on 6th Dec and 39 at Harthill Res on 14th Dec
Fieldfare	40 W to roost at Redmires Res on 6th Dec, 40 at Froggatt on 9th, 50 at Hathersage and 100 at Ravenfield Ponds on 16th, 220 at Thrybergh CP on 21st, 120 at Loxley Chase on 30th Dec, 60 W to roost at Redmires Res on 24th Jan and 80 at Peak Forest on 25th
Redwing	Max of 99 N at Thrybergh CP on 7th Dec, 70 at Hope on 14th, 80 at Offerton on 26th, 70 at Loxley Chase 30th Dec and 157 at Concord Park on 21st Jan
Blackcap	Singles at Millhouses on 13th and 15th Dec, Brincliffe Edge on 16th, Dore on 20th, Stublely Hollow and Hillsborough on 28th Dec and one at Grenoside on 27th Jan
Chiffchaff	Three at Poolsbrook CP on 6th Dec and singles at Thrybergh Banks on 7th, Harthill Res on 21st Dec and Tinsley on 1st Jan
Great Grey Shrike	One at Thornseat Delf on 7th Dec
Brambling	Very scarce, with singles at Thrybergh CP on several dates in Dec and at Oughtibridge for two weeks in Jan. Five at Pebley on 4th Jan and two at Thrybergh CP on 21st Dec
Goldfinch	100 at Barlborough on 5th Dec and 60 at Ravenfield Ponds on 11th Dec
Siskin	A number of flocks reported from the E of the area, including 32 at Wentworth Lakes on 11th Dec, 50 at Harthill Res, 22 in the Loxley Valley, 30+ S at Thrybergh Banks and 20 at Treeton Dyke on 14th, 31 at Offerton on 26th Dec and 30 at Ulley CP on 12th Jan
Linnet	20 at Ulley CP on 30th Nov, 60 at Silverwood Pit Top on 5th Dec, 25 at Woodhouse Tip on 22nd Dec and 50 at Silverwood Pit Top on 20th Jan

Lesser Redpoll	157 at Pit-house West on 28th Nov, 100 at Thrybergh CP on 1st Dec, 70 at Haywood Farm on 14th Dec and 2nd Jan, 50 at Ulley CP on 21st Dec, 60 at Salmon Pastures on 25th, 50 at Grindleford Station on 26th Dec, 140 again at Pit-house West on 13th Jan and 140 at High Hazels Park on 29th Jan
Common (Mealy) Redpoll	At least two (ringed) with a flock of 140 Lesser Redpoll at High Hazel Park on 29th Jan
Crossbill	Four at Stanage on 4th Jan
Yellowhammer	22 at Thrybergh CP on 21st Dec and 70 at Pebley on 27th Dec and 4th Jan
Corn Bunting	Good numbers in a mixed finch/bunting flock at Pebley, with three at on 27th Dec, one on 4th Jan, eight on 17th Jan and 12 on 24th Jan. Also on 24th eight in fields N of Hooton Roberts and three there on 25th

Records were received from the following observers, with apologies for any omissions:

MG Archer, S Ashton, S Bailey, W Bailey, RP Blagden, K Borman, K Bower, SJ Branch, PL Brown, P Burke, R Butterfield, D Buxton, DM Bye, S Clifton, RJ Croxton, A Deighton, M Earle, RA Frost, G Featherstone, M Garner, P Garrity, KR Gould, T Grose, D Hall, I Hedge, A Hill, RD Hill, K Hindmarch, M Hodgson, J Hornbuckle, C Hurst, Alan Johnson, Ann Johnson, J Kingsland, P Leonard, P Lockwood, J Marriott, C Measures, P Mella, M Miller, TH Minskip, S Naylor, MG Oxlade, M Pearson, DR Pickering, NR Porter, B Priest, P Ridsdale, J Sherwin, M Sherwin, MA Smethurst, D Stables, J Stobart, M Timms, R Twigg, EC Vincent, RDR Williams, D Wood, D Woodriff, BTO BirdTrack, Rotherham and District Ornithological Society, Sorby-Breck Ringing Group, Thrybergh CP Bird Log.

DATES TO NOTE				
Time/Date	Group	Location	Speaker	Title
7.30pm 27 th February	DOS	Friends Meeting House, Chesterfield	Jon Hornbuckle	Birding in the Philippines
7.30pm 5 th March	RSPB Sheffield Local Group	Central United Reformed Church, Sheffield	Terry Bond	Autumn In The Scilly Isles
7.30pm 14 th March	DOS	Methodist Church Rooms, Buxton	Bill Cove	Calke Abbey, a warder's perspective on its Wildlife
7.30pm 2 nd April	RSPB Sheffield Local Group	Central United Reformed Church, Sheffield	Graham Wynne	Past Successes, Future Challenges (RSPB)

NEW MEMBERS

The Group welcomes the following new members - **Gordon Rogers, Ms E. Wade, Christine Brewster, Kim Schofield, Scott Duckworth** and **Malcom Oxlade** - and welcomes **Brian Carr** back to the group.

We hope you enjoy your membership, and good birding!

COPY DATE FOR NEXT BULLETIN

The next Bulletin will be issued at the April Meeting. Please note that any items for inclusion in the Bulletin must be received by Pete Mella at peterjmella@googlemail.com (for preference), or 396 Loxley Road, Loxley, Sheffield S6 4TJ, by **Sunday 29th March**.

BULLETIN BY EMAIL

More members have now agreed to take their Bulletins by email. This is now about one-third of membership and this will help funds in cutting down the cost of sending out Bulletins. It is appreciated that not all members have the email facility but many thanks to those who have and are willing to receive their copies in this way.