



SHEFFIELD BIRD STUDY GROUP
BULLETIN

ISSUE 212

MAR 2012

www.sbsg.org.uk

SEEING OUT WINTER

The birding highlights of Jan and Feb



WINTER GULLS

Rarer gulls photo special

WILD WEST CANADA

Adventures on Vancouver Island

THIS BIRDING LIFE

Clive McKay's life with birds

PLUS - All the latest SBSG news

Nigel Lindsey 1956-2012

It is with great sadness that we have to report the death of Nigel after his long struggle with motor -neurone disease. Nige, as he was known to his friends here in Sheffield, passed away peacefully in his sleep only a few days after his 56th birthday. He was a very popular figure on the local birding scene for some years around late 80s and early 90s and was extremely likeable chap and quite simply fun to be around. I have very fond memories of the annual bird races we entered along with Andy Deighton and Roy Twigg. The local football matches we played against the Barnsley birders quite often saw Nige pressed into keeping goal at the last minute, quite simply

because no-one else fancied it, but he never complained. Despite his fun side, Nige was a very serious ornithologist and was a respected member of the Oriental Bird Club, having travelled to the far-east on many occasions. His tales of epic train journeys across India were legendary! Nige left Sheffield in the early 90s to take up a post at Bradford University where he met and subsequently married his wife Julia. He was a very well respected member of the lecturers there and was eventually made a Dean, an achievement that he and his family were justifiably very proud of. Along with Roy and Ann Twigg and John Gregory I attended

Nige's funeral in the village of Haworth a few weeks ago, the size of the congregation reflecting just how popular and respected he was as a person. We did manage to have a chat with both Julia and one of Nige's brothers afterwards, who both told us how much he had enjoyed his birding days here in Sheffield and that he often spoke about them. Nigel will be sadly missed by all those who were fortunate to meet him, and our thoughts go out to his wife, family, and two lovely young children at this sad time.

Kev Gould

News in brief

Wader survey volunteers needed

The Peak District National Park Authority are looking for volunteers to help survey the Dark Peak areas around Stocksbridge and Holmfirth, to help assess the decline of species including Curlew, Snipe, Lapwing and Redshank. Surveyors will get contributions towards their mileage. Those interested should contact Wader Recovery Project Manager Tara Challoner on 01629 8 1 6 2 4 or tara.challoner@peakdistrict.gov.uk

Sorby Breck Ringing Report

The 2011 Sorby Breck Ringing Report is now available for download as a PDF. Visit <http://www.britishringers.co.uk/2011-report.php> to download a copy.

Get your 2011 records in!

It's nearly that time of year when the Annual Report scribes will be hard at work getting the 2011 Report written up. If any members have any outstanding 2011 remaining, please send them in as soon as possible!

New members

The group welcomes new members **Malcolm Cowburn, Hilary Pengelly, Neil Fawson, Tom Middleton, Nigel Dakin, Tim Chester and Naalin Perera**. We hope you enjoy membership, and good birding to you all!

Martin's not ignoring you!

Our membership secretary, Martin Hodgson, is currently having Internet problems, and so may not be contactable via the world wide web for a couple of weeks. If your query requires urgent attention, please forward it to one of the committee, otherwise Martin will get back to you once he's back online.

Cover photo

This issue's cover photo is by David Wood.

Deadline for next Bulletin

The next Bulletin will be issued at the May indoor meeting. Please note that any items for inclusion in the Bulletin must be received by Pete Mella at peterjmella@googlemail.com (for preference), or 21 Lump Lane, Grenoside, Sheffield, S35 8PL, by **Saturday 28th April**.

Bulletin by email

More and more members have agreed to receive their Bulletins by email, and now **well over half** of you are on our email list, meaning we have been able to cut our print run considerably, and make big savings on postage. Many thanks to all members who have agreed to this, and if you would like to switch over to receiving your Bulletin in pdf format then please email me at peterjmella@googlemail.com.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Indoor Meetings

Jon Hornbuckle - 40 Years of World Birding

Wed 11th April 2012, Sheffield University Arts Tower, Lecture Theatre 5, 7.15pm

A name that will need very little introduction - Jon is a founder member of the SBSG, and has acted as the group's secretary, chairman and co-editor of the annual report during his long association with the group, as well as co-editing the 1975-1980 Breeding Atlas, along with Dave Herringshaw. As well as this he has been instrumental in setting up the Alport Castles Peregrine nest protection scheme, been an active ringer, undertook various surveys, and even found time to find the UK's first wintering Dark-eyed Junco. Since the 1990s Jon's birding interests have been international, reaching a staggering personal list that is among the longest of any birder in the world - his most recent tally on Surfbirds is a staggering 8,831 (on Clements taxonomy; on IOC criteria it's even larger). His birding has taken him to every corner of the globe, and he has taken part in many international conservation and ringing programmes. This talk promises to be one to remember, as Jon takes us through some of his incredible birding journeys.

Prof Tim Birkhead - Bird Sense: What It's Like To Be A Bird

Wed 9th May 2012, Sheffield University Arts Tower, Lecture Theatre 5, 7.15pm

Tim Birkhead is professor of behaviour and evolution at the University of Sheffield's Animal and Plant Sciences department. His scientific research includes sexual selection and the evolution of pre- and post-copulatory reproductive strategies in birds, and he is the author several critically-acclaimed ornithological works, including the Poyser monograph of the Magpie, *The Wisdom of Birds: An Illustrated History of Ornithology*, and his latest book *Bird Sense: What It Is Like To Be A Bird*. This book is what Prof Birkhead will be talking about in this lecture, which will be a fascinating talk from a very engaging speaker.

Field Meetings

Waders and Wagtails

April (date tba) Orgreave Lakes/Bole Hill Flash

Keep your eyes on the website for further details of this walk, which will take in some hotspots for Spring migrants.

OTHER DATES TO NOTE

28th March - SK58 Birders Indoor Meeting. Rob Hardcastle on Tetrad Surveys. 7.30pm, Upstairs Function Room, Loyal Trooper, Sheffield Road, South Anston. £1 members, £2 non-members.

30th March - DOS Indoor Meeting. Nigel Slater will be giving a talk entitled "Garden Birds and their Songs". 7.30pm, Evergreen Club, Allestree. £1 members, £1.50 non-members.

4th April - RSPB Sheffield Group Indoor Meeting. Life on the Edge: A Glimpse Into The World of Seabirds. 7.30pm, United Reform Church, Sheffield. £1.50 members, £3 non-members.

3rd May - RSPB Sheffield Group Indoor Meeting. Terry Bond will speak on "Bird Watching In Scandinavia". 7.30pm, United Reform Church, Sheffield. £1.50 members, £3 non-members.

Group contacts

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Atlas species sponsorship - the final push!

Sheffield's disappearing birds. Please help even more to disappear!

Much work has now been done in producing the Atlas with the target of having it published by the end of this year, a fitting way to mark the Group's 40th anniversary. With up to 400 pages of text, maps and illustrations this is going to be a very significant publication. And as you're no doubt aware it's also going to cost the Group a significant amount of money, perhaps in the region of £7,500.

We've reached the £2,000 mark thanks largely to the generosity of members and friends in sponsoring species. We continue to seek sponsorship from a variety of funding bodies but in these financially challenging times we've met with little in the way of success so far.

So again, we appeal to the membership to sponsor one or more of the remaining species that haven't yet been taken. For £20 your name will be acknowledged at the foot of the pages of the account of your chosen species. The list of birds as yet without a sponsor follows. If you can afford to adopt a species please get in touch with **P e t e B r o w n** at peterbrown@blueyonder.co.uk or call him on 01142967363. Better still come along to one of the upcoming SBSG indoor meetings, chequebook in hand.

Come on members; let's make sure that all the unclaimed birds on the list disappear and let's get our Atlas published.

Greylag Goose, Shelduck, Egyptian Goose, Pochard, Tufted Duck, Ruddy Duck, Black Grouse, Red-legged Partridge, Quail, Pheasant, Moorhen,



Dunlin, Black-headed Gull, Collared Dove, Turtle Dove, Grasshopper Warbler, Sedge Warbler, Reed Warbler, Garden Warbler, Marsh Tit, Starling, Chaffinch, Reed Bunting.

Pete Brown

Sheffield Bioblitz 2012

Derek Whiteley is organising a BioBlitz, to run for 48 hours from 3pm on Thursday May 17th to 3pm on Saturday May 19th. Both the launch and finish will take place at Weston Park Museum. Participating organisations are Sorby Natural History Society, Sheffield Biological Records Centre, Museums Sheffield and Sheffield Eco-schools. SBSG has been invited to take part.

Weston Park Museum will be the headquarters, with public access and a café. Operatives will enter records as they arrive, and an up-to-date running total will be on display in the public gallery. The bioblitz events will

be publicised in the Environment Weeks brochure, the Museums events brochure, the Sorby newsletter and in the local media.

It is envisaged that there will be a lot of recording meetings on both days, with leaders taking groups to the best wildlife sites, but also exploring new areas. All forms of life are to be recorded, including freshwater life, insects, lichens, fungi, ground minibeasts, trees and other plant life, as well as birds and mammals. Individuals are also encouraged to do their own thing. Observations can be sent in over the 48 hours by text, phone (see the Environment

Weeks Brochure for details), in person or by e-mail to bioblitz@sorby.org.uk. Local groups can help by running their own events; SBSG members are encouraged to report their sightings – please let the group have them also. The aim is to record 1000 species, strictly within the area of the Sheffield Metropolitan District, thereby producing many new biological records for the city and indicating its species richness. The publicity generated should be of value to participating organisations, and may bring them new members.

Rod Hinchliffe

Lecture report

Clive McKay

This Birding Life

The January lecture, the first in the Group's 40th anniversary year, was given by Clive McKay, who subtitled his presentation 'Forty years of birding that started in Sheffield.'

The talk was divided into five sections; childhood, teenage years, university etc, influential books and birds and bird days. Clive's parents moved from Ireland to Sheffield, and Clive recalled his father's impressive store of farming and country knowledge, with the countryman's ability to recognise birds instinctively. He recalled visits to a wildlife park at Matlock and felt that, despite current misgivings about keeping birds and animals in this way, such places have a role in stimulating an early interest in the natural world.

He had fond memories of his membership of the Good Companions Rambling Club; he and his mother were active members and he would sometimes go without her, the only child on a walk, safe in the company of other adults. The Club members bought him a copy of *The Observer's Book of Birds*. Tinsley library stimulated his interest, holding many relevant books. Later acquisitions included Peterson's field guide, and *Flight Identification of European Raptors*. Clive's first year at Myers Grove School brought him into contact with David Herringshaw, and his knowledge moved forward in leaps and bounds. Clive

has a good memory for the red-letter days; October 28th 1972 brought him a Grey Phalarope at Midhope Reservoir.

Around this time he was shocked to discover he was short-sighted. Much of his early birding was done at Tinsley Sewage Farm, and his first sighting, proudly related to Dave Herringshaw, was of a Merlin, flying off with a mouse. Wisely, Dave Herringshaw accepted this, but quietly asked if the bird might have been a Kestrel. Indeed it was, as Clive eventually came to accept. Tinsley had its moments, with Red-legged Partridge and Grasshopper Warbler recorded. New habitats were always springing up there, and later on it was home to breeding Little Ringed Plover and Lapwing.

Clive took his first degree at Aberdeen University and had fond memories of the noted ornithologist, Professor George Dunnet, finding half a day to show him round following his application. At Aberdeen he met Kevin Shepherd, a brilliant birder, who introduced him to jizz as central to bird identification. Clive applied this, back in Sheffield in 1981, with 75 species recorded one morning along the Don.

About this time he began to study visible migration with Keith Clarkson, recalling 1285 birds counted on September 29th 1980. Clive then digressed on

visible migration, saying it worked like a rolling maul, each species having its own pattern, moving along its route like traffic between motorway service stations, with some species migrating at night. It is best seen where natural barriers constrict and concentrate movement. He also suggested that those birds which migrate in daylight hours are those which live in open environments, whilst species that spend their lives in low and dense habitats migrate at night.

Moving on, Clive mentioned working in Greenland in 1984, Sinai (with its Hoopoe Larks) in 1985, and his sighting, initially disbelieved, of a Cedar Waxwing on Noss, in The Shetlands, leading up to a PhD thesis on Chough on Islay, beginning in 1986. In 1991 he was involved in studies of White-fronted Goose, and worked in Cameroon from 1993-1995 on Bannerman's Turaco, Banded Wattle-eye and Great Blue Turaco. He was back in Islay in 1995 before becoming warden at The Reef on Tiree, a superb spot for waders, from 1995-1997. His last red-letter day? His marriage on Tiree on May 31st 1996.

Regrettably, due to some technical problems earlier in the evening, Clive ran out of time. He was nevertheless thanked for an interesting and highly enjoyable presentation.

Rod Hinchliffe

Lecture report

Tim Melling

Canada: The Wild West

The February lecture was given by Tim Melling, with an account of a recent visit to western Canada, spent mainly on Vancouver Island.

The visit began in Vancouver, the city, and Tim's first slides doubtless brought back fond memories to those of the audience who have also been there; the marina, Grouse Mountain and Stanley Park. Early sightings included Common Loon, Sooty Grouse (on the mountain) and Great Blue Heron, Red-winged Blackbird, Swainson's Thrush, Black-capped Chickadee and American Robin (in the park). He also had a slide of a black squirrel, simply a melanistic form of Grey Squirrel. Just outside the city an area of wetland, the Reifel Reserve, produced a number of waders, wildfowl and birds of prey, including Sandhill Crane, American Bittern, Wilson's Phalarope, Harlequin, Carolina Duck, Northern Harrier and Great Horned Owl.

Vancouver Island, very large and sparsely populated, has an area about half that of the British Isles. Most of the population live in the south; the remainder is essentially a huge tract of almost impenetrable temperate rain forest. Pacific White-sided Dolphin, swimming in the wake of the ferry boat, and Minke Whale were seen on the crossing to the

island. Tim showed slides of, among others, American Dipper, Cedar Waxwing, Red-breasted Nuthatch, the common Chestnut-backed Chickadee and Ruby-crowned Kinglet.

Rufous Hummingbird and Bald Eagle are quite common. Black Turnstone and Black Oystercatcher were found on rocky shorelines. Tim's presentation contained excellent photographs of various mammals, including Black Bear, River and Sea Otters, and several of a family party of Wolf, on a river shoreline. At Zeballos, a tiny settlement some 30 miles down a dirt track at the north of the island, Roosevelt Elk (ie, Red Deer) and Beaver were sighted. Probably the highlight of the evening were the superb shots of a cougar, a highly elusive animal, found swimming across a large inlet during an early morning boating excursion. Hump-backed Whale, Steller's sea lion and Sea Otter were also sighted that morning.

Tim showed a photograph of Marbled Murrelet, the last North American species to have its nest

found. Bizarrely, this seabird breeds miles inland, high in the branches of rainforest trees.

At Telegraph Cove, a good whale-watching point, Orcas were seen, together with Humpback Whale. This species rarely breaches but was seen to do so, apparently a response to the presence of Orcas wandering into the area and performed with the aim of driving them away. At Port Hardy Tim recorded Hooded Warbler, a great rarity there, before flying to Great Bear Lodge on the mainland where more mammals – American Marten and Grizzly Bear – were seen.

Tim was thanked for an absorbing and enthusiastic presentation, remarkable for the quality of his slides, and which included a brief illustrated discourse on the fable of self-inflicted traumatic bilateral orchietomy as a survival strategy among hunted male beaver. Few of the men in the audience will forget his talk in a hurry.

Rod Hinchliffe



PHOTO SPECIAL

HERE COME THE GULLS

January and February have seen a few of the rarer gulls turn up in the area. Below are some of the best shots, all taken by **Andy Deighton**.



This **Mediterranean Gull** was photographed feeding at High Bradfield on 7th January. It was also seen at Loxley Chase, and roosting at Broomhead Res.

This first winter **Iceland Gull** (right) was present at Shirecliffe Tip on 28th and 28th February.



This fourth winter **Caspian Gull** was first reported at Orgreave Lakes on 28th January, and was sighted throughout February. It was noted to have an injured leg.

RECENT SIGHTINGS

1st January - 29th February 2012

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

Bittern - Up to two birds roosting at Pit-house West until at least 23rd February.

Whooper Swan - Four at Renishaw Lake on 12th Jan, one at Orgreave Lakes on 15th, and three at Dale Dike Res on 17th.

Pink-footed Goose - High counts in January included 200 W over Leash Fen on 6th, 300 E at Thrybergh CP on 6th, 200 W at Leash Fen on 6th, 240 W at Monsal Head on 8th, 600 N at Agden on 8th, 325 over Parkwood Springs on 8th, 530 W at Parkwood Springs on 14th, 860 over Thrybergh CP on 14th, 890 W over Firsby Res on 14th, 827 W at Canklow on 15th, 530 NW at Parkwood Springs on 15th, 200 W at Eastwood on 15th, 870 over Ulley CP on 15th, 1,100 over Whitwell Moor on 15th, 250 NW over Wharncliffe Chase on 29th and 250 W over Handworth on 29th. Far fewer reports in February, with 70 NW at Handworth on 7th, 80 NW at

Morehall Res on 11th, 98 N at Woodhouse on 12th, and 60 NW at Agden on 12th.

Barnacle Goose - 2 were at Thrybergh CP on 12th Jan.

Red-crested Pochard - A female was at Rother Valley CP on 13th-19th January. A male was present at the same site from 3rd-14th Feb. Elsewhere, one was at Orgreave Lakes on 2nd Feb.

Scaup - The first winter drake was present at Thrybergh CP throughout January and February.

Smew - A redhead was at Rother Valley CP from the start of January, until 14th Feb. Elsewhere a redhead was at Ickles on 9th Feb, and a drake was at Orgreave Lakes on 17th and 18th.

Red Kite - One drifted over Rocher Crags at Agden on 26th Feb.

Rough-legged Buzzard - A juvenile roamed the Ewden, Agden and Bradfield area for the whole of January and February, still being reported in early March.

Merlin - A female was at Ewden Height on 28th January. Elsewhere there were reports from Orgreave Lakes on 4th and 18th Feb, a female hunting in the Rivelin Valley on 19th, and a "dashing male" at Silverwood Pit T o p o n 2 1 s t .

Water Rail - 2 were calling at dusk at Pit-house West on 2nd Jan, and 23rd Feb. Singles were recorded at Blackburn Meadows, Treeton, Bolehill Flash, Poolsbrook Marsh, Harthill Res and Woodhouse Washlands.

Oystercatcher - Singles at Ickles on 13th Feb, Thrybergh Res on 17th, and Rivelin Valley on 19th. Orgreave Lakes saw the majority of records, beginning with a single bird on 14th Feb, and peaking at three on 25th,

Ringed Plover - Several records from Orgreave Lakes from 29th Jan, peaking at six on 19th Feb. One was at Silverwood Lagoon on 21st Feb, and a pair at Outo Kumpo steelworks on 27th.

Golden Plover - The Peat Pits flock peaked at 350 on 18th Jan. Elsewhere good counts included 27 that flew NW at Ewden Valley on 9th, 30 flew over Orgreave Lakes on 10th, 50 were in fields at Freebirch on 10th, 90 on the 'Plains' at Orgreave on 13th, 52 at Ulley CP on 15th, 106 at Barlborough on 15th, 260 at Freebirch on 23rd, 30 S at Shilito



This Scaup was at Orgreave Lakes (M. Smethurst)

Wood on 29th, 75 at Ughill on 19th Feb, and 26 at Redmires on 23rd. A pair were observed displaying at Upper Ewden Beck on 25th Feb.

Grey Plover - Single birds at Thrybergh CP on 11th Jan and 2nd Feb, with possibly the same bird as the latter at Orgreave Lakes on 3rd and 4th.

Knot - One was at Orgreave Lakes on 31st January.

Dunlin - Many records from Orgreave Lakes, including 12 on 31st Jan and 2nd Feb. At other locations, two were at Thrybergh CP on 2nd Feb, one at Treeton on 10th and 13th Feb, one at Thrybergh CP on 10th and 26th, and one at Middleton Moor on 25th.

Jack Snipe - Singles at Silverwood Lagoon on 10th Jan, Orgreave Lakes on 14th, and Rother Valley CP on 5th.

Snipe - High counts at Woodhouse Washlands included 12 on 20th Jan and 31 on 5th Feb.

Bar-tailed Godwit - One was at Thrybergh CP on 5th Feb.

Curlew - One flew W at Morehall Res on 25th Jan. One flew W over Firsby Res on 12th Feb, and singles were at Orgreave Lakes on 12th, 17th and 18th, and Rivelin Valley on 16th. Two were at Hathersage on 18th, with birds returning to many of the upland breeding sites by the month end. The highest count by far was 38 feeding at Midhope on 25th.

Redshank - All records from Rother Valley CP, where numbers peaked at four on 4th Feb, and Orgreave Lakes, where a single was present from 3rd Feb onwards.

Green Sandpiper - Up to three birds reported at Blackburn Meadows throughout January and February.

Mediterranean Gull - A second winter was present at Broomhead Res roost on 2nd, 8th and 9th January, with probably the same bird reported feeding at High Bradfield on 7th, and Loxley Chase on 8th. An adult in almost full summer plumage was present at Broomhead Res on 3rd and 24th Feb.

Black-headed Gull - Peak counts were 1,700 at Langsett Res on 18th Jan, 2,000 at Broomhead Res on 14th Feb, 1,200 at Orgreave Lakes on 18th, and 1,250 at Thrybergh CP on 24th.

Common Gull - The highest counts were 142 at Langsett Res on 11th Feb, and 100 at Broomhead Res on 14th.

Herring Gill - Peak counts were 400 at Broomhead Res on 14th Jan, and 400 at Sheffield Wednesday FC on 28th.

Yellow-legged Gull - One was at Owlerton on 6th Jan, and one at Broomhead Res on 22nd.

Caspian Gull - A fourth winter with an injured leg was present at Orgreave Lakes from 28th Jan until at least 29th Feb. A third winter was at Poolsbrook CP on 27th Feb.

Iceland Gull - A 1st winter was present at Orgreave Lakes on 25-27th Feb. A 1stW/2cy was at Shirecliffe Tip on 28th and 29th.

Great Black-backed Gull - Peak counts included 300 at Broomhead Res on 14th Jan, 140 at Sheffield Wednesday FC on 28th, and 80 at Orgreave Lakes on 18th.

Kittiwake - An adult was in the roost at Orgreave Lakes on 17th Feb.

Short-eared Owl - One was at Peat Pits on New Year's Day. Up to five birds were hunting at Leash Fen for most of the period.

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker - Singles at Thrybergh Cemetery on 15th Jan, Wharncliffe Wood on 17th, and Sharrow General Cemetery on 16th Feb.

Woodlark - One at Aldwarke SF on 26th Feb.

Skylark - High counts included 60 at Orgreave Lakes on 5th Feb, and 25 at Wharncliffe Chase on 26th.

Meadow Pipit - Orgreave Lakes saw the largest counts, with 150 in one flock on 27th Jan, and 120 still present on 11th Feb.

Rock Pipit - A rock or water pipit flew low N calling on 21st Jan.



This Snow Bunting was at Orgreave Lakes (M. Reeder)

Waxwing - Small numbers still present throughout, with two at Bolehill Rec, Crookes on the 1st Jan the first of the year, and staying until 7th. Three were at Oxpring Bank on 5th, up to 29 in Sharrow between 6th and 16th, 20 at Lodge Moor on 11th, two at Wentworth on 19th, one at Crosspool on 22nd, one at Broomhead Res on 22nd, 10 at Crosspool on 23rd, 10 at Broomhill on 25th, 30 at Highfield on 28th and 30th, 40 at Heeley City Farm on 29th, and 20 at Broomhill on 30th. There were sparser sightings during February, with 15 at Crosspool on 3rd, one at Heeley City Farm on 5th, 25 at Wentworth on 7th, 24 at Crosspool on 15th and 30 at the same site on 20th, and 14 at Sheffield University on 28th.

Stonechat - Three at Broomhead Moor on 5th Feb was the only record above one, with singles at Outo Kumpo Steelworks, Wharncliffe Chase, Agden Side and Ewden Height.

Fieldfare - Highest counts included 320 at Thrybergh CP on 1st Jan, 250 at Lodge Moor on 30th, 200 at Beighton on 6th Feb, 200 at Norton Lees on 10th, 200 at Orgreave Lakes on 2th, 200 at Wharncliffe Chase on 12th, and 230 at Rivelin Valley on 19th.

Redwing - Recorded in smaller numbers than Fieldfare, with larger counts included 120 at Aldwarke

on 8th Jan, and 100 at Canklow on 7th Feb. Singing was observed by a flock of 17 at Sharrow General Cemetery on 26th Feb.

Cetti's Warbler - One at Pit-house West between 9th and 16th January.

Blackcap - Wintering birds widely reported, at Kimberworth Park, Ecclesall, Millhouses, Hangingwater, Walkley Bank, Chee Dale, Sharrow, Nether Edge, Brincliffe Edge, Endcliffe Park, Woodseats and Ravenfield. Unseasonal singing was heard in Chee Dale on 28th Jan, and Ecclesall on 18th Feb.

Chiffchaff - Wintering birds recorded from Rawmarsh, Rother Valley Country Park, Aldwarke, Ickles, Canklow Woods and Firsby Res.

Great Grey Shrike - Sporadic reports from the Leash Fen area up to at least 12th Feb, suggesting the bird was present but elusive for much of the period

Brambling - 100 at Chatsworth Park on 1st and 2nd January were the largest counts of the winter. Elsewhere numbers were lower, with highest counts being 16 at Mam Tor on 8th Jan, 60 at Longshaw on 16th, and 20 at Broomhead Hall on 29th.

Siskin - Larger flocks included 200 at Broomhead Res on 1st Jan,

80 at Parkwood Springs on 28th, 50 at Langsett Res on 4th Feb, and 200 at Bingham Park on 5th.

Common (Mealy) Redpoll - Singles at Waverley Opencast on 11th Jan, Pit-house West on 13th, and Wharncliffe Side on 29th.

Lesser Redpoll - Generally lower numbers, with 100 at Pit-house West being the largest count. Elsewhere 31 were at Thrybergh CP on 2nd Jan, 27 at Blackburn Meadows on 6th, 40 at Attercliffe on 10th, 25 at Ravenfield Ponds on 21st, 20 at Wharncliffe Wood on 21st, 20 at Dore on 21st Feb, 40 at High Hazels Park on 21st.

Crossbill - Larger counts included 20 at Holling Dale on 14th Jan, 15 at Wharncliffe Chase on 17th, 20 at Langsett Res on 4th Feb, 20 at Broomhead Res on 12th, and 15 at Redmires Conduit on 21st.

Hawfinch - One was at Hathersage on 16th January.

Lapland Bunting - One was feeding at Orgreave Lakes on 5-7th Feb.

Snow Bunting - One was present at Orgreave Lakes on 8-9th Jan.

Pete Mella

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

MG Archer, S Ashton, A Bailey, B Bailey, S Barnes, SJ Barnes, A Baverstock, AR Bell, RP Blagden, C Bonnington, K Bower, SJ Branch, MC Brew, C Brewster, PL Brown, V Browne, R Burton, R Butterfield, DM Bye, BM Carr, EO Chafer, I Chapman, J Clarke, J&DA Clifton, L Coates, J Crank, J Crooks, N Cross, C Dauris, A Deighton, J Ducker, W Dudhill, NP Dummigan, L Dunkley, M Dyson, H Egan, MG Fenner, P Flackett, D&J Franklin, D Gains, G Games, M Garner, P Garrity, G Grant, S Green, S Guymmer, D Hallam, R Harris, I Hedge, M Hibbert, A Hill, RD Hill, DJ Hitchen, M Hodgson, J Hornbuckle, J Horner, J Housden, C Hurst, G James, M Jarvis, Anne Johnson, A Jones, R Kay, JE Kenward, T Kettle, S King, J Kingsland, K Knowles, M Lacey, P Lawson, P Leonard, P Lockwood, N Loverock, JL Marriott, C MCWhirter-Young, C Measures, P Mella, B Merryweather, T Middleton, M Miller, T Millson, TH Minskip, D Mowbray, D Neill, MG Oxlade, D Parkes, PH Pearsall, N Perera, J Perlstrom, R Platts, S Platts, R Popplewell, NR Porter, M Purslow, MN Reeder, P Ridsdale, D Rigg, B Roberts, K Roberts, D Roddis, S Samworth, J Sherwin, M Sherwin, S Sherwin, A Siddall, D Simmonite, MA Smethurst, M Snook, B Spencer, J Stobart, MJ Sweeney, J Taylor, M&L Taylor, N Taylor, SG Tebbutt, P Thomas, A Thompson, M Timms, K Tupholme, R Twigg, C Tyler, SE Vickers, EC Vincent, RV Walker, D Warburton, R Watkinson, G Wheatley, RDR Williams, J Wilson, P&A Wilson, D Wood, D Woodriff, P Wragg, H Young, Thrybergh CP Bird Log, Sorby Breck RG.

GIFT AID AND MEMBERSHIP

In recent years there have been changes to Gift Aid legislation, making it easier for charitable organisations to reclaim income tax on the contributions, including subscriptions, made by members.

The group is constantly looking for sources of income to offset the increasing costs of running the group, such as printing the excellent Annual Report, (the better it gets, in terms of photos etc, the more it costs) and also room hire for our Indoor Meetings.

Gift Aid is a means by which every basic rate tax-paying member can contribute to the group's income, courtesy of the Inland Revenue (what an incentive!). If you are about to pay your 2009 subscription and have not already filled in a Gift Aid form, please complete the tear off slip below, and return it to any committee member at an indoor meeting or send with subs to Martin Hodgson by post. Alternatively, please send it to me at:

Anselm,
White Edge Drive,
Baslow
Derbyshire
DE45 1SJ

At the end of the tax year I can then recover 22/78 of your subscription (£3.95). If you are a higher rate taxpayer, you can include the payment on your tax return, and get higher rate tax relief yourself.

Please take the time to do this, as we can potentially raise hundreds of pounds for the group.

*Ron Blagden
Treasure*

GIFT AID FORM

NAME

Are you a basic rate taxpayer? YES/NO

Do you agree to Sheffield Bird Study Group treating your membership payment for 2012 and future membership payments, as a Gift Aid contribution?
YES/NO

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions for 2012 became due in January.

We have a good programme of speakers planned for next year (see page 7), and many local field trips are also in the pipeline. A copy of the Annual Report for the year prior to membership is also included. The subscriptions remain the same at £14 for individual members, £16 for family membership, and £7 for juniors (up to age 16), which I am sure you will see as good value for money. A subscription form is below. To renew, please see Martin Hodgson at any meeting, or send your cheque payable to Sheffield Bird Study Group, together with a stamped addressed envelope for return of your membership card, to Martin Hodgson, 142 Hangingwater Road, Sheffield, S11 7ET. For new members an application form is available at meetings, or by email to martinjhodgson@btinternet.com

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION 2012 RENEWAL FORM

Name(s).....Date.....

Address.....
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Email..... Telephone No.

Please indicate whether you would like to receive your Bulletin by e-mail Yes/No

Please include a stamped addressed envelope for return of your membership card.

To: Martin Hodgson, 142 Hangingwater Road, Sheffield, S11 7ET