

BIRD NEWS FROM CARR VALE NATURE RESERVE
AND SURROUNDING AREA

AUGUST 2011

Just 91 species were logged during August; the worst August total since 1997 yet despite this we added five species to the year list, which moved on to 138, just two off the highest end of August total. Litter continued to be a problem but for once the muddy margins of the flashes looked perfect for passage waders. Unfortunately just seven species of wader thought so, which no doubt contributed to our low monthly total.

It was a fantastic month for raptors with **Sparrowhawks** logged on 19 dates during the month, **Common Buzzards** logged on 24 dates, **Kestrels** recorded on 25 dates, **Hobbies** seen on 23 dates and **Peregrines** (three different birds) seen on eight dates. **Water Rails** were not to be out done as they were logged on 18 dates with an adult, a fledged juvenile and a chick all regularly noted whilst **Little Owls** were recorded on 15 dates during the month, **Kingfishers** on 21 dates, **Green Woodpeckers** on 11 dates, **Great-spotted Woodpeckers** on ten dates and **Yellow Wagtails** on 28 dates.

A **Great-crested Grebe** was present on the 1st (remaining to the 4th) on which date a juvenile **Little Egret** graced the flashes and there was a good count of 13 **Grey Lag Geese**. Two **Little Egrets** arrived mid-morning on the 2nd and that day the **Canada Geese** peaked at 158, a very low count for August. Also on the 2nd two **Shoveler**, a **Snipe** and a **Lesser Whitethroat** were seen. A **Comma**, an **Essex Skipper** and a **Brown Argus** were also seen on the 2nd, the latter representing the first record for the site but its provenance may be tainted given that a released **Swallowtail** was also present on that date. Also amongst the insects present on the 2nd there was two male **Banded Demoiselles**, a species that is barely annual at Carr Vale and three **Emperors**. The **Lesser Whitethroat** remained the following day when three **Tree Sparrows** were seen and then 141 **Mallard** on the 4th was the highest count of the month. **Grey Herons** peaked at nine on the 5th when the **Common Sandpiper** that had been present from July was last seen and an **Essex Skipper** was seen. Two **Grey Lag Geese** were present on the 6th when a **Greenshank** flew through and two **Green Sandpipers** were present. A **Great-crested Grebe** was seen on the 8th (until 14th), a **Lesser Whitethroat** and a **Brimstone** were seen on the 9th and two **Shoveler** were seen on the 10th, one of which remained until the 15th.

Two **Grey Lag Geese** were seen on the 11th (and were still present the following day) along with a **Green Sandpiper**, 23 **Collared Doves** were counted on the 12th and five **Grass Snakes** including four recent hatchlings were seen on the 13th. A **Common Sandpiper** was seen on the 14th, a juvenile **Little Egret** was present on the 15th when 57 **Goldfinches** were counted and another **Comma** was seen. **Shoveler** increased to three on the 16th, a **Common Sandpiper** was also seen and a **Caspian Gull** was found hidden amongst 35 **Lesser Black-baked Gulls**, which represented the highest count for the month. Also on that date 20 **Sand Martins** was the highest count for the month, a **Grey Wagtail** was the first of nine records during the month and then an early **Goldcrest** was present from the 18th (until 21st). A juvenile **Whinchat** was present early on the 19th and a **Tree Pipit** flew south on the 20th on which date two pairs of **Grey Partridge** were found with nine and eight young.

The 21st was a good day as first a **Tree Pipit** flew south and then a **Cetti's Warbler** was found in the reeds below the observation mound. As observers were looking for that an influx of **Black-headed Gulls** included a juvenile **Mediterranean Gull**, which stayed until flushed by a **Peregrine**, whilst 11 **Teal** on the flashes was the first double-figure count of the autumn and there was 12 **Common Buzzards** in the air at once. A **Stoat** was also reported on the 21st. A **Greenshank** circled the flashes on the 22nd but then left north, another **Tree Pipit** flew south and two **Weasels** were chasing each other in front of the mound. **Red-legged Partridges** peaked at four on the 23rd and a **Green Sandpiper** was also seen that day. Two **Little Egrets** came in from the north on the 24th but only stayed twenty minutes and then they flew off south-east. The same day 40 **Gadwall** were counted, 14 **Common Buzzards**, four **Kestrels** and four **Hobbies** were also seen and a **Little Ringed Plover** arrived for a weeks stay. Four **Sparrowhawks** and four **Hobbies** were seen on the 25th, a **Snipe** was seen and a **Tree Pipit** flew south on the 26th whilst on the 27th **Lapwings** peaked at a lowly 52, another **Green Sandpiper** was present and the **Black-headed Gull** count reached 205. **Teal** reached a high of 22 on the 28th and in the evening 250 **House Martins** were wheeling over the sewage works. Nine **Grey Herons** and four **Hobbies** were counted on the 29th when a **Lesser Black-backed Gull** of the *intermedius* race was found. Two juvenile **Pochard** were present on the 30th when a **Tawny Owl** was heard, a party of three **Jays** was seen and there was a flock of 80 **Linnets**. A **Dunlin** dropped in very briefly on the 31st when the **Cetti's Warbler** was still present in the reed-bed and a **Migrant Hawker** was seen.

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