

BIRD NEWS FROM CARR VALE NATURE RESERVE AND SURROUNDING AREA

DECEMBER 2008

Daily coverage continued throughout the month although again it was down to Ian Swain, Kev Navin, Phil Snaith and Arthur Gee to continue with the coverage until the 25th after which it was a breeze to finish our 8th consecutive year of continuous coverage, a total of 3204 days. The year ended with a flourish with three new species for the year taking the year list to 146 and late information concerning a Bar-tailed Godwit in July last year took the year list for 2007 to 149. 83 species were recorded during the month including **Bittern** (6th record), **Pink-footed Geese**, **White-fronted Geese** (4th record), **Goosander**, **Peregrine**, **Woodcock**, **Waxwing** (five, 11th record), **Tree Sparrow**, **Common (Mealy) Redpoll** (7th record) and **Roe Deer**.

Cormorants were seen on 29 dates but there were only three double-figure counts the highest off which being 16 on the 11th. **Herons** were logged on all bar one date but the highest count was only five on the 22nd whilst **Mute Swans** were logged daily with a peak of nine on the 14th. Two **Pink-footed Geese** were present on the 3rd and a flock of 84 was down on the 13th. These remained until the 16th after which the flock reduced to 35, remaining at this level until the 19th. Over the following three days the only count was eight on the 21st but 35 were then present on the 23rd increasing to 54 on the 24th and 61 on the 25th. Numbers then declined again with 42 on the 26th, 36 on the 27th and 34 on the 28th on which date two first winter **White-fronted Geese** were found amongst them. Shortly after this discovery the flock left north-west but not before record shots had been obtained. Although we have had Pink-feet down before the length of stay on this occasion is most unusual. Three **Grey Lag Geese** were present on the 23rd with one or two on 16 other dates and three Grey Geese that flew north on the 29th were thought to be Bean Geese. **Canada Geese** numbers remained in three-figures all month with a peak count of 183 on the 28th.

Wigeon were present daily and continued to increase slowly reaching a high of 143 on the 31st. Counts of **Gadwall** were 20 or less until Christmas after which numbers increased peaking at 57 on the 30th. There were some good counts of **Teal** with 21 counts in excess of 100 the highest of which being 169 on the 14th but **Mallard** numbers remained low with a high of just 74 on the 1st. Four **Shovelers** were present on the 17th with one on the 14th and two on the 15th and up to three **Pochard** were present 17 dates. **Tufted Ducks** were recorded in double-figures on 17 dates with a maximum of 20 on the 21st and five **Goosander** were logged on the 23rd.

Sparrowhawks were logged on eight dates (nine bird / days), **Common Buzzards** were seen on 29 dates (53 bird / days), **Kestrels** were recorded on 14 dates (16 bird / days) and a **Peregrine** was seen on the 9th. Five **Red-legged Partridges** were seen on the 10th and three **Grey Partridges** were logged on the 14th. **Water Rails** were recorded on ten dates from the 10th with two on the 24th, 26th and 27th. **Coot** peaked at 52 on the 3rd and 7th, **Golden Plover** were only recorded on four dates with a peak of 35 on the 2nd and **Lapwings** were recorded in double-figures on at least 11 dates with a high of 60 on the 26th. **Snipe** were recorded in single figures on 11 dates but no more than three were seen on any date and a **Woodcock** was reported on the 21st whilst a **Redshank** was seen daily between the 27th and 30th.

216 **Black-headed Gulls** on the 17th was the highest count of the month and single **Common Gulls** were seen on four dates. Large Gulls were scarce with maximum counts of 78 **Herring Gulls** on the 14th and 41 **Great Black-backed Gulls** on the 15th. 10 **Stock Doves** were seen on the 1st, a **Woodpigeon** was singing on the 25th and 1500 were present on the 28th. A **Little Owl** was seen 12 dates and a **Tawny Owl** was logged on the 9th. A **Kingfisher** were seen on the 1st and 2nd, **Green Woodpeckers** were logged on 5th, 24th and 28th and a **Great-spotted Woodpecker** was seen on the 25th. Two **Grey Wagtails** were seen on the 29th with singles on four more dates and 32 **Pied Wagtails** were counted on the 28th.

One of the highlights of the month was a small flock of five **Waxwings** which flew over the mound towards Bolsover. **Fieldfares** continued to be seen in small numbers with a high of 103 on the 9th whilst the highest count of **Redwings** was 120 on the 16th. 13 **Long-tailed Tits** were seen on the 21st and up to five **Willow Tits** were seen on several dates, the mound feeding station being the best place to get close up views. One or two **Coal Tits** were seen on 20 dates with three on the 24th.

37 **Magpies** were together on the embankment on the 28th and two **Ravens** flew over on the 12th. The only **Tree Sparrow** of the month was recorded on the 14th. The highest count of **Goldfinches** was 20 on the 21st and **Siskins** were only recorded from the 25th with ten noted on the 30th. 30 **Linnets** on the 2nd was a good winter count and **Lesser Redpolls** were very scarce until the 20th when 20 were found on the 20th. 15 were seen on the 25th with 20 on the 27th, increasing to 30 on the 29th and 30th. Hidden amongst this flock was a **Common (Mealy) Redpoll**, which was found on the 29th. **Bullfinches** were recorded daily with up to seven logged on a number of dates and **Reed Buntings** were regular visitors to the mound feeding station with a high of 21 on the 30th.

A **Fox** was seen on the 11th, a **Weasel** was seen on the 17th and two **Roe Deer** were seen on the 25th and 26th.

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