

# Sheffield Bird Study Group

# BULLETIN



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[www.sbsg.org.uk](http://www.sbsg.org.uk)

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**Bulletin**

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## Dates for your diary

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### INDOOR MEETINGS

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**Wednesday 11th November 2009 – 7.15 pm – Sheffield University Arts Tower, Lecture Theatre 5**

**Mike Carrier** will talk to us about "**A Look at Migration**". He is very involved with the North Solway Ringing Group, County Recorder for North East Cumbria (Carlisle and Eden) and in conservation in this important migration spot with the Cumbria Wildlife Trust. We look forward to a very informative evening.

**Wednesday 9th December 2009 – 7.15 pm – Sheffield University Arts Tower, Lecture Theatre 5**

**Nick Williams** is a well-known lecturer and photographer and comes highly recommended for his Audio Visual shows. This time he will be entertaining us with his presentation on Europe - "**From The Dummersee to the Camargue**".

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### FIELD MEETINGS

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**Sunday 1st November 2009—7am-9am—Visible Migration at Redmires**

In a slight change to recent years, this year's vis-mig field trip will be held at the start of November, which is often a good time to see the most spectacular passage in terms of sheer numbers of birds. The right conditions can produce upwards of 10,000 Woodpigeons, all dispersing from their roosts and uniformly heading SW-W, according to the experts. Those of us with less expertise think they're migrating, along with the flocks of winter thrushes and finches that should still be on the move then, with big movements of Pink-footed Geese also a strong possibility with anti-cyclonic conditions. Look at the helpful weather chart in the opening pages of the 2007 Annual Report to see what to look for in the days ahead of the trip. Meet at the bridge at the NE corner of the top res (approx. SK260857).

**Sunday 22nd November 2009—Twitchers Fieldtrip**

Paul Medforth will be leading a trip to wherever the birds take us! This will be something of an ornithological mystery tour, as the location will depend completely on what is around on the day, with the news services hopefully leading us to see the best of the rarities that late autumn can turn up.

The minibus will leave at **7.30am** from Paternoster Row.

Booking essential. For more details, or to book your place, please contact Paul Medforth on 01246 418120 or 07968 092032.

## The Lecture

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### Uganda - Pearl of Africa

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The speaker for the September talk was John Mather, a well-travelled and much-respected ornithologist, whose *Where To Watch Birds In Yorkshire* is an indispensable part of many of our book collections.

He took us a bit further afield in this talk, chronicling his time in the Central African country of Uganda. His tale started in Entebbe, where many memorable birds were introduced to us before he'd even left his hotel grounds. Some of the stunners shown included many brilliantly-coloured species of weaver, Speckled Pigeon, African Thrush, White-headed Robin Chat, Woodland Kingfisher and Hadada Ibis.

His travels took in locations such as Entebbe's Botanical Gardens, home to touracos, hornbills and manakiins, as well as primates that included geuenons, colobus and Black-faced Vervets. A trip to the forests of Kibali led to memorable encounters with Chimpanzees, as well as beautiful birds that included White-spotted Flufftails and African Grey-crowned Cranes.

As his journey took us through the country's swamps, the species came thick and fast, with way too many to list here. We were treated to a feast of stunning pictures by John's travelling companion Anne, which included bishops, widowbirds, bee-eaters, gonoleks, African Spoonbills, African Jacanas, Pied Kingfishers, and aningas. Marabou Storks posed for photos as they stood like sentinals, waiting for human scraps.

John told how 90% of the country's mammals were eliminated under the reign of dictator Idi Amin, but with a scheme of burning grasslands and restocking from neighbouring countries, animals like hartebeest, giraffe and oribi are beginning to return, sharing their habitat with grassland birds such as bustards and ground hornbills.

A memorable chapter of John's travelogue was his search for the Shoebill Stork, which included a wonderful riverboat cruise in which he saw birds such as Goliath Heron, Little Bittern, Long-toed Lapwing, African Black Crane and, eventually, fantastic views of the Shoebill, a rather grotesque but astonishing bird.

John's talk continued with such amazing tales as witnessing a Marshall Eagle devour a dik-dik (a species of diminutive antelope), and returning to his lodgings to find a hippo grazing on the lawn! One other encounter involved driving into a cloud of millions of butterflies, which stretched for some 20 miles.

The talk ended in the Bwindi Inpenetrable Forest, where birds included Blue-throated Roller, African Grey Parrot, Oriole Finch and Cinnamon-chested Bee-eater. However it was the forest's gorillas that were the most fascinating creatures here, with John and his party having an unforgettable encounter with a group that included a recently born young and a posturing silverback. It must have been a truly humbling experience to be face to face with our closest cousins in the wild, and John commented, "it was very touching and moving to be in their presence".

However the park's, and the gorilla's, existence shows almost unbelievable dedication from those who work there, as over 110 rangers have been murdered by rebels there in the last 15 years.

John was thanked for a fascinating and thought-provoking talk, the richness and diversity of which this brief write up can't do justice to. Anne was also thanked for sharing some amazing photography of many of the world's most stunning birds.

Pete Mella

## Local Field Meeting

# SBSG / Sorby Breck Ringing Group – Ringing Event at Blackburn Meadows NR

There was another good turnout for this now annual event, supported by the Sheffield City Council’s Ranger Service. Around twenty people were treated to a full demonstration of the ringing process by members of the Sorby Breck Ringing Group, (including our very own Dave Williams), together with close-up views of a range of species and a chance to pose questions to the experts.

Seeing birds at close quarters in the hand is always a special moment, regardless of the species involved and all those present appeared to thoroughly enjoy the experience, particularly the younger members present.

The weather was ideal for both ringers and spectators alike, with migrant warblers well represented including Blackcap, Lesser Whitethroat, Chiffchaff, Willow and Reed Warblers, together with less familiar resident birds such as Goldfinch, Bullfinch and Reed Bunting.

All in all, it was a thoroughly enjoyable couple of hours, which provided an informative insight into the workings of the SBRG. A total of 62 birds were ringed (excluding birds that were re-caught on the day)

**Richard Hill**



Total birds ringed on the day:

Blackcap	13	Blackbird	2
Robin	8	Goldfinch	2
Blue Tit	7	Reed Bunting	1
Reed Warbler	6	Great Tit	1
Dunnock	5	Willow Warbler	1
Bullfinch	5	Lesser Whitethroat	1
Chiffchaff	5		
Wren	5		

## The Lecture

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### Peak District Raptors

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In February's talk Mick Taylor took us on a journey from Ashbourne in the south to the heather moors and wooded clefts of the High Peak. En route, he gave us loads of authoritative and up-to-date material on the birds of prey of the Peak National Park. His slides were all excellent and demonstrated his points very effectively, although he modestly claimed the best ones were not his as he was a 'birder who takes photographs' – rather than a 'bird photographer'. But what really gave his talk extra zing were his brilliant anecdotes and asides, some of which I have put in text boxes.

Mick structured his talk according to the characteristic species of Peak District habitats. Accordingly, most **Hobbies** are found in the low-lying general farming areas to the south. This falcon has been steadily expanding its numbers outwards from the Home Counties and the Peak Park holds two or three pairs. Its almost swift-like profile is increasingly seen further north, and we can look forward to more if its dashing aerial manoeuvres in the lower, more wooded parts around Sheffield.

Hobbies nest in various types of tree, pine being particularly popular. They often use old crows' nests, even in the same year if the crow moves out by about June. Mick has even seen a Hobby using a crow's nest 165 feet up in a pylon! One problem with this is that raptor nestlings can become snarled in the binder twine often found in corvid nests.

Peak District **Peregrines** are quite happy setting up home in quarries – 'sea cliffs' without water – often in old Raven's nests. Mick thinks that most quarries in the area now hold a pair. Even in the working quarries Peregrines don't seem bothered by the dust and noise and, encouragingly, the quarry managements are pleased to have them there.

Of the 24 pairs that attempted breeding in 2008 in the Peak Park, only 11 were successful. In fact, it is quite common to find an adult female paired with an immature male, the latter probably having replaced an illegally shot adult bird. But after their long absence from most of the country, it is great that they are back and holding their own.

Peregrines take a variety of birds, including large aggressive ones like crows and jays. Grouse are rare but racing pigeons are not. Mick has often seen a Peregrine pick off the last bird of a flight of pigeons which, he argues, will probably be the

weakest, a point worth remembering if you ever get into an altercation with a pigeon fancier.

Occupying similar habitat to the Peregrine, the Park now holds an amazing 40 pairs of **Raven**, 14 of which have taken to nesting in trees. The eastward spread is ongoing and its dramatic tumbling display can now be seen over the Dukeries and beyond into Lincolnshire.

**Buzzards** have also done well inside the Park and now outnumber Kestrels. Around Chatsworth and Bakewell you would be 'unlucky not to get a hatful' in an average day. Mick thinks the increase started when gamekeepers switched from poison to Larson traps to keep down the crows.

Buzzards can nest in any type of tree, and often add a few pine fronds every day to their nest. This helps to cover up the smell from bits of old meal.

**Red Kites** have spread remarkably quickly from introduction sites around the Country and reports now run at several a year in the Peak. One pair has already prospected in South Derbyshire and given the quantity of suitable territory in the area it can only be a matter of time before breeding occurs. Chatsworth was actually considered as a suitable site for introduction.

The **Osprey** too may eventually infill into the many suitable areas of the Park but seems much less inclined to do so than the Red Kite. A good sprinkling of birds occurs annually, mainly in Autumn, over the larger waterways in the region. Welbeck to the east is popular and is a good bet for first breeding Osprey.

**Marsh Harrier** occurs from time to time on passage, eg on Big Moor. This bird has had excellent breeding success in Britain's new wetland reserves and we can expect to see more of it in the area. **Montagu's Harrier**, tiny though the British breeding population is, did actually breed on Burbage Moor in the 1950's and could well return one day.

But it is to the **Hen Harrier** that we should look to represent this genus in the Peak Park. Grouse moors are perfect for them and could support many pairs if it weren't for illegal killing by gamekeepers and others. An appalling 61% of adult Hen Harriers disappear on grouse moors and only one pair has managed to raise young unaided in recent years. Others have failed after the disappearance of one

of the parents. The fate of the Upper Derwent Hen Harriers has been well publicised and Mick added a lot more to the picture. Feeding programmes have helped single parent broods to fledge – ironically, in much greater numbers than would be expected to be achieved naturally.

Encouragingly, Hen Harriers are doing OK further north in the UK. Mick reports that females can actually breed at one year old and there are also signs that attitudes are beginning to change amongst game keepers. The new lightweight wing tags, which don't seem to bother the birds at all, are making it easier to track individual birds. Coupled with all the effort put in by conservationists we can, hopefully, look forward to this magnificent bird returning as a regular breeder in our area.

The other raptor seriously affected by illegal killing is the **Goshawk** whose numbers have crashed in its previous strongholds in the Park. Some of the perpetrators of these crimes are known but cannot be prosecuted without a very high level of proof.

Of the few British raptors that don't live inside the Park, the **Honey Buzzard** occasionally appears as a late summer migrant. The immature **White-tailed Eagle** that went on a tour of the country in 2004/5 spent a couple of days around Beeley and Harland Edge. But as the first Derbyshire record for 69 years, it is not a likely prospect for raptor watchers in the near future.

All five British owls occur in the Park, with **Tawny** being the most numerous. **Barn Owl** numbers are up in recent years while those of **Little Owl** are fairly stable. The latter are spread thinly in a variety of habitats but are particularly fond of limestone vales like Monsal Dale.

Six or seven pairs of **Short-eared Owl** breed in the northern part of the Peak and are joined in winter by birds from further north. For example, there have been up to seven on Leish Fen this year with three on Beeley Moor.

**Long-eared Owls** also nest in small numbers inside the Park and are, of course, mainly arboreal. But, Mick has known Long-eared to nest on the ground. So, if you do find a nest, Long-eared nestlings have orange eyes while Short-eared have yellow ones. Also, Long-eared are greyish, not buff like the Short-eared.

His favourite raptor, it was the **Merlin** that Mick enthused most about. Short, stocky, angular, fast and feisty, it is the 'falcon with attitude'.

He dispelled many myths about the Merlin. They *do sometimes* line their nests with grass, nest in trees (eg in old crows' nests) feed on the ground as well as in the air (eg on shrews and nestling pipits) and the male *does sometimes* brood the young ones.

The familiar and much loved **Kestrel** and **Sparrowhawk** weren't forgotten. They seem to be maintaining their numbers despite the increases in their larger relatives.

As a bonus, Mick had many interesting things to say about other upland birds: **Ring Ouzels** are doing OK on the rocky slopes despite some disturbance by rock climbers, the **Whinchats** that have almost gone from lowland areas are holding out at higher latitudes and altitudes and **Stonechats** have seen healthy increases throughout. **Lapwing** and **Golden Plover** continue to breed in suitable areas.

I hope I have provided something of the flavour of Mick's talk for those who missed it. His audience was extremely appreciative and wished him well in his important and fascinating work.

**Dermot Smyth**

*[This lecture report was excluded from previous bulletins for space reasons, but we are delighted to be able to publish it in this issue.]*

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## Brendan Loughridge

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The group is very sorry to hear of the death of member Brendan Loughridge, who passed away during the summer. Our thoughts go out to his family at this difficult time.

## Field Meeting

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### Spurn Field Trip, September 2009

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The westerly winds and calm weather of the last week or so meant conditions weren't looking good for rarity-hunting during the SBSG's annual Spurn jaunt, but some good species were seen nonetheless.

A **barred warbler** was the rarest bird of the day, showing briefly to some patient members of the group in a buckthorn bush by the Warren, with glimpses of attendant **dunnocks** causing flurries of short-lived excitement before the warbler finally appeared. The highlight of the day for many was a very obliging **snow bunting** on the coastal path, which posed for photos on the rocks, and some members were lucky enough to see **water rail**. The most unusual bird of the morning was undoubtedly a **cockatiel** that flew low overhead!

After lunch the group split up, one section off to Sammy's Point to investigate an overheard report of an anomalous "large pipit", and the rest towards the point to find the Lapland buntings that had been recently reported. Neither team were successful, but birds seen included **peregrine**, **whinchat**, **stonechat**, **wheatear**, **yellow wagtail**, **pink-footed goose**, **little egret**, both **godwits**, **whimbrel**, **curlew**, **grey** and **golden plover**, **sanderling**, **little gull**, **fulmar**, **gannet**, **guillemot** and **red-throated diver**. Thousands of **knot** taking to the air off the Humber was also one of the most



P. Mella

memorable sights of the day. 83 species were seen in total throughout the day.

Good numbers of **grey seal** were seen bobbing around in the sea, **roe deer** were seen by the Sammy's Point group, and one member of the group got good views of breaching cetaceans, probably **harbour porpoises**, near the Point.

While the weather conspired to make it fairly quiet day birdwise, and even many of the commoner migrants such as flycatchers and redstarts were nowhere to be seen, it was still a great day out in some unseasonably warm sunshine.

Many thanks to Paul Medforth for organising the trip and driving us all there and back.

Pete Mella

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## Your Bulletin Needs You!

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In coming months we are looking for increased input from members in the Bulletin. The group has a membership with a wealth of birding knowledge and stories to tell, and we want you to share it!

If you have any ideas for articles we would love to hear from you. This could be details of a local patch or favourite area, a local birding walk, stories of your birding travels abroad, ID features sharing your knowledge of tricky species, or reviews of books or equipment. You may even want to volunteer a regular column, for example updates on a patch you cover frequently (or even your own garden), or any twitchers out there may want to share

stories of their best (or worst) rarity-hunting experiences.

More specifically, we are looking for volunteers to write up lectures at indoor meetings. This was a job done tirelessly by Wendy Thompson for many years, who has now stepped down from the role.

If you have any ideas for future Bulletin features then please get in touch with me at [peterjmella@googlemail.com](mailto:peterjmella@googlemail.com)

Pete Mella

# Breeding Atlas - Sponsor a Species

With the fieldwork for the Breeding Atlas complete, work has now begun on writing the species accounts. Various members have been busy over the summer making excellent progress with distribution maps (Dave Williams), habitat maps (Bob Lowndes and Helen Hipperson) and weather charts (Anne Johnson) that will underpin the analysis in the species accounts. Richard Dale, Richard Hill any David Wood have also developed a template for a model species account (see below) for the writing of the accounts by a team of 10-12 over the next 6-9 months.

The major item that remains to be finalised is funding. We have a quote for just over £9,000 for a good quality book that will do justice to the thousands of hours that have gone into the Breeding Atlas, and Pete Brown and I are exploring various avenues for funding. One route we wish to run with as of now is that of sponsoring a species at the rate of £20 for individuals (we'll be approaching local companies and organisations with a higher rate – the Forestry Commission has not – yet! – sponsored Goldcrest, as in the mock-up below). This will be going out on the website in due course, but first shout is going to our membership, so get your name down to be associated with your favourite species, or if you wish to support the project but have no particular

species you wish to sponsor, that's fine too: we can allocate one. In either case, please get in touch with Pete Brown ([peterbrown@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:peterbrown@blueyonder.co.uk)) or David Wood ([david.wood@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:david.wood@sheffield.ac.uk) or 0114 2306928) with any preference as to species.

If all of our members sponsor a species (surely you will!), we'll raise over £2000 towards our publication costs. The committee has decided that we are also prepared to devote some of the Group's funds so ably nurtured by Ron Blagden on seeing this project to completion.

What we are aiming to do is secure several thousand pounds of funding from one of the national funding bodies that would consider supporting a project such as this (such as National Lottery Fund, Veolia Environmental Trust). Pete Brown and I will be working on this in the weeks ahead. What several of these funders ask for is some form of matched funding, or for details of what the contribution of the applicants is to the overall costs of the project. This is where it will prove invaluable to be able to point to the funds raised by our membership sponsoring a species – so get in touch and help us get the Atlas published!

David Wood

The Sheffield Breeding Atlas 2003-08

**Goldcrest**
*Regulus regulus*

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**Common resident breeder**

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**National status**

Amber listed. 14% decline 1960-2005 (CBC/BBS)

Decline in occupied 10km<sup>2</sup> squares of 0.7% between BTO Atlases of 1968-72 and 1988-91



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**Status in the Sheffield Area (300 tetrads)**

	Occupied	Confirmed	Probable	Possible	% change in occupation
1975-80	147 (49%)	51	76	20	
2003-08	198 (66%)	74	108	16	+34.7%

Though the Goldcrest is currently amber listed this masks a general increase in numbers over the last two decades. It only meets the criterion for the amber list (25-49% population decline over the past 25 years) because 1975, the start of the relevant 25-year period, was the peak year for the population index, following a dramatic increase after the hard winters of the early 1960s had drastically reduced the population. The decline recorded from CBC/BBS data for the period 1980-2005 is a less precipitous 14% and the more recent trend is one of steady increase (+25% for the period 1995-2005), though with year on year fluctuations as this species is highly susceptible to hard weather but also capable of rapid recovery due to its high breeding potential.

Locally there has been a notable expansion, with a 30.6% increase in occupied tetrads since the 1975-80 Atlas.

The Goldcrest occurs chiefly in coniferous woodland, reaching extremely high densities in mature plantations. It is also found, though in much smaller numbers, in mixed and occasionally purely deciduous woodland. Birds of the Sheffield Area describes the species as 'abundant and widely distributed' but noted a marked north-western bias in the species' distribution, with large areas in the north-east, south-east and south-west from which it was largely absent. This pattern was largely attributed to the lack of suitable habitat in the form of conifer plantations or mixed woodland in these areas.

To an extent this pattern holds true today, with the majority of occupied tetrads falling to the north-west of the city where the large conifer plantations on the moorland fringe provide ideal habitat; empty tetrads in these areas correspond to areas of open moorland. However, a notable expansion has occurred into areas previously devoid of this species, particularly in the south-west, east and north-east. A 367% increase, from three to 11 occupied tetrads, has occurred in SK17; in SK48 the increase is of 183%, from six to 11 occupied tetrads; and a 300% increase, from five to 15 occupied tetrads, is evident in SK49.

Species sponsored by The Forestry Commission

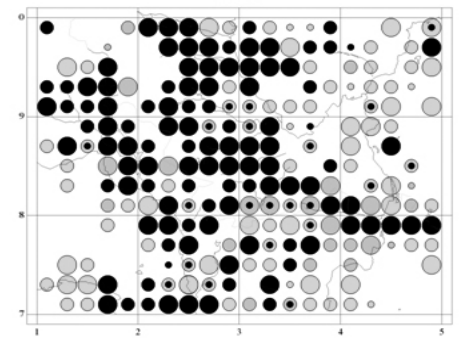
The Sheffield Breeding Atlas 2003-08

It seems likely that the maturing of planted conifers in these areas, whether in plantations or, perhaps more likely in the north-east, in the mixed woodland commonly planted on ex-industrial sites, has accounted for the spread of this species into areas formerly denied to it by the absence or unsuitability of the woodland.

This theory is lent support by the coniferous woodland cover map (page #), which shows a number of areas of coniferous woodland that correspond to tetrads that have been colonised since the 1975-80 Atlas, notably following the line of the River Don in SK49 and 48 and along the River Wye in SK17. The extent of coniferous woodland cover in the north-west of our area is also clearly evident from this map and it is apparent that the distribution of the Goldcrest is essentially dictated by the distribution of its favoured habitat.

The only area showing a notable decrease in occupied tetrads is to the south-east of Sheffield in parts of SK37 and 47. Though largely farmland this area is not particularly lacking in woodland and it seems possible that Goldcrests breeding at low densities here may have been overlooked. The large areas in SK17, and 47 from which the species is still absent are, however, largely devoid of woodland, of any type.

Numbers breeding in areas of favoured habitat can be very large. For example, 66 territories were recorded in the western plantation in the Alport Valley during survey work in 2005.



Species sponsored by The Forestry Commission

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## Northern England Raptor Forum

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On behalf of the Northern England Raptor Forum the South Peak Raptor Study Group and the Peak District Raptor Monitoring Group are hosting this year's annual Conference.

The 2009 Northern England Raptor Conference will be held at the Agricultural Business Centre, Bakewell, Derbyshire, DE45 1AH on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2009. The cost of the conference will be £20 which includes refreshments and a buffet lunch.

Provisional speaker programme:

Bill Heinrich	The Gyr Falcon
Ian Newton	The Life of the Sparrowhawk
Terry Pickford	Bowland Peregrines
Mike Innerdale	Upland Moorland Management
Steve Roberts	Honey Buzzards
Andrew Dixon	Saker Falcon Research and Conservation in Mongolia
Anthony Messenger	The Hobby in Derbyshire
Steven Ewing	Results of the 2008 Merlin Survey

For further details and booking form contact:

Geoff Mawson, Conference Co-ordinator, Moonpenny Farm, Farwater Lane, Dronfield, Derbyshire, S18 6RA

Email: [moonpenny@talktalk.net](mailto:moonpenny@talktalk.net), Tel: 01246 415097

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## Committee Matters

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As announced at the last indoor meeting, we have lost Richard Dale from the Committee, as Richard has taken the offer of working on a PhD on the Mauritius Kestrels, and has migrated south for the next few years. He is a big loss to us, especially following the departure of Helen Hipperson a few months before. We managed to return the Committee to its full complement as Pete Mella joined us, and is already doing sterling work on the Bulletin, but we really do need someone to fill Richard's position. If you are interested in joining the Committee (we meet once a month for about 2 hours, during 10 months of the year), please get in touch with anyone from the Committee, or contact David Wood ([david.wood@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:david.wood@sheffield.ac.uk) or 0114 2306928).

Two other members who have served the Group extremely well in recent years are also

standing down from important roles in the next couple of months: Margaret Miller has arranged outstanding programmes of speakers for us, after also being Secretary, Membership Secretary and Bulletin Editor for the Group, while other commitments see Jenny Kingsland stepping down as Membership Secretary. Margaret and Jenny have made a fantastic contribution to the running of the Group through their involvement, and we need people to pick up where they are leaving off.

It's simple really: without people filling these roles, there will be no membership secretary and no programme of speakers beyond next year, which Margaret already has in place. It's your Group too: over to you...

David Wood



## Recent Sightings

### 1st June - 29th September 2009

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

Whooper Swan	Two at Silverwood Lagoon on 23rd Sept.
<b>Lesser White-fronted Goose</b>	<b>Escaped bird at Thrybergh CP from 19th Sept</b>
Pink-footed Goose	16 SE over Brightside on 14th Sept and 75 E over Ansell Rd on 26th.
Shelduck	A juv at Middleton Moor on 5th Sept.
Mandarin Wigeon	33 at Linacre Res on 19th Aug. One at Thrybergh CP on 5th Aug, with the next eight at the same site on 10th Sept. Max of 17 at Orgreave on 16th Sept.
Teal	Two at Middleton Moor on 8th Aug with small numbers at many sites thereafter. Max of 15 at Catcliffe Flash on 23rd Sept.
Pintail	Singles at Thrybergh CP on 16th and 19th Sept and at Aldwarke SF on 27th.
Pochard	Max of 35 at RVCP on 6th Aug.
Tufted Duck	Max of 157 at RVCP on 4th Sept.
Goosander	Three at Redmires Res on 20th Sept.
Red Kite	Regular sightings in the Ewden/Broomhead/Agden area in late-Aug and Sept, including two at Agden Side on 22nd Aug. Also one SE at Thrybergh CP on 27th Sept.
<b>Marsh Harrier</b>	Cream-crowns at Hobson Moss on 9th Aug, Agden Side on 16th, Langsett Res on 23rd and Thrybergh CP on 29th. A female flew S at Barlborough Hall on 30th Aug and two cream-crowns were at Upper Commons the following day. A juv was in the Upper Ewden Valley on 12th and 20th Sept with a pager report of a cream-crown at Midhope Moor on 18th Sept.
Hen Harrier	A ringtail at Barbrook Pools on 5th Sept and a juv male at East Moor on 5th.
<b>Montagu's Harrier</b>	<b>The juv present around Beeley Moor for the preceding four days reported in our area at Wadshelf on 2nd Sept.</b>
Common Buzzard	Max of 12 at Ewden Height on 6th Sept and eight at Agden Side on 20th Sept.
Osprey	Singles at RVCP and Barlborough on 5th Aug, Barbrook Pools on 17th, Thrybergh CP on 19th, Big Moor on 21st, Strines Moor on 23rd Sept, Midhope Res on 1st Sept, Firsby Res on 8th Sept, and Silverwood Wood on 20th Sept.
Merlin	Singles at Redmires Res on 30th Aug and 6th Sept, Totley Moss on 1st Sept, Rod Moor and Ewden Height on 12th Sept.
Hobby	Breeding was confirmed in the S Yorks part of our recording area for the first time. Elsewhere birds reported from Brightholmlee on 7th Aug, Cowell Flat on 8th, Spout House Hill on 17th, Big Moor on 18th, Agden Side on 23rd, Thrybergh CP on 24th and 25th, Fox House on 25th and Froggatt Edge on 27th.
Red Grouse	Good numbers on the moors, with a max count of 100+ on Broomhead Moor on 9th Sept, the day after a shoot.
Grey Partridge	Eleven were at Big Moor on 12th and nine were at Barbrook Filters the following day.
Oystercatcher	One at Thrybergh CP on 18th Aug.
Little Ringed Plover	A juv at Middleton Moor on 2nd Aug and two at Orgreave Lagoons on 17th.
Ringed Plover	Small numbers at a few sites including two at Redmires Res on 16th, 24th and 27th Aug and 1st Sept, and a max of five at Orgreave Lagoons on 17th Aug.
Golden Plover	Few recorded, with the regular site at Peat Pits now drained and ploughed. Max of just four at Wharncliffe Chase on 8th Sept, Peat Pits on 12th Sept and Langsett Moor on 23rd Sept.
Grey Plover	One W at Middleton Moor on 16th Sept.
Lapwing	Max on 320 at RVCP on 7th Aug; no other counts over 100.
Dunlin	Two S at Thrybergh CP and a juv at Redmires Res on 24th Sept.
Snipe	Passage included seven W at Ughill Moor on 19th Aug, five NW at Wharncliffe Chase on 21st and 11 NW there on 9th Sept, with four W at Agden Side on 13th and two NW at Ecclesall on 28th.

Black-tailed Godwit	One S at RVCP on 4th Sept and a party of nine W at sunset at Redmires Res on 10th.
Whimbrel	Two S at Thrybergh CP on 9th Aug and singles S at Brightholmlee on 17th and at Thrybergh CP on 20th Aug.
Curlew	Max of 11 at Redmires Res on 2nd Aug and five at Broomhead Moor on 9th Sept.
Redshank	Single at Thrybergh CP and Ramsley Res on 30th Aug and at Thrybergh CP on 21st.
Greenshank	Singles at Thrybergh CP on 20th and 29th Barbrook Pools on 24th Aug.
Green Sandpiper	Reported in small numbers from several sites with notable records including one at Wharncliffe Chase on 2nd Aug, two at Barbrook Pools on 8th Aug, three at Centenary Way Riverside on 15th, 16th, 22nd and 28th Aug and one at Morehall Res on 19th Aug.
Common Sandpiper	Widely reported in small numbers including max of three at Redmires Res on 5th Aug, with two at Thrybergh CP on 9th, Redmires Res on 16th Aug and at Ulley CP on 5th and 6th Sept.
Mediterranean Gull	A juv was at Middleton Moor on 2nd Aug and a pager report of an adult on 17th Sept.
Little Gull	An impressive flock of 20 E at Silverwood Wood on 20th Sept.
Black-headed Gull	Max of 600 at Ulley CP on 13th Aug and 330 at Middleton Moor on 20th Sept.
Lesser Black-backed Gull	Max at Middleton Moor of 1300 on 5th Aug, 1370 on 7th and 1000+ on 20th Sept.
Yellow-legged Gull	Several individuals reported with Lesser Black-back flocks including two adults and a 3rd-summer at Middleton Moor in early Aug, with a 1st-winter on 7th Aug and two adults again on 5th Sept. Two 3rd-summer were at Orgreave Lagoons on 11th Aug with two adults and a 3rd-summer there on 19th and two adults on 8th Sept. Redmires Res held an adult on 8th and 9th Aug, a juv/1st-winter on 16th Aug, a 1st-summer on 1st Sept, two adults on 15th and a 1st-summer on 20th Sept.
Caspian Gull	A 3rd-summer was at Redmires Res on 9th Aug.
Common Tern	Breeding was successful at Thrybergh CP where ten, including juvs, left to the W on 30th Aug, with more leaving W at daybreak the following day. Subsequently three were at RVCP on 4th Sept and Orgreave Lagoons on 5th with five W at Thrybergh CP on 6th and two at Catcliffe Flash on 8th.
Ring-necked Parakeet	Two W at Heeley City Farm on 10th Aug, one in a garden at Wadsley Common on 21st
Cuckoo	A juvenile was at Wharncliffe Chase on 11th Aug.
Barn Owl	One flew over the A6 at Monsal Dale on 19th Sept.
Short-eared Owl	One at Redmires Res on 11th Sept.
Nightjar	One at Broomhead Moor still churring on 12th Aug.
Swift	After 300 at Ulley CP on 2nd Aug numbers declined, with 40 S at Millhouses on 4th, 60 at Sheffield City Centre on 6th and 19 W over Ansell Rd on 8th the final double-figure counts. A pair were still feeding young in the nest at Walkley Bank on 11th Aug. One NE at Jessops Riverside and another at Oughtibridge on 3rd Sept and two at Brightside the following day were the last recorded.
<b>Wryneck</b>	<b>One was found at Dukes Road on 6th Sept.</b>
Skylark	One SW at Redmires Res on 6th Sept, three SW at Agden Side and six SW at Wharncliffe Chase on 20th Sept, two SW at Redmires Res on 24th and 22 S at Ulley CP on 27th.
Sand Martin	Max of 120 at Thrybergh CP on 30th Aug and 30+ at Thrybergh CP on 3rd Sept. Ten were at RVCP on 4th Sept and one at Salmon Pastures on 26th Sept was the last reported.
Swallow	Passage included 77 S at Thrybergh CP and 92 SW at Redmires Res on 23rd Aug, with 113 SW on 30th Aug and 359 SW on 6th Sept also at Redmires and 200 S at Ewden Height on 12th Sept. 250 were at Wharncliffe Chase on Sept 30th Aug, 300 Hirundines, mostly Swallows, were at Thrybergh CP on 6th and 350 roosted at Redmires Res on 10th Sept.
House Martin	150 were in the Loxley Valley on 23rd Aug with 210 SW on 6th Sept and 180 SW on 13th at Redmires Res.
Tree Pipit	A feature of visible migration at this time of year, max recorded on passage included nine S/SW on 23rd Aug and six S/SW on 6th Aug at Redmires Res with four SW at Wharncliffe Chase on the latter date.
Meadow Pipit	Counts from vis mig sites included 113 S on 1st Sept, 765 S/SW on 6th, 120 S on 20th and 210 SW on 24th Sept at Redmires Res, 170 SW at Totley Moss on 1st Sept and 153 SW on 6th Sept, 316 SW on 9th, 87 SW on 11th, 372 SW on 20th and 193 SW on 25th Sept at Wharncliffe Chase.
Rock Pipit	One briefly at Redmires Res on 20th Sept.

Yellow Wagtail	Three were at Thrybergh CP on 9th Aug with one W at Aldwarke SF and a juv S at Redmires Res on the same day. Four were at Thrybergh CP on 16th Aug with two there on 23rd. Other notable records, including several from the W of the area, included one at Agden Side on 23rd, two S at Redmires Res on 30th Aug and on 6th Sept, six at Carr Vale SF on 7th Sept, one in the Ewden Valley on 9th Sept, one at Broomhead Res on
Pied Wagtail	50 were at Middleton Moor on 20th Sept and 120 roosted at Stocksbridge on 21st.
Redstart	Three were at Barbrook Plantation on 17th Aug and at Padley Gorge on 21st; subsequently singles were at Grange Wood on 24th Aug, Eyam on 6th Sept, Longstone Moor on 10th Sept and Agden on 20th Sept.
Whinchat	Five were in the Barbrook Valley on 2nd Aug, with four at Big Moor on 18th Aug and two at Roper Hill on 1st Sept, Redmires Res on 2nd and Owler Tor on 7th Sept. The last report was of one at Ramsley Moor on 26th Sept.
Stonechat	Ten in the Barbrook Valley on 2nd Aug, a family party of seven at Owler Tor on 7th Sept
Wheatear	Max reported were five at Peat Pits on 27th and 30th Aug, five at Agden Side on 6th Sept and ten at Onesmoor Bottom on 25th.
Ring Ouzel	One in the Upper Ewden Valley on 12th Sept, four at Burbage Edge on 15th, two at Redmires Res on 19th and one at Big Moor on 27th.
Fieldfare	One at Soughley Lane on 24th Sept.
Redwing	Six at Onesmoor on 25th Sept.
Mistle Thrush	Max of 63 at Peat Pits on 8th Aug and 49 at Wharnccliffe Chase on 11th Sept.
Grasshopper Warbler	One at Redmires Res on 2nd and 9th Aug with two there on 5th, also singles at Silverwood Wood on 8th and one at Wharnccliffe Chase on 30th Aug.
Sedge Warbler	One at Thrybergh CP on 4th and 14th Aug, with two there and one at Aldwarke SF on 23rd Aug.
Reed Warbler	Max of five at Thrybergh Tip on 9th Aug and eight at Blackburn Meadows NR on 16th
Lesser Whitethroat	Notable records included two at Thrybergh Tip on 9th Aug, Thrybergh CP on 16th and Blackburn Meadows NR on 16th and 27th Aug. One was in a Wybourn garden on 31st Aug with singles at Thrybergh CP and Thrybergh Tip on 6th Sept the last reported.
Whitethroat	Max of six at Thrybergh CP on 6th Aug and in the Shirebrook Valley on 24th Aug. Last
Garden Warbler	Singles at Ulley CP on 2nd and 30th Aug and Haywood Farm on 13th Aug.
Blackcap	Max of four at Ulley CP on 8th Aug, Thrybergh Tip on 23rd Aug and Shirebrook Valley
Chiffchaff	Max recorded were eight at Thrybergh CP on 16th Aug, eight along the Chesterfield Canal the following day, nine at Poolsbrook Marsh on 28th and 13 at Thrybergh CP on 29th. In Sept, seven were at Poolsbrook Marsh on 11th and five were at Ramsley Moor on 19th and at Ulley CP the following day.
Willow Warbler	Max included 20 at Midhope on 5th Aug, 16 at Redmires Res on 16th and ten at Ulley
Spotted Flycatcher	Seven at Strines Res on 4th Aug included a family party, as did five at Wharnccliffe Chase on 11th Aug and four at Shillito Wood on 13th and 24th. Juvs were still being fed at Howden Res on 6th Sept and four were at Ramsley Res on 12th.
Pied Flycatcher	One trapped and ringed at Blackburn Meadows NR on 27th Aug was the observer's first there in 28 years.
Tree Sparrow	One N at Rod Moor on 26th Sept.
Chaffinch	Migrants included 29 SW at Wharnccliffe Chase and 54 W at Redmires Res on 20th Sept, with 22 W at the latter site on 24th.
Greenfinch	A post-breeding flock on Soughley Lane peaked at 90+ birds on 24th Sept.
Goldfinch	Max were 180 at Wharnccliffe Chase on 21st Aug and 100 at Chelmorton on 19th Sept.
Siskin	40 were at Redmires Res and there were 25 at Ramsley Moor on 13th Sept, 30 at
Linnet	Max of 350 at Peat Pits on 9th Sept and 205 at Silverwood Wood on 18th, with 42 S at Redmires Res on 24th Sept and 103 SW there on 27th.
Twite	Two were at Ramsley Res on 19th Sept.
Lesser Redpoll	A flock at Ramsley Res peaked at 80+ on 13th and 17th Sept.
Crossbill	40 were in the Ewden Valley on 23rd Aug, there were 14 at Redmires Res on 6th Sept, 15 at Wharnccliffe Wood on 10th and 30 at Langsett Wood on 23rd and Wigtwizzle on 27th Sept..
<b>Snow Bunting</b>	<b>One W at Rod Moor on 27th September.</b>

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

C Almond, B Bailey, S Bailey, P Barker, SJ Barnes, A Baverstock, B Beach, AR Bell, RP Blagden, K Bower, PL Brown, R Butterfield, D Bye, L Coates, R Dale, A Deighton, S Duckworth, M Dyson, MG Fenner, D Gains, S Guymmer, A Hill, RD Hill, C Hurst, J Hornbuckle, P Jackson, G James, Anne Johnson, A Jones, M Kramer, P Leonard, P Mella, J Mowbray, JL Marriott, M Miller, TH Minskip, MG Oxlade, M Pearson, MN Reeder, P Ridsdale, S Samworth, G Sharples, J Sherwin, M Sherwin, MA Smethurst, B Spencer, D Stables, SG Tebbutt, P Tucker, C Tyler, RV Walker, D Warburton, RDR Williams, D Wood, D Woodriff, BTO BirdTrack, Rotherham and District OS, Sorby-Breck Ringing Group and Thrybergh CP Bird Log.

<b>Dates To Note</b>				
Time/Date	Group	Location	Speaker	Title
7.30pm 20th October	DOS	Hognaston Village Hall	Mark Grantham	A Hundred Years of Ringing
7.30pm 5th October	RSPB Sheffield Group	Central United Reformed Church	Graham Bell	Encounters With Birds
7.30pm 9th November	DOS	Friends Meeting House, Bakewell	Charles Brown	The Wildlife of Needlewood Forest
7.30pm 27th November	DOS	Everygreen Club, Allestree	Neil Glenn	Valley Parade—Wildlife of the Rio Grande Valley

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## **New Members**

The group welcomes new member **Lewis Coates**. We hope you enjoy your membership, and good birding!

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## **Copy date for next Bulletin**

The next Bulletin will be issued at the December Meeting. Please note that any items for inclusion in the Bulletin must be received by Pete Mella at [peterjmella@googlemail.com](mailto:peterjmella@googlemail.com) (for preference), or 396 Loxley Road, Loxley, Sheffield S6 4TJ, by **Saturday 28th November**.

We are always on the lookout for more members to submit articles for publication, and volunteers are needed to write up lectures at indoor meetings—see page 6 for more details.

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## **Bulletin By Email**

More members have now agreed to take their Bulletins by email in PDF format. This is now about one-third of membership and this will help funds in cutting down the cost of sending out Bulletins, as it saves both printing and postage costs.

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. If you wish to change over to email Bulletins, please contact [peterjmella@googlemail.com](mailto:peterjmella@googlemail.com).