

BIRD NEWS FROM CARR VALE NATURE RESERVE
AND SURROUNDING AREA.

MAY 2014

106 species were logged during May, which equals the record for the month and the year list moved on to 133. Once again the weather was fairly benign although we did have a few days when it rained. Ian Swain was again the main recorder for the third week of the month as I was away. The only aggravation during the month was the repeated ripping down of the close fishing season notices.

The two Pink-footed Geese from March were last seen on the 18th, Grey Lag Geese were again present daily with double-figure counts on seven dates whilst a single bird with a broken wing was present throughout. The male Mandarin Duck, that was infatuated with a female Mallard was seen on all but two dates during the month, Red-legged Partridges were logged on six dates and single Cormorants were seen on four dates. One or two Little Grebes were present on eight dates and up to five Great-crested Grebes were seen daily. Sparrowhawks were recorded on 11 dates, Common Buzzards were seen on 27 dates with double-figure counts on only three dates whilst one or two Hobbies were seen on nine dates. Water Rails were logged on seven dates, Oystercatchers were a daily feature as were Little Ringed Plovers until the 29th. One or two Redshank were logged on 16 dates and up to four Common Terns were present daily, one or two Kingfishers were seen on 17 dates, Green Woodpeckers entered the log book on 14 dates and Great-spotted Woodpeckers were proved breeding. Up to five Yellow Wagtails were logged on 25 dates, up to six Hares were seen on 15 dates, a Fox was seen on three dates and up to two Roe Deer were seen on ten dates including a doe with a fawn on the 19th.

A male Pochard was present on the 1st when three Whimbrel left north-east early morning and there was a good May count of 120 Great Black-backed Gulls as well as a late Meadow Pipit. A Dunlin, four Whimbrel and a Common Sandpiper were seen on the 2nd when the Great Black-backed numbers had dropped to just 40 and a total of seven Arctic Terns flew north. The pair of Garganey was last seen on the 3rd, dashing any hopes of a breeding attempt but the 3rd also produced the bird of the year so far, in the form of a Glossy Ibis, a new bird for Carr Vale. Unfortunately it didn't stay very long before flying off to South Yorkshire where it remained for weeks. Also on the 3rd a Raven flew north. A pair of Grey Partridges was reported on the 4th, this being the first record for the year and the same afternoon four Dunlin, two Whimbrel and two Common Sandpipers were present. A pair of Shelduck was present on the 5th and a pair of Shoveler, a Peregrine, two Dunlin and a Common Sandpiper were seen on the 6th when two Whimbrel arrived at 1100 hours. Two Dunlin flew south on the 7th, a Teal was seen on the 9th when three single Whimbrel were logged during the morning (though this could relate to the same returning individual). A male Shelduck was seen on the 10th when a Whimbrel left south-east before 0700 and an Arctic Tern flew north.

A total of 12 Dunlin flew through the reserve on the 11th, which is the second highest count for the patch and the same day one or two Whimbrel were logged as was a Common

Sandpiper that remained until the following day whilst two Arctic Terns also flew north on the 11th. The pair of Garganey was back for the afternoon on the 12th as was a Whimbrel from 1730. A Whimbrel was seen on the 13th as was a first summer Common Gull and the last Great Black-backed Gull of the winter. The 13th was also a day when the breeding bird survey took place which produced four Garden Warblers, 13 Common Whitethroats, 17 Sedge Warblers (a record count) and 16 Reed Warblers (all singing males). A female Wheatear was also found on the 13th as was the first Large Red Damsel. A female Marsh Harrier flew south, a Whimbrel left east, there was a pair of Wheatears, a male Whinchat and a Grass snake, were all seen on the 14th with the Whinchat remaining overnight.

A Little Egret found on the 15th remained until the following day but the best record for the 15th was the discovery of a brood of three Water Rails. An Osprey flew north on the 16th and Grey Lag Geese peaked at 14 on the 17th whilst the male Garganey paid a visit on the 19th. Four Redshank on the 20th was the highest count of the spring whilst insect news concerned a Four-spotted Chaser was seen on the 21st and a Dingy Skipper was seen on the 22nd. A Red Kite flew south-east on the 23rd when there was a pager report of an immature male Marsh Harrier but much more significantly a pair of Lesser Black-backed Gulls settled down to nest for the first time ever in Derbyshire. The male Garganey returned on the 24th and was subsequently seen on all bar one month to the month end and the same day a Cuckoo was heard (also on the 25th).

A Little Egret left north, a Red Kite flew north-west and a Peregrine was seen on the 25th. The provision of a Sand Martin bank was new to the reserve this year and proved to be a resounding success with all 24 holes occupied by the 24th (humble pie to be eaten by the doubters I think!). Unfortunately the American Bullfrog was heard on the 26th so it's still around. A Ringed Plover flew north on the 27th and the same day a Bar-tailed Godwit was present for twenty minutes before it too continued north. A first summer Mediterranean Gull was a brief visitor on the 29th when two second summer Herring Gulls were rather late visitors. A first summer Common Gull was present on the 30th when a Goldcrest was still singing and then on the 31st three Teal were present and a first summer Little Gull left north.

Mark Beevers.