

Sheffield Bird Study Group

BULLETIN



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Bulletin

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THE SUMMER AND AUTUMN BIRD SIGHTINGS

**A bumper recent sightings,
covering the highlights from
the Bulletin's summer break**

UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT

**The future of the Eastern
Moors and Greno Woods**

BIRDS FACING THE CRUNCH?

**Musings on birds and
government cuts**



NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Future of Greno Woods

Greno Woods are situated about five miles north of the city centre, close to the residential areas of Grenoside, Ecclesfield and Chapeltown. They cover some 440 acres and together with neighbouring woodland form an area totalling 1730 acres, the biggest area of continuous woodland in Yorkshire.

For the last 50 years the woods have been managed for coniferous timber production, with reduced activity in recent years. They recently came onto the market, and to preserve them for conservation and recreation purposes a proportion was purchased by a charitable body, the Esmee Fairburn Foundation. Almost all the remainder was purchased by a private investor on behalf of Silvapower Ltd, a company involved in producing woodchip for heating purposes.

The purchase has saved the woods from further commercial use in the short term; in the longer term it is the aim of the Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust, with the agreement of the new owners, to buy the woods from them. In order to do this the trust aims to raise £1m over the next two years. In the interim the trust will take over the management of the woods.

In order to publicise its intentions the trust held a meeting in Greno Woods on September 17. Some 35 individuals, comprising trust and Silvapower staff members and invited guests representing bodies likely to have an interest in the project, were present. The background, as stated above, was presented, and management aims and options were discussed. There followed a short walk into the woods,

specific features and areas of potential development being pointed out. It appears the trust has few recent records of bird life in the woods, although one of its flyers states that over 60 species have been recorded.

Greno Woods are clearly important both in ecological and conservation terms. They also contain a Scheduled Ancient Monument (a Romano-British field system) and much of them are classified as Plantation on an Ancient Woodland Site. The aims of the Wildlife Trust are ambitious and those wishing to support this project, or find out more about it, are referred to the trust website (www.wildsheffield.com) or the new website, www.grenowoods.com.

Rod Hinchliffe

Update on Membership Issues

Many members will have received their Welcome Pack a long time ago, and may well have misplaced some of the contents. I've used the opportunity of becoming membership secretary to check that the discounts mentioned in the welcome letter are still available. I'm happy to report that, with small changes, they mostly are.

This is the current position:

The Bakewell Bookshop
Matlock Street, Bakewell (10% on cash/card purchases on natural history books)

Sheffield Photographic Centre
294 Ecclesall Road, Sheffield

(negotiable discounts on photographic and optical goods)

Foothills 11 Edgedale Road, Sheffield (10% on walking boots, clothing and equipment).

Hawkrige Books (www.hawkrige.co.uk) The bookshop in Cross Street, Castleton, is now closed, but the proprietors continue to sell from home in Sheffield, and a discount may be negotiable. Contact 0114 2689393 to make an appointment to view

The 25% discount on the entrance fee for **Potteric Carr Nature Reserve**, Doncaster, negotiated some time ago, has now been discontinued following a new pricing system. Visiting

SBSG members will, I'm sure, bear the extra 75p cost graciously. If you are over 65 you'll get the concession anyway.

And for those wishing to join the **Derbyshire Ornithological Society**, the annual fee is still £12 per person, but the contact details of the membership secretary Barrie Staley are now: Snail mail:

20 Lancelot Drive, Stretton,
Burton-on-Trent DE13 OGJ
E-mail: barrie_staley@o2.co.uk
Tel: 01283 567325

Martin Hodgson

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Indoor Meetings

Pete Short—Bearded Tits

Wed 10th November 2010, Sheffield University Arts Tower, Lecture Theatre 5

Tonight's talk will be given by Pete Short, the RSPB's Humber site manager, who will be giving a talk on Bearded Tits - this endearing reedbed species being one of the great success stories of the Society's Blacktoft Sands nature reserve.

Neil Glenn—Texas Valley Parade

Wed 8th December 2010, Sheffield University Arts Tower, Lecture Theatre 5

Neil Glenn is a Nottinghamshire-based birdwatcher, who is the author of the critically-acclaimed *Best Birdwatching Sites In Norfolk*, an international bird tour leader, and chairman of the Nottinghamshire Birdwatchers group. Tonight he will be giving a talk detailing his birdwatching experiences in the US state of Texas.

Field Meetings

Coming soon...

Visible Migration at Redmires (Oct/Nov date TBA)

A fixture on the programme in recent years, late October and early November is a peak time for passage of winter thrushes, finches and geese through our area, and the right weather conditions can provide one of the great birding spectacles of our area with thousands of birds on the move in the space of a few hours.

Ideal weather conditions would be clear skies with a light breeze from the SW, especially if the days before have been wet or foggy. To prevent the washouts of previous years, the date for this event will be announced late on to help take advantage of favourable conditions - please keep your eyes on the website for announcements,

OTHER GROUPS' DATES TO NOTE

17th Oct - SWT Wildlife photography workshop. With Paul Hobson, at Wyming Brook. £15, email h.wittram@wildsheffield.com to book a place.

16th Oct - Optics Day RSPB Old Moor, from 10am.

19th Oct - DOS indoor meeting. Joint meeting with Carsington Bird Club, the speaker will be Ken Broughton on "Charles Tunnicliffe - Bird Artist". Hognaston Village Hall, 7.30pm.

20th Oct - Equipment Demo RSPB Old Moor, from 10am.

23rd Oct - Feed The Birds Day. Family day at RSPB Old Moor, 11-3pm. Free activities, reserve charge applicable.

4th Nov - RSPB Sheffield Group indoor meeting. The speaker will be Chris Tomson, with a talk entitled "The Countryside Explained". Central United Reformed Church, Sheffield, 7.30pm.

26th Nov - DOS indoor meeting. Nigel Slater will be speaking on "Bird Migration". The Evergreen Club, Allestree, Derby, 7.30pm.

2nd Dec - RSPB Sheffield Group indoor meeting. Keith Clarkson will be speaking on "Life on the Edge - A Glimpse into the World of our Seabirds". Central United Reformed Church, Sheffield, 7.30pm.

Deadline 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 by **Saturday 27h November**. **IMPORTANT NOTE** - I will probably be moving house before the next deadline, so if sending articles by post please email or ring me first to check my address.

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.

The Future Management of the Eastern Moors

With effect from November 1st 2010 the Peak Park authority will share the management of the eastern moors (Big Moor, East Moor, Leash Fen and Totley Moor) with two new partners, The National Trust and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. This will be known as the Eastern Moors Partnership.

For the first 18 months of this new arrangement three other moors, Burbage, Hathersage and Houndkirk, will also be leased by The National Trust from Sheffield City Council. Consultation meetings were held during August at which interested parties – groups or private individuals – were informed of the plans made so far and invited to contribute to shaping the future of the area. The information gathered from these meetings was analysed by the consortium, and a further meeting was held on September 11th at which feedback was provided and the opportunity taken for further consultation. SBSG was invited to attend this series of meetings.

The August meetings were very similar, differing only in the points on which views were sought; community engagement; access and recreation; wildlife and historic landscape and farming and land management. I attended two of these. At each meeting there was a brief introduction by a facilitator, a summary of the work done so far, an opportunity for attendees to comment on the chosen area for that evening, and a question and answer session.

The vision statement presented to attendees was bold, with a wide range of plans to be implemented and achieved by 2025. These include management based on extensive grazing of appropriate livestock, including deer; restoration of bogs and water features, eg at Leash Fen; development of woodland; return of native species; and the opening of a moorland discovery centre. Staff members have largely been appointed with the RSPB, for logistical reasons, acting as the employer. All staff report to a single controlling committee.

Apparently the Peak Park authority has wanted to manage the estate in bigger and better ways for some time, and the involvement of two large charitable bodies should facilitate this, with a tripling of

Pete Mella



available funding. The hope is this approach to the management of the UK's first national park will set new standards and set a benchmark for other parks to aspire to.

These meetings provided hundreds of comments from participants. There was a clear sense that the scale of planned initiatives promised all things to all men, with the attendant anxiety that the nature of the area could be changed as many more people might seek to access it.

The feedback session was held at Losehill Hall. Danny Udell, who will manage the moors, provided a summary of the consultation process, which had involved the cataloguing of over 1000 comments, suggestions and concerns from the 145 people who had attended the August meetings. These were used in formulating the following draft management principles:

- The long term vision
- Exemplar management to achieve biodiversity
- Range of public benefits
- An accessible multi-user site
- Connected network for access
- Appropriate grazing to achieve objectives
- Protect and celebrate a rich cultural heritage

- People and community involvement
- Inspiration
- High quality experience
- Wild and open nature not compromised
- Work with changing climate, adapting management as required

Part of ongoing work is to produce options and solutions for the above, and a workshop provided opportunities for attendees to comment. A second workshop, with attendees split into small groups, was used to invite comments on a range of issues on which the partnership felt it needed external guidance. The meeting concluded with a note of 'next steps,' which include the appointment of a visitor services officer in spring 2011 and a programme of events next summer.

SBSG was well represented at the meetings, with at least three other group members attending, apart from myself. The senior RSPB employee in the partnership, Roy Taylor (roy.taylor@rspb.org.uk), was pleased to note our interest and keen to involve and encourage birders in, for example, the five-yearly population surveys that are envisaged.

Rod Hinchliffe

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Spurn Field Trip - September 2010

A 7 o'clock "kick off" from Paternoster Row in our minibus was the order of the day, only 11 of us were available for the trip (usual cancellations) so we set off for Spurn.

Reasonable weather for the day, and much optimism after the two hour journey with us parking up at the Blue Bell car park. Most of our party remained around the Kilnsea area for the day with one of us catching the 'Spurn Ranger' to the point.

The rest of us moved around the triangle or ventured up Beacon Lane with a visit to the ponds.

In the end it turned out to be a fairly quiet day with a small migration through. Swallows and Martins starting their annual trek south with a few Swifts included, a few chats and a gathering of common warblers around the triangle.

The intrepid birder (Kevin) who caught the bus up to the point was rewarded with Wryneck and Common Rosefinch amongst others. During the summer months, the Spurn Ranger Bus service travels from Withernsea and Patrington to Spurn Point (four journeys each way), I wish I'd known!

At the Triangle pond hide there were excellent views of Yellow Wagtail and Dunlin, with a good number of Common and Lesser Whitethroats in the bushes. Beacon Lane and Beacon Ponds were bereft of birds.

The weather was pleasant for the day and it wasn't the most productive but it was enjoyable all the same. Spotted Flycatchers were around and for some of us this was probably the bird of the day. 84 species for the day – not bad!

Redmires gull roost Field Trip - September 2010

A fine, but windy and rather dingy, evening met the brave souls that turned up for the Redmires gull roost trip, led by Richard Hill and Dave Wood.

The blustery conditions meant a great deal of the 400 or so Lesser Black-backed Gulls present were staying put in the nearby fields, but careful scoping of the birds that made it down to the water, split between the Bottom and Middle

Reservoirs, revealed at least four Yellow-legged Gulls. An adult, a 2nd year and two 1st winters were present, and Richard and Dave were on hand to point out the ID features of each age group, with some young Lesser Black-backs around for handy comparison.

Elsewhere a Teal was present with the usual Mallards, briefly raising hope it may be the Garganey that had been on the

reservoirs the previous day.

Thanks to all members who came on the trip, and a special nod to brand new member Chris who was attending her first ever outing with the group- a gull ID session is something of a baptism of fire into the SBSG!

Pete Mella

Birders wanted in Hathersage

The Peak Birds Project has provided funding for a wild bird crop at a farm at Hathersage which was sown earlier this year. I am looking for volunteer birders (SBSG/DOS) to visit the site and make weekly counts of birds using the crop (for feeding etc) as it develops over a six month period between October 2010 and March 2011.

This will hopefully provide data on how useful these crops are, which species they attract and peaks in bird species over the

survey period. I will supply a spreadsheet for entering data which can be emailed with monthly figures of counts and also arrange any access to the site (if required) with the farmer. Any birders who are interested can contact at David.Pearce@peakdistrict.gov.uk

David Pearce
Peak Birds Project Officer

News in brief

The SBSG now on Twitter!

For the technologically-minded, the SBSG is now on Twitter. To keep up to date with our "Tweets", which will include news, announcements and a taste of the recent sightings, visit www.twitter.com/shefbirdstudy

New members

The group welcomes new member Chris Kelly, and welcomes back Sally Thomas and Christopher Hewitt. Good birding to them all!

Birds facing the crunch?

The Government's scrapping environmental Public Service Agreements. But, looking at examples on his own patch, **John Kirkman** argues that it may not a great idea for wildlife...

The annual report of the SBSG is an excellent publication, and deserves to win the awards it has tucked under its belt.

What is less easy to assess is the general status of our regional birds, the trends of numbers and spread of our bread-and-butter species, the entry of the unusual into the general population, and matters of concern that need to be acted upon, because the data provided by hundreds of enthusiasts have to be the basis of something - the attempt to increase biodiversity or at least to slow the damage of the current unprecedented assault by humans.

I spend much of my time in SK38 tetrad F, and like most observers, keep daily notes and go to bed in an anorak. The districts are Bradway and Totley Rise, with the pastures and hedges towards Holmesfield.

In my opinion, the previous government had a wretched attitude to, and record on, the environment. They seemed to think that nature is a pretty backdrop, a bit of a luxury for leisure and holiday time, and add-on to the core business of business, and easily expendable if it came to the (credit) crunch. Nevertheless, bird populations were included as one of the indicators of the quality of national life. And, of course, there were numerical targets! How can you consider quality without bringing in quantity, a bureaucrat would ask.

To that end, there were two Public Service Agreements covering birds. A P.S.A. is, or was, a promise of funding from the Treasury to

another government department as long as targets are met. There were two relating to the Department of the Environment.

One was to ensure that 95% of sites of Special Scientific Interest were in a "favourable" condition by 2010. This one has no direct relevance to my tetrad, but might to the nearby East Moors, from Totley Moss to above Chatsworth.

The other was a bigger and more important challenge, to halt the decline of farmland birds by 2010. This helped the flow of subsidies to schemes such as environmental stewardship. In mid-June, the Coalition scrapped the P.S.A. system, though no publicity seemed to be attached to it. The implication is that our countryside will have less

"Of course there are numerical targets - how can you consider quality without quantity, a bureaucrat would ask..."

and less protection against our own species.

So where might my tetrad stand in terms of the effects of the past harsh winter, of steady populations, of increases and newcomers, of collapses, of continuing and worrying reductions?

Birds I never saw in Bradway ten years ago were Buzzards, parakeets and Canada Geese. A Buzzard is to be seen more or less monthly now, and you always know from the racket made by the local crows. Their attacks are fierce, but last only within the particular pairs' territory. Nevertheless, Buzzards have still not taken the Sheaf headwater with great enthusiasm. Does anyone know why? Suburban and near-urban Birmingham and Coventry yield far more sightings, as do most parts of lowland England. To my non-buzzard eyes,

the area looks excellent for Buzzards.

Parakeets are frequently sighted within 2km of the Old Mother Redcap, the suburban focal point. They might of course, be a mixed blessing if they become established.

This is the first year the geese have bred on Tyzack's Dam. Four goslings in May had fallen away to two by late June, breeding on the island but often loafing on the bank by the anglers. Will we be into debates on culling in a few years, if they come to dominate as they do by and on the Wye at Bakewell? Mandarins seem to be steady on the dam, but have spread up the Sheaf and Totley Brook towards the Shepley Spitfire, where one mother had eight well-grown young in July.

Very worryingly, several species have gone or are spasmodic. Mickley Farm had to Skylark pairs from 1990-2004, but since then I have heard only one singing male in one of the six years.

Whitethroats sang down the hedge on Rod Moor road and from a hawthorn and hedge on Mickley Lane. This year, nothing. Cuckoos never call in the tetrad. Until recently, six or so Yellowhammers bred, in 2009 I think one, this year I have not heard one, nor seen a Linnet. All this is awful!

How about the other warblers? Chiffchaffs have had minor fluctuations around an average of ten singing males, with 2009 higher than 2010, where three long-standing locations seem to be empty. If anything, Garden Warblers are up, and there are several spots where I can now count on their presence. Blackcaps have increased steadily, roughly doubling since 1990 and now ahead of Chiffchaffs in numbers. The Garden Warblers often spend late August actually in my garden.

Willow Warblers steadily fell away up to this year. I always heard one while gardening, the bird nesting near the Castle Inn. They were near the Shepley, by Standall Tools and Mickley Lane, and so on. These have all been silent since 2006, their jewelled tones a sad subtraction from the summer atmosphere.

Consequently, to hear more in 2010 was an encouraging surprise: Totley Bents Cattery, Beauchief Hall, Twentywell Lane, The Crown at Totley; something of a return to form. The Willow is a pivotal bird, of course, much researched, way down from its millions of the seventies, when it exceeded all other migrants put together. Scotland seems to be full of the birds even now.

The finches are steady (except for the Linnet). Fortunately, this assessment includes the red-listed Bullfinch. On a big rise is the Goldfinch, which are hardly ever out of sound or sight. Not far behind (and not a finch!) is the Nuthatch, which now fills Poynton Wood with its scolding chatter and is in all the neighbouring gardens. When I was a boy, a visit to Linacre Wood was needed to find one. These are all solid core birds rather than fly-by-night rarities edging in.

Where else is there stability? Blackbirds, Robins, Blue and Great Tits are at a high density; the first of the four, for example, every hundred metres. Song Thrushes, too, have held steady, against the general trend. The Swift colonies, four of them, have declined little if at all, partly because areas remain of houses with gaps into the roof spaces though if these households join the trend of barricading themselves in behind plastic edgings the outlook will darken. Swallows, I would say, are up, if only by one pair, but that is an excellent contrast to those East Anglian Villages cited in the literature as having lost the lot.

House Martins are faring less well. One colony, at the foot of Bushey Wood Road, has gone, and the

Duncan Brown (www.flickr.com/photos/cradlehill)
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other three are down by up to half. Why the swallow/martin contrast? Down, perhaps, to different wintering areas and migration routes.

Those old campaigners, House Sparrows and Starling, withstood their national catastrophe until 2005. Autumn Starling flocks were 300-strong by Totley Park, the shopping parade had 200, my cul-de-sac sported a wheeling and bustling 50. No longer! We are down to a scattering of small breeding groups of three or four pairs, with autumnal totals of around 20, and it is rather poignant to see them still go on swooping fly-pasts in such small numbers.

Sparrows too are struggling. We used to have three dozen in the garden after breeding, and the district had many such clusters. Today I am pleased if we manage double figures. I imagine the area produced too few invertebrates for the adults to feed enough young strong enough to survive their first winter; and increasingly fortified houses have removed nest sites.

And the severe winter? Long-tailed Tit and Goldcrest numbers were good, but have taken a big tumble. Wrens, on the other hand, are as numerous as ever, at least up with the Blackbirds. Perhaps this is

because, unlike the other two, they specialise in creeping into nooks and crannies in walls, under shrubs and between tree roots where the snow and ice cover was not complete.

Overall we have patterns that both parallel and contradict the national trend, as a result of local and international forces only partly understood; but patterns that give cause for concern or underline the need for continued rather than reduced and cheaper stewardship.

As well as accumulating data about birds, and deriving great pleasure from doing so, we need to try to influence the practical forces that control public stewardship; i.e. write letters. The current (Coalition) supremo is Caroline Spellman, Secretary of State for the Environment, at Nobel House, 17 Smith Square, London SW1P 3JR.

If we don't write, politicians are likely to think that we don't care! Tell her that the work covered by the two DEFRA Public Service Agreements from the Treasury need to continue, and that we are part of the natural system. Few decision-makers seem to know that we are.

If you have any opinions on the issues raised in this article please get in touch at the usual address.

Local Birding with David Woodriff

Another page from David's birding diary.

The 4th June was one of those rare days for me that doesn't happen often enough - a full day's birding!

The night before I was planning in my head where to go? I had a car at my disposal with a full tank and so many options, however, I couldn't resist the chance to cover my local patch without any time restrictions.

I entered Wharncliffe Woods around 6.30am on a lovely summer's morning. The place was alive with bird song and counts totalled 13 singing Blackcap; 26 Robin; 29 Willow Warbler and 32 Wren.

An early highlight was a Tawny Owl that silently crossed the woodland path. Judging by the odd squawk that I heard from within the foliage, it must have been feeding young hidden away, especially as it was "out" in broad daylight.

In a glade that borders the edge of the wood and Wharncliffe Chase, I was drawn to an innocuous call that could have been a fledged species but I had a feeling it wasn't. The sun's rays were piercing through the trees like spotlights and the magical view of a pair of Spotted Flycatcher chasing around was a perfect site. They perched still just often enough to allow me to focus on them before they dashed off again.

Wharncliffe Chase was alive with singing birds. One, possibly two Cuckoos were calling and often seen being chased off by a posse of Meadow Pipits. I have no doubt that fairly soon one of this species would host a young Cuckoo. A total of 12 Skylarks;

37 Linnets; 15 Tree Pipits and seven Reed Bunting were holding territory.

I watched a pair of Redstarts taking food to a classic nest site within a disused farm building. A Kestrel was perched nearby on telegraph wires which seemed to make the Redstarts cautious although I'm sure it had more interest in movements in the undergrowth below.

A post-breeding flock of 200 Starling made an unusual view feeding so openly on the Chase along with around 50 Lapwings. It was fantastic to discover that a pair of the latter species bred on a field next to the Chase raising three young.

"It was fantastic to discover that a pair of Lapwing bred on a field next to the Chase raising three young."

With slightly aching legs but a passion for more, I found my passport and went "foreign" - travelling to RSPB Blacktoft Sands near Goole. My target bird was seen in relative abundance - Marsh Harrier. I was told by the warden that up to 10 pairs were breeding and this soon became evident. I made notes on the differences between this and the more familiar Buzzard for future reference when / if required.

I was fortunate also to get a brief glimpse of a Bittern flying low over the reed tops whilst Avocets were breeding on one of the pools offering confiding views.

My final destination was to Firsby Reservoir near Rotherham. I have been so

impressed by the excellent records generated from this site and I wasn't disappointed when I finally found the location. I enjoy my local patch but certainly wouldn't complain if I could call here more often - it's a fantastic hidden birding oasis!

Around 80 House Martins flitted between the waters edge and the farmers house on the sites periphery tending to their nests and young within. How I would love to live in this location with such views right outside your window!

The next spectacle was a bird I'd seen reported here which had drawn me to this location - Yellow Wagtail. It's one of those species that I've seen but just not often enough. I initially saw a ghostly white female perched in dead willows over the water. The brilliant yellow male was nearby and I was amazed at how such a vividly coloured bird could easily be missed, even without any leaf cover on the dead willows!

The final highlight of a fantastic day was the site of a Hobby passing west over the Reservoir seemingly carrying food. I seem to be quite lucky with this species but never tire of looking at the strong facial markings and noticeably leaner more pinched wing shape.

It had been a hot, tiring day but the range and quantity of species made it all worthwhile. I was content with undertaking a "full count" on my local patch, a visit to see a specific star bird at a nearby RSPB reserve plus the wonderment of a first-visit to a hidden birdwatching gem within our area. Happy days!

RECENT SIGHTINGS

1st June - 30th September 2010

These records are largely unchecked. Records in bold require supporting details.

Black-necked Grebe – An adult bird was at Orgreave Lakes on 1st and 2nd July, with an immature at the same site on 4th September.

Leach's Petrel – A bird was watched at Orgreave Lakes for 25 minutes on the morning of 19th September, and was taken by a sparrowhawk as it flew over Treeton village.

Little Egret – A good period for this species. Three immatures moved between Orgreave Lagoons and Catcliffe Flash on 2nd July, with one lingering at Catcliffe Flash on 3rd. Thrybergh CP saw two fly over on 8th July, and one on 17th. Chatsworth Park saw singles on 23rd and 30th July, two on 1st Aug, and one on 2nd Aug. Orgreave Lakes had singles on 30th July and 2nd Sept, and one was at Firsby Res on 31st Jul.

Great White Egret – one was present at Firsby Res on 9th September.

Pink-footed Goose – 104 flew over Rother Valley CP on 18th September, 28 over Rod Moor on 25th, 28 over Ughill and Redmires on 26th, 23 over Fatty Boyn's



This female Pintail was at Thrybergh CP on 13th September.

pond on 26th, 280 over Silverwood Lagoon on 28th, 78 over Firsby Res on 28th, and 210 over Silverwood Lagoon on 29th.

Shelduck – Juveniles were seen at Langsett Res, where one was reported on 13th August, Thrybergh CP, where six were present on 24th August and three on 5th September, and Orgreave Lakes, where three were reported on 5th September. Another bird was at RVCP on 13th September.

juveniles were present at Thrybergh Tip on 8th August.

Tufted Duck – Breeding was confirmed at a number of sites, including Aldwarke SF, Redmires, Orgreave Lakes, Thrybergh Tip and Catcliffe Flash.

Common Scoter – Three males were present at Orgreave Lakes on 13th August. Another was at Rivelin Dams on 14th August, and two were, again, at Orgreave Lakes on 17th August.

Gannet - One flew south over Silverwood on 24th September,

Red Kite – Well-reported over the summer, with reports from Bramley, Ringinglow Bog, Rawmarsh and Langsett Moor, and up to two birds present in the Agden/Ewden area between 5th July and at least the 30th August. Another (or same bird) was at Cowell Flat on 25th September.

Marsh Harrier – A cream-crown was present at Ringinglow Bog on 2nd June. Birds were reported from the Agden/Canyards area regularly in late July and August, with two birds reported hunting at Peat Pits on 14th and 15th August. Elsewhere single birds were at Redmires on 15th August and



This Little Egret was one of three that commuted between Orgreave Lagoons and Catcliffe Flash at the beginning of June.

Pintail – One was at Thrybergh CP on 13th September, and a flock of 36 flew west at Rother Valley on 19th.

Garganey – 2 immature / females and an eclipse male were at Rother Valley on 15th July, and a juvenile was present at Redmires on 12th September.

Shoveler – A female with 5 unfledged

Midhope Moor on 27th, and two juveniles were at Barbrook Pools on 16th August. Singles were at Ringinglow Bog and Cinder Bridge Field on 25th September.

Common Buzzard – Good counts included 11 at Firsby Res on 31st August, 12 at Ulley CP on 12th September, and 10 (including seven up at once) at Agden on 12th September.

Osprey – Singles were at Ulley CP on 15th June, Firsby Res on 15th June, Ulley CP on 28th August, Bakewell on 11th September, Treeton and Thrybergh on 11th September, Bamford Mill on 17th September, and Barbrook Pools and Big Moor on 21st September.

Quail – Two reports of singing birds at Longstone Edge on 16th and 20th June.

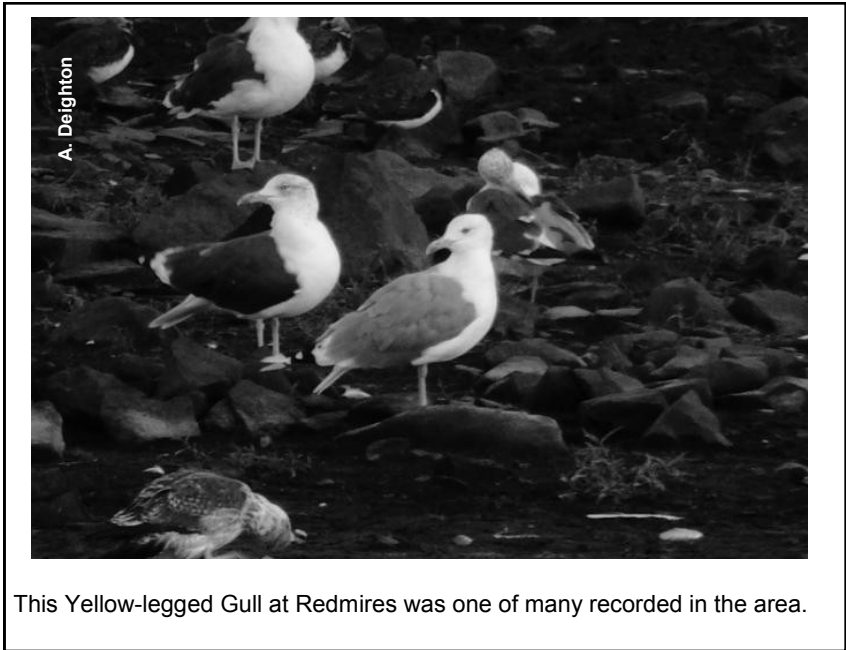
Oystercatcher – A pair hatched three young at Redmires Middle Res, the first breeding record, and 10th breeding wader, for the site.

Golden Plover – Highest counts at Redmires were 24 on 25th July, 20 on 1st August, and 14 on 21st.

Little Stint – A juvenile was at Middleton Moor on 31st August. Two birds were at Orgreave Lakes on 10th September.

Ruff – One was at RVCP's Meadowgate Lake on 15th August.

Snipe – Large counts included 16



This Yellow-legged Gull at Redmires was one of many recorded in the area.

at Orgreave Lakes on 27th July, and 10 on visible migration at Rod Moor on 22nd September.

Black-tailed Godwit – 1 was at Orgreave Lakes on 13th July, and 2 summer plumaged adult 'isandica' were at Middleton Moor on 1st August.

Whimbrel – Singles were at Abney Clough and Redmires on 11th July, and two flew south over Orgreave Lakes on 14th September.

Spotted Redshank – 1 flew south over Thrybergh CP on 31st August, and 1 briefly dropped into Silverwood Lagoon on 11th

September.

Greenshank – Widely reported from 1st July, from Redmires, Thrybergh CP, Orgreave Lakes, Carr Vale, Silverwood Lagoon, RVCP and Firsby Res. Top counts were four at Redmires on 22nd August, and five at Orgreave Lakes on 7th September.

Turnstone – One at Orgreave Lakes on 31st August and 1st September.

Arctic Skua – A dark phase juvenile flew west over RVCP on 26th August.

Little Gull – A first summer was present at Orgreave Lakes on 13th and 14th June. Two juveniles were at Thrybergh CP on 14th August.

Mediterranean Gull - An adult winter was at Redmires on 28th Sept.

Lesser Black-backed Gull – Large counts recorded included a maximum of 850 at Middleton Moor on 27th August, 800 flying over Mount Darnall on 4th September, 1,000 at Orgreave Lakes on 21st September, and 780 at Redmires on 28th September.

Yellow-legged Gull – Regularly reported from 13th July onwards, with regular birds among Lesser Black-backed Gull roosts at Orgreave Lakes (peaking at 4 on 13th August), Redmires (peaking



This Common Sandpiper was at Redmires Top Res on 2nd July.

A. Deighton



These two Marsh Harriers, photographed at Peat Pits in August, were one of my many sightings during the summer.

at 5 on 25th September) and Middleton Moor (peaking at 6 on 4th August). An adult was also at Wardlow on 24th July.

Caspian Gull – A adult was roosting at Middleton Moor on 29th July. An adult was at Redmires on 28th, with a juv/1st winter at the same location on 29th.

Sandwich Tern – One adult and one immature were at Thrybergh CP on 17th September.

Common Tern – Five pairs nested and laid, but one of the nesting rafts was washed up against the dam, leading to a “disastrous” breeding season.

Little Tern – One was at Carr Vale on 27th June – the first site record.

Black Tern – A juvenile was at Treeton Dyke on 16th September, and commuted between Treeton, Catcliffe Flash and Orgreave Lakes until at least 22nd September/

Ring-necked Parakeet – Reports from Botanical Gardens on 16th June and 4th September, Heeley City Farm on 19th June, Rotherham on 1st July, Hunter’s Bar on 26th August, and Millhouses Park on 21st September.

Cuckoo – Well-reported, including

unusual reports of singing birds at Millhouses on 3rd June, and Botanical Gardens on 10th June. A maximum of three were at Rocher Flat on 19th June, and juveniles were reported from Wharnccliffe Chase on 17th August, Green Moor (attended by a Willow Warbler) on 20th August, and Stannage Pole (attended by a family of Meadow Pipits) on 22nd September.

Short-eared Owl – Single birds were at Abbey Brook on 13th June, and Silverwood Lagoon on 11th September.

Swift – 1,000 were at Ulley Res on 7th July. Other large flocks included 120 at Sheffield University on 1st June, 300 at Thrybergh on 12th June, 300 at Orgreave Lakes on 14th June and 1st July, 100 at Wharnccliffe Heath on 21st June, and 500 at Harthill on 5th July. Late birds included 6 at Damflask on 30th August, one at Sothall on 31st August, three at High Green on 31st August, one at Firsby Res on 31st August, seven at Thrybergh on 31st August, and one in a mixed hirundine flock at Firsby Res on 10th September.

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker – Breeding was confirmed at Graves Park. Single birds were also seen at Grenoside on 3rd June, and Lodge Moor on 23rd July.

Skylark – Larger counts included 12 at Wharnccliffe Chase on 4th June, and 25 at Orgreave Lakes on 6th August. Movement was noted with 10 SW at Ulley on 12th September, one south at Redmires on 18th, and three north at Firsby Res on 20th.

Sand Martin – Breeding was recorded at several sites on the Don, as well as Ulley and Aldwarke. 44 were recorded between four breeding sites on the Don on 8th July, and 30 were roosting in the reedbed at Blackburn Meadows on 1st August. 17 were counted among hirundines at Firsby Res on 10th September, and three were at Orgreave Lakes on 15th.

Swallow – Largest flocks included an large roost at Middleton Moor that peaked at 600 on 15th August and 120 at Green Moor on 17th August. Large movements during September included 436 SW at Wharnccliffe Chase on 2nd, 150 S at Stoke Ford on 5th, 335 SW at Redmires on 18th, 359 SW at Wharnccliffe Chase on 17th, and 82 at Rod Moor on 22nd. Feeding flocks included 130 at Firsby on 10th September, and 200 at Langsett on 16th.

House Martin - Top counts included 100 at Ulley on 17th July, 125 at Firsby on 21st August, 160 W at Redmires on 4th September, 300 at Firsby on 10th September, and 250 at Thrybergh on 17th September.

Tree Pipit - Singing males recorded from a number of locations, with breeding confirmed at two. Passage included five S/ SW at Redmires on 21st August, and an easter record of one South at Orgreave Lakes on 19th August.

Meadow Pipit - Large numbers on passage include 212 SW over Wharnccliffe Chase on 21st September, 170 S at Redmires on 12th, and 255 SW at Wharnccliffe Chase on 30th.

Yellow Wagtail - Records included five S at Ulley on 21st August, and western records, all at Redmires, on three dates in August and September. Breeding was confirmed at Firsby Res.

Redstart - Breeding was confirmed at a number of locations, including two pairs at Longshaw. Three birds were at Ramsley Moor on 28th August.

Whinchat - Family parties were reported in a few locations on the moors, and more unusual records included a juv at Stannington on 7th August, and a single bird at Orgreave Lakes on 24th August and 8th September. One was at Redmires on 30th September.

Stonechat - Breeding was confirmed in a number of locations, including two pairs at Upper Derwentdale. Larger counts include seven at Cowell Flat on 27th July (including 4 juvs), and nine at Ramsley Moor on 18th September.

Wheatear - The largest counts were six (including 2 juvs) at Middleton Moor on 15th August, and five juvs at Longstone Edge on 22nd.

Ring Ouzel - Birds were reported on the usual breeding grounds, and included a pair mobbing a Kestrel at Moscar Moor on 13th June. On passage one was at Faithorn Clough on 4th September, an influx of 20 at Redmires on the 12th, and 8, also at Fairhorn Clough, on 18th. Two were at Ramsley on 22nd September, four were SW with Mistle Thrushes on 26th September, and two were at Big Moor on 30th.

Redwing - The first were reported from numerous sites on 26th September, with the highest count being 97 W at Redmires. Small numbers were recorded for the rest of the month, including seven feeding at Agden Side on 28th, and nine SW at Wharnciffe on

30th.

Fieldfare - One at Rod Moor on 26th September.

Mistle Thrush - post-breeding flocks included 65 at White Lee Moor on 10th Aug, and 90 at Wharnciffe Chase on 25th August.

Wood Warbler - Two singing males were recorded at Wyming Brook on 2nd June and at one Windy Corner on 3rd. Two birds were feeding at Blacka Moor on 7th June, and one food-carrying at Wharnciffe Woods on 27th. Two birds were at Redmires Plantation on 28th July.

Spotted Flycatcher - Larger counts included four at Agden on 4th July, and the latest record was two at Redmires Conduit on 4th September.

Pied Flycatcher - More unusual records included four birds at Stanage on 3rd June, 3 at the same location on 13th, and one at Howden Res on 15th. A female was seen with juvs at Haywood Farm on 12th June, and a pair feeding young was recorded at Agden Rocher on 6th.

Siskin - Westerly movement was record at Redmires with 18 on 30th August, 13 on 12th September, and 20 on 18th September. 15 birds were at Midhope Res on 16th September, and eight were seen on vis mig on 22nd at Moscar Cross.

Linnet - Large counts include 100 at Rivelin Valley on 7th August, 100 at Stannington on 14th, 220 at Silverwood Wood on 4th September, 160 at Roper Hill on 18th, and 120 at Firsby Res on 21st.

Lesser Redpoll - Counts on visible migration included 17 at Rod Moor, and 13 at Moscar Cross, both on the 22nd September, and 21 at Redmires on 26th.

Brambling - Singles were at Shirebrook Valley and Shirecliffe on 30th September.

Crossbill - Records included 14 at King Tree on 11th June, 11 at Holling Dale on 12th (these first two records including juveniles), 13 at Redmires on 13th, 8 at Blacka Moor on 3rd July, 12 at Ecclesall on 18th, eight at Wharnciffe Chase on 23rd, 12 at Foulstone Delph on 15th August, and 13 W at Redmires on 26th September.

Hawfinch - One was recorded on the edge of Wharnciffe Wood at Oughtibridge on 9th August.

Yellowhammer - 10 were at Ulley on 17th June, 10 at Thrybergh on 21st, 11 at Ulley on 24th June and 16 on 17th July, and 10 were at Stubble Hollow on 8th August.

Lapland Bunting - One flew SE over Redmires on 26th Sept.

Corn Bunting - A singing male was at Harthill on 6th July.

Pete Mella

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

CD Abell, MG Archer, S Ashton, B Bailey, SJ Barnes, MA Beevers, AR Bell, RP Blagden, K Bower, SJ Branch, MC Brew, PL Brown, R Butterfield, DM Bye, J Crooks, R Dale, A Deighton, M Dyson, G Featherstone, MG Fenner, D Gains, P Garrity, V Gibson, D Gosney, KR Gould, R Greasley, S Guymer, R Harris, A Hill, RD Hill, H Hipperson, M Hodgson, J Hornbuckle, C Hurst, G James, Alan Johnson, Anne Johnson, KE Kenward, J Kingsland, K Knowles, P Leonard, JL Marriott, CR McKay, C Measures, P Mella, TH Minskip, S Mitchie, J Mowbray, MG Oxlade, D Parkes, PH Pearsall, NR Porter, MN Reeder, J Sherwin, M Sherwin, MA Shethurst, AHV Smith, B Spencer, D Stables, CB Stride, SG Tebbutt, A Thompson, M Timms, R Twigg, SE Vickers, RV Walker, D Warburton, JC Wasse, R Watkinson, RDR Williams, D Wood, M Wood-Bonelli, D Woodriff, Rotherham & District Ornithological Society, BTO Birdtrack.