

DECEMBER 2020 BIRD NOTES

Highlights: Great Northern Diver, Ruff and a record count of Common Gulls.

What is thought to be our regular wintering Great Northern Diver arrived back as a Christmas Box on 25th. Water bird maxima were: 24 Little Grebe on 31st, 55 Great Crested Grebe on 30th, 33 Cormorant on 29th, 1 Little Egret on 6th, 3 Grey Heron on 25th, 40 Mute Swan on 1st, 2 Whooper Swan on 6th, 170 Pink-footed Geese heading W on 29th, 466 Greylag Geese on 9th, 378 Canada Geese on 31st, 3 Barnacle Geese on 25th, 321 Wigeon on 1st, 91 Gadwall on 15th, 320 Teal on 24th, 145 Mallard on 30th, 3 Pintail on 15th, 8 Shoveler on 6th, 468 Pochard on 24th, 364 Tufted Duck on 1st, 10 Goldeneye on 15th, 5 Goosander on 31st, 1 Water Rail in Hopton reedbed on 15th and 28th and another in WLC Creek on 31st, 19 Moorhen on 1st, 1345 Coot on 24th, and an escapee Black Swan all month.

Very little raptor activity this month, with a Red Kite over Millfields on 26th, 6 Common Buzzards in the air on 15th and 2 Peregrine on 1st and 19th.

Wader sightings included the Lapwing flock still at last months high of 600 on 1st, 1 Dunlin on 1st and 2nd, a Ruff was around Stones Island 6th-31st, a flock of 54 Common Snipe took to the air from Horseshoe Island on 9th, 5 Woodcock flew into Hopton End at dawn on 12th, 1 Curlew on 16th and 20th and 4 Redshank from 29th.

Gull counts were 13000 Black-headed, 1500 Lesser Black-backed and 1000 Common from Millfields at dawn on 20th and a site and county record of 2250 Common Gulls off Stones Island at dusk on 29th. Other Gull maxima were 8 Herring on 27th, 3 Yellow-legged on 25th and 2 Great Black-backed on 19th.

A movement of 1240 Wood Pigeon on 19th showed the majority heading northeast, 11 Collared Dove were around feeders at Oldfield Lane cottages on 9th and another 5 were around the Ranger Base and WLC on 17th. From Hopton end at dawn on 28th 7 Tawny Owls were heard, and 2 Kingfishers were seen during the WeBS count on 15th at opposite ends of the site, Hopton end and Millfields. There were 2 dunnocks singing at Hopton end on 21st and 2 Mistle Thrushes singing on 17th. Wintering thrushes numbered 30 Fieldfare on 8th and 200 Redwing on 20th. The maximum day count of Chiffchaff was 2 but, with 2 on Stones Island on 2nd and several other dates plus singles seen at other locations remote from Stones Island, at least 3 and probably 4 birds were considered to have been on site this month. Further evidence of Chiffchaff came on 23rd when 2 similar birds were flushed from a litter bin being emptied at dusk by Rangers. A photograph of one of the birds clearly shows a Chiffchaff. Were they roosting in the bin? The regular early morning post-roost Jackdaw flock numbered 800 on 18th and 52 Rooks flew over the site on 10th. A flock of 700 Starlings left of Hopton reedbed at dawn on 17th, subsequent site checks since found no further roost there.

A typical 93 species this December compared with 93 in 2019, 87 in 2018, 92 in 2017, 95 in 2016, 94 in 2015 and 91 in 2014.

NOVEMBER 2020 BIRD NOTES

Highlights: Great Northern Diver, Bean Goose, Hawfinch and Snow Bunting .

At the eleventh month, and finally, a new species to Carsington: Bean Goose with some excellent support species. Water bird maxima were from the WeBS count on 17th unless dated otherwise: a juvenile Great Northern Diver on 16th and an adult on 17-18th, 24 Little Grebe, 37 Great Crested Grebe on 10th, 26 Cormorant on 4th, 2 Little Egret on 9th, 3 Grey Heron on 2nd, 40 Mute Swan on 2nd, 6 Whooper Swan on 5th, a Bean Goose species flew south over the dam on 10th, 167 Pink-footed Geese heading NE on 4th, 500 Greylag Geese on 2nd, 507 Canada Geese on 10th, 2 Barnacle Geese on 2-20th, 337 Wigeon, 84 Gadwall, 200 Teal, 170 Mallard on 10th, 4 Pintail, 4 Shoveler on 7th, 2 Red-crested Pochard on 8-21st, 325 Pochard on 4th, 366 Tufted Duck on 10th, 5 Goldeneye, 3 Red-breasted Merganser on 8th, 5 Goosander on 5th, 1 elusive Water Rail in Hopton reedbed all month, 25 Moorhen on 10th and 1349 Coot. The most photographed bird this month was an escapee Black Swan, present all month and usually found at Millfields.

Raptor sightings included a Red Kite on 3rd and on a few other occasions, 3 Sparrowhawk at the same time on 12th, 5 Common Buzzards in the air on 4th and 15th, an adult male Merlin on 6th, briefly perched on a roadside fence post along the dam, and Peregrine on 4th and 12th.

A Golden Plover was heard flying over on 8th and 13th, the Lapwing flock increased to 600 by 30th, 2 Dunlin on 30th, a flock of 50 Common Snipe were flushed from the dam wall in the dawn mist on 6th, and 27 noted on 17th included a flock of at least 20 flying around Watersports, and 5 Woodcock flew into Hopton End at dawn on 29th.

Gull counts were 11000 Black-headed and 1000 Lesser Black-backed from Millfields early on 20th, 500 Common mid afternoon in Brown Ale Bay on 4th, 2 Herring on 11th and 21st, 1 Caspian on 15th, 3 Yellow-legged on 4th and 3 Great Black-backed on 5th.

There was a massive nationwide Wood Pigeon movement southwards early in the month, which was well recorded at Carsington on many days between dawn and 1100hrs, with 1120 on 1st, 4250 on 3rd, a record 43200 on 4th, 10935 on 5th and 1920 on 7th. Five Great-spotted Woodpecker were noted on 4th and 5th, 31 Skylark flew over northwards on 2nd and then another 26 on 19th, maybe just heading from their roost to feed on Carsington Pastures. Meadow Pipit were around all month with 40 on 16th and, as winter thrushes moved through, their largest counts were 392 Fieldfare on 5th and 240 Redwing on 11th. A Blackcap was calling behind the Visitor Centre on 6th and 3 Chiffchaff were noted on 18th with at least 1 still around on 29th. Ten Goldcrest were noted on 4th and 20 Long-tailed Tit on 2nd. The dawn Jackdaw flock totalled 700 on 28th, 70 Rook flew over on 2nd and 2402 Starlings flew west in small flocks during the morning of 5th. Finches were well recorded, mostly flying over, with 79 Chaffinch on 2nd and at least 20 around Sheepwash car park feeder on 30th, 8 Brambling on 5th, 7 Greenfinch on 2nd, 20 Siskin on 8th, 12 Lesser Redpoll on 5th, a Crossbill on 4th and 7th, a Hawfinch on 8th and a Snow Bunting, seen and heard for 2-3mins flying around Stones Island, finally landing behind Watersports Island out of sight at 0800hrs on 20th.

A substantial 101 species this November compared with 95 in 2019, 93 in 2018, 101 in 2017, 99 in 2016, 101 in 2015 and 96 in 2014.

OCTOBER 2020 BIRD NOTES

Highlights: Garganey, Grey Plover, Kittiwake, Yellow-browed Warbler and Lapland Bunting.

Many notable and a few rare species during this month of migration but still no new species for the year. Water bird maxima were from the WeBS count on 18th unless dated otherwise: 35 Little Grebe, 42 Great Crested Grebe, 31 Cormorant on 25th, 3 Little Egret from 16th, 5 Grey Heron, 36 Mute Swan on 4th, 4 Whooper Swan on 14th, 345 Pink-footed Geese heading SE on 11th, 510 Greylag Geese on 30th, 520 Canada Geese on 19th, 40 Barnacle Geese on 17th, 356 Wigeon on 30th, 79 Gadwall on 31st, 366 Teal, 166 Mallard, 3 Pintail on 7-9th, juvenile Garganey again on 14th and 29th and maybe all month, 7 Shoveler on 31st, 6 Red-crested Pochard on 7th and 9th, 309 Pochard on 30th, 234 Tufted Duck, 3 Goldeneye on 16th, 5 redheaded Goosander on 31st, 1 Water Rail returned to winter in Hopton reedbed from 17th, 21 Moorhen and 1211 Coot. A couple of exotic escapees have also been noted, a Black Swan arrived on 2nd and stayed all month and 2 Nene Geese came in with the 40 Barnacles on 17th.

Only a few raptor sightings, including Red Kite on 8th and 11th and a juvenile Peregrine on several dates up to 13th, reported as playing around with the Lapwings and Black-headed Gulls at the Wildlife Centre, obviously practising its catch skills to the annoyance of the resident birds.

Fewer wader records, which is expected in October, including a Ringed Plover on 1st, a flock of 50 Golden Plover heading west over Wildlife Centre Creek on 11th, a Grey Plover, heard over the Wildlife Centre on 9th, was then seen trying to land on Stones Island shore, 230 Lapwing on 25th, 4 Dunlin on 4th, a Jack Snipe with Common Snipe on Horseshoe Island on 21st, 12 Common Snipe on 13th and 23rd and a Common Sandpiper at Hopton End on 2nd.

Gull counts were 10,000 Black-headed and 4000 Lesser Black-backed from Millfields early on 28th, 570 Common on 31st, 2 Herring 30-31st, 2 Caspian on 17th, 4 Yellow-legged on 25th, a Kittiwake on 24th and 3 Great Black-backed on 12th and 19th, which included a well known regular, named 'One Foot' for obvious reasons, enjoying crayfish for breakfast on 14th and 15th.

Wood Pigeon movement was noted on 28th with 405 heading south. An exceptionally late Swift record over Watersports was a big surprise on 22nd, the previous latest was on 24th Sept 1998. The final hirundine records were a Swallow on 15th and 3 House Martins on 6th. Up to 2 Kingfishers were around all month and Skylark movement peaked at 82 over on 13th, 60 of which were heading north, and Meadow Pipits peaked at 161 through on 7th. A Rock Pipit was on the dam on 1st and singles were also noted on 4th, 21st and 26th. A Stonechat was seen from the Wildlife Centre on 6th and 13th and 3 Wheatear were spread along the dam on 1st. Winter thrush flocks started passing through with 286 Fieldfare and 1678 Redwing counted on 11th. Late warblers were a Blackcap by the Wildlife Centre on 22nd and a Chiffchaff with a mixed tit flock at Sheepwash on 30th. The star warbler was a Yellow-browed Warbler found in poor weather near the Wildlife Centre on 27th. It proved elusive the following day but was seen. Jackdaws totalled 1000 and Rooks 165 as they left their roost near the dam on 28th. Other species noted flying over were, 167 Starlings heading southwest on 13th, 30 Brambling on 27th, 20 Siskin on 7th, 22 Lesser Redpoll on 19th, 11 Crossbill on 19th, 2 Yellowhammer on 9th and the highlight, a rare Lapland Bunting on 18th. This bird was seen and heard flying northwards over Stones island at 0835hrs, the first since 2010.

A reasonable 106 species this October compared with 103 in 2019, 106 in 2018, 108 in 2017, 108 in 2016, 96 in 2015 and 98 in 2014.

SEPTEMBER 2020 BIRD NOTES

Highlights: Great Egret, Garganey, Marsh Harrier, Osprey, Little Stint and Sandwich Tern.

This month proved to be a record breaker for species counts. It was looking promising from the 7th when a co-ordinated all day watch around the site recorded 92 species, 10 more than last year at the same time. By the end of the month 119 species had been noted, just exceeding the previous record set at 118 during September 2002.

Water bird maxima were from the WeBS count on 27th unless dated otherwise: 33 Little Grebe, 50 Great Crested Grebe on 9th, 46 Cormorant on 7th, 3 Little Egret on 7-8th and 11th, 1 Great Egret on 7th, 18th and 24th, 9 Grey Heron on 11th, 38 Mute Swan on 7th, 1 Whooper Swan on 27-28th, 1 Pink-footed Goose on 7th, 575 Greylag Geese on 29th, 796 Canada Geese on 29th, 4 Barnacle Geese on 28th, 2 Shelduck on 7th, 121 Wigeon on 29th, 66 Gadwall, 255 Teal on 7th, 107 Mallard, 8 Pintail on 2nd and 27th, juvenile Garganey 19-22nd, 9 Shoveler on 2nd, 5 Red-crested Pochard on 30th, 213 Pochard, 325 Tufted Duck on 9th, 2 drake Common Scoter on 10th, 21 Moorhen and 1270 Coot.

Raptor sightings included many Red Kite records with 3 up at the same time on 2nd and 4 on 17th. A juvenile Marsh Harrier travelled slowly southwards, low over the water, at midday on 7th, 9 Common Buzzards were up at the same time on 2nd, an Osprey was seen on 2nd and 4th, a Hobby 2-7th and a Peregrine on several dates up to 17th.

There were 15 species of waders through the month, with 2 Oystercatcher on 7-8th, a juvenile Little Ringed Plover on 14th, 4 Ringed Plover on 19th and 2 Golden Plover flew over on 10th. A Grey Plover flew north on 19th, 82 Lapwing were present on 29th, 7 Knot flew around the Wildlife Centre on 9th, a Little Stint on Watersports Island on 17-18th, 4 Dunlin on 7th, 3 Snipe on 19th, 6 Bar-tailed Godwit flew SW on 6th, 1 Curlew on 11th and 17th, a Redshank 6-9th, 1 Green Sandpiper on 2nd and 5th and the last Common Sandpiper was at the Wildlife Centre on 8th.

Gull numbers were 3000 Black-headed Gulls early morning on 26th, 2300 Lesser Black-backed Gulls came into roost on 7th, 2 Yellow-legged from 19th and 3 Great Black-backed Gulls on 13th. There were 3ad+1juv Sandwich Terns off Lane End on 17th and a Common Tern present on 5th.

The last Swift record of the month was 4 on 7th, followed by 2 Sand Martin on 11th. There were at least 200 Swallows through on 2nd and 110 House Martin on 6th and both species were still trickling through towards the end of the month. Meadow Pipit movement increased from 5 on 1st to 33 on 21st. Probably the last records of this year were 2 Yellow Wagtail on 15th, 1 Redstart on 15th, a juvenile Whinchat in WLC fields on 10th, 1 Stonechat on 19th and a Wheatear on the dam early on 21st. The first autumn Redwings were 2 over Sheepwash on 28th and there were 43 Mistle Thrush at Sheepwash on 5th. Late records of warblers included a Sedge Warbler on Watersports Island on 22nd, Reed Warbler on causeway to Stones Island on 21st, Lesser Whitethroat in WLC Creek on 23rd, 2 Whitethroat on 10th and a Willow Warbler on 15th. There were still 2 Blackcap and 18 Chiffchaff around on 28th.

A new site record of 119 species this September compared with 107 in 2019, 115 in 2018, 117 in 2017, 112 in 2016, 104 in 2015 and 107 in 2014.

AUGUST 2020 BIRD NOTES

Highlights: Great Egret, Common Scoter, Red Kite, Osprey, Greenshank, Green Sandpiper, Arctic Tern, Green Woodpecker, Tree Pipit and Crossbill.

Another fairly productive month, as the highlights list shows and 111 species is a pretty good tally. Water bird maxima come from the WeBS survey on 23rd unless stated otherwise: 33 Little Grebe, 58 Great Crested Grebe on 15th, 44 Cormorant on 31st, at least 7 Little Egret on 4th, 2 Great Egret on 21st and 31st, 9 Grey Heron on 15th, 44 Mute Swan on 15th, 270 Greylag Geese on 31st, 370 Canada Geese on 26th, 3 Barnacle Geese up to 7th, 4 Shelduck on 24th, a female Mandarin on 1st, 4 Wigeon on 31st, 39 Gadwall, 107 Teal on 15th, 224 Mallard, 4 Pintail on 31st, 2 Shoveler on 3 dates, 25 Pochard on 27th, 305 Tufted Duck on 5th, 8 Common Scoter on 28th, 23 Moorhen on 15th and 698 Coot.

Raptor records included the fine sight of 3 Red Kite on 20th, 2 Sparrowhawk on 4 dates, 10 Buzzard on 20th, 23rd and 29th, Osprey on 24th and then daily from 28th, 9 Kestrel on 23rd, 2 Hobby on 2nd, 19th and 29th and 2 hunting Peregrine on 15th and 22nd.

Waders were represented by 3 Oystercatcher on 17th, an adult Little Ringed Plover on 1st, 5 Ringed Plover on 26th, 80 Lapwing on 5th, 2 Dunlin on 28th, 4 Snipe on 26th, Whimbrel on 10th and 12th, 2 Curlew on 1st, 4 Redshank on 22nd, 4 Greenshank on 27th, Green Sandpiper on 1st and 23rd and 6 Common Sandpiper on 23rd.

Black-headed Gull peaked at 300 on 21st, single Common Gull were seen on 4 dates, 1,500 Lesser Black-backed Gull came in to roost on 21st, a Herring Gull was noted on 1st, 4 Yellow-legged Gull were present on 21st and 3 Great Black-backed Gull on 12th and 19th. Five Common Tern and a juvenile Arctic Tern moved through on 26th.

Fifty Swift flew through south on 2nd and 2 Kingfisher were reported on 7th and 19th. A site scarce Green Woodpecker, heard in Tail Bay on 4th, was a nice surprise. Hirundine numbers included 100 Sand Martin on 31st, 150 Swallow, leaving roost in the Hopton reedbed, on the same date and 100 House Martin on 19th. Two Tree Pipit were photographed near the Wildlife Centre on 20th, 4 Yellow Wagtail were seen on 22nd and 30th along with 6 Grey Wagtail on 1st and 70 Pied Wagtail on 15th. Redstart seem to have had a good year with 6 noted on 5th, single Wheatear were present on 4th and 26th and a bumper 45 Mistle Thrush were at Sheepwash on 27th. All of the usual migrant warblers put in appearances with Sedge present to the month-end, 6 Reed on 27th, 5 Lesser Whitethroat on 7th and 12th, 2 Whitethroat on 12th, 3 Garden Warbler on 2nd, 17 Blackcap on 15th, 41 Chiffchaff on 15th and 6 Willow Warbler on 19th. Ten Goldcrest were counted on 31st, at least 2 family groups of Spotted Flycatcher was encouraging, 20 Long-tailed Tit were noted on 5th and 10 Willow Tit on 10th. Other counts of note included 5 Treecreeper on 15th, 9 Raven on 8th, 50 House Sparrow on 16th and 19th, 32 Tree Sparrow on 13th (described, encouragingly, as mostly juveniles), 120 Goldfinch on 19th, 25 Siskin on 31st and 30 Linnet on 4th. Yet another Crossbill record was of 2 flying southwest on 27th and there were 2 other singles during the month.

111 species this August compared with 112 in 2019, 113 in 2018, 114 in 2017, 106 in 2016 and 106 in 2015.

Recorder: Clive Ashton: cliveashton@btinternet.com

JULY 2020 BIRD NOTES

Highlights: Black-necked Grebe, Great Egret, Common Scoter, Red Kite, Hobby, Sanderling, Black-tailed Godwit, Green Sandpiper, Mediterranean Gull, Tree Pipit and Crossbill.

A rather wet and poor month, weather wise, produced an excellent species count of 107 thanks to the dedication of several individuals, in the main, (you know who you are)! Water bird maximum counts are from the WeBS survey on 5th unless stated, with brood numbers in brackets: 17 Little Grebe on 30th (5), 38 Great Crested Grebe (11), 2 adult Black-necked Grebe on 7th and a juvenile on 21st, 24 Cormorant on 16th and 29th, 6 Little Egret on 22nd, a Great Egret on 21st, 9 Grey Heron on 30th, 46 Mute Swan on 24th, 184 Greylag Geese (8), 614 Canada Geese (10), 4 Barnacle Geese on 26th (1), a single Wigeon on 22nd, 25 Gadwall (4), 11 Teal on 19th, 133 Mallard (12), 9 Pochard on 3rd, 180 Tufted Duck (4), 11 Common Scoter on 2nd and 11th (during a period of obvious national movement), 14 Moorhen on 23rd (3), and 378 Coot (8).

Raptors this month included: 2 Red Kite on 11th and 29th, 3 Sparrowhawk on 27th, 8 Buzzard on 11th, 3 Kestrel on 10th and 24th, 3 Hobby on 18th and at least 2 Peregrine on 16th and 21st.

Wader breeding was largely poor with the usual 4 species of Oystercatcher, Little Ringed Plover, Lapwing and Redshank failing, in most cases, but maximum counts were: 9 Oystercatcher on 3 dates, 8 Little Ringed Plover on 19th, 78 Lapwing on 23rd, a Sanderling on 23rd, single Black-tailed Godwit on 3 dates, Whimbrel on 14th and 21st, 5 Curlew on 10th, 3 Redshank on 6th and 8th, a Green Sandpiper on 26th, 9 Common Sandpiper on 14th and 2 Turnstone on 30th.

A trickle of Mediterranean Gull moved through with an adult and a juvenile present on 16th, the usual Black-headed Gulls were still present along with 3 Common Gull on 16th, 375 Lesser Black-backed Gull on 28th, a Herring Gull on 16th, 2 Yellow-legged Gull on several dates, 2 Great Black-backed Gull on 3 dates a Common Tern on 6 dates and an Arctic Tern on 14th and 26th.

Other records this month included 7 Stock Dove on 1st, 3 (now site scarce) Collared Dove on 22nd, 105 Swift moving through on 26th, 2 Kingfisher on 26th, a Skylark on 30th, 200+ Sand Martin on 2nd, 40 Swallow on 24th, 30 House Martin on 7th and 26th, single somewhat early Tree Pipit on 6th, 28th and 31st, a Meadow Pipit on 14th, 3 Yellow Wagtail on 14th, 5 Grey Wagtail on several dates, 60 Pied Wagtail on 22nd, 9 Redstart on 24th, Wheatear on 11th and 18th and 14 Mistle Thrush on 22nd. Warblers remained and maximum counts were: 7 Sedge on 22nd, 3 Reed on 11th and 22nd, 5 Lesser Whitethroat on 22nd, 5 Whitethroat on several dates, 6 Garden on 1st, 17 Blackcap on 23rd, 19 Chiffchaff on 23rd and 5 Willow on 28th. The best of the rest (as they say) included 8 Goldcrest on 15th, a great count of 10 Spotted Flycatcher on 22nd, 11 Willow Tit on 23rd, an impressive 22 Raven on 10th, 70 Starling on 28th, 15 Tree Sparrow on 23rd, 5 Siskin on 13th, 40 Linnet at Shiningford on 23rd and 4 Crossbill over on 14th.

107 species this July compared with 104 in 2019, 107 in 2018, 105 in 2017, 100 in 2016 and 99 in 2015.

Recorder: Clive Ashton: cliveashton@btinternet.com

JUNE 2020 BIRD NOTES

Highlights: Red Kite, Osprey, Hobby, Avocet, Sanderling, Black-tailed Godwit, Greenshank, Grasshopper Warbler and Crossbill.

The site re-opened to visitors on 3rd June and, given that many birders still chose to stay away, 100 species is an excellent return. Water bird maxima come from the WeBS survey on 8th unless stated and brood numbers are shown in brackets: 10 Little Grebe (2), 54 Great Crested Grebe (10), 14 Cormorant on 23rd, a Little Egret from 23rd, 5 Grey Heron on several dates (including the ringed bird from Wheldrake of previous years), 26 Mute Swan on 30th, 131 Greylag Geese on 30th (8), 531 Canada Geese on 16th (6-7), 4 Barnacle Geese on 1st and 7th (1), a drake Mandarin on 1st, 29 Gadwall on 30th (3), 6 Teal on 12th, 79 Mallard (10), a Shoveler on 17th and 19th, 3 Pochard on 22nd and 23rd, 95 Tufted Duck (2), 8 Moorhen (1) and 216 Coot (5).

Raptors this month included: Red Kite on 4 dates, 2 Sparrowhawk on 17th and 21st, 8 Buzzard on 8th, Osprey on 4th and 5th, 3 Kestrel on 30th, 2 Hobby on 20th and Peregrine on 28th,

Waders were well represented and included: 7 Oystercatcher on 8th, 28th and 30th (3 broods), single Avocet on 10th and 19th, 5 Little Ringed Plover on 5th, 2 Ringed Plover on 7th, 24 Lapwing on 26th and 28th (1 brood), a Sanderling on 1st, a Dunlin on 8th, a summer plumage Black-tailed Godwit on 28th to 30th, Whimbrel on 3rd, 2 Curlew on 21st and 29th, 7 Redshank on 8th (2 broods), a Greenshank on 12th and 2 Common Sandpiper on 30th.

Black-headed Gull had reared c300 young on Millfields Island by mid-month and a few at other locations, other Gull records were 10 Lesser Black-backed on 30th, a Herring Gull on 7th, an adult Yellow-legged Gull from 16th and a second summer on 30th and 2 Great Black-backed Gull on 4 dates. The only Tern records were single Common on 4th, 25th and 30th.

Other counts and notable records this month included: 5 Stock Dove on 17th, 50 Swift on 3 dates, 3 records of Kingfisher, 6 Great Spotted Woodpecker on 26th, 80 Sand Martin on 29th, 40 Swallow on 3rd, 100 House Martin on 8th, 5 Grey Wagtail including 3 juveniles on 26th, a pair of Redstart on 23rd with an adult and a juvenile on 30th and 15 Mistle Thrush on 29th. A site scarce Grasshopper Warbler was reeling in Wildlife Centre Creek on 21st, 3 pairs of Sedge Warbler were carrying food on Stones Island on 10th, 9 Reed Warbler on 16th included fledged young in Brown Ale Bay, 3 Lesser Whitethroat were in a chase on 13th, fledged young Whitethroat were on Stones Island on 28th, at least 3 juvenile Blackcap were noted on 21st and a Willow Warbler was carrying food on 10th. More breeding evidence included 3 juvenile Goldcrest on 21st, 2 young Spotted Flycatcher on 30th, 2 family parties of Willow Tit on 7th, fledged Coal Tit on 23rd, fledged Blue and Great Tit on 3rd, Nuthatch feeding young in a box on 1st, fledged Treecreeper on 3rd, 3-4 juvenile Jay on 29th and a juvenile Raven amongst a count of 11 on 1st. Twenty Starling flew through on 21st, 10 Tree Sparrow were counted on 12th and 20th with juveniles noted from 2 locations on 1st and 23rd, 6 Siskin were seen on 25th, a Linnet on 5th and single Crossbill flew over on 20th and 25th. Finally Reed Bunting were noted carrying food at Millfields and Stones Island on 4th.

100 species this June compared with 94 in 2019, 91 in 2018, 97 in 2017, 94 in 2016 and 90 in 2015.

Recorder: Clive Ashton: cliveashton@btinternet.com

FEBRUARY 2020 BIRD NOTES

Highlights: Great Northern Divers, Shag, Scaup, Water Rail, Red Kite, Merlin, Jack Snipe and Kittiwake.

A month of constant rain produced 93 species, which is the highest total since 96 in 2004. The Great Northern Divers remained all month and showy Jack Snipe drew in plenty of admirers. Water bird maxima come from the WeBS survey on 8th unless stated: 2 Great Northern Diver all month, 10 Little Grebe, 49 Great Crested Grebe, 29 Cormorant, a first winter Shag on 28th, 3 Grey Heron on 18th, 4 Mute Swan on several dates, a Pink-footed Goose on 11th and 12th, 11 Greylag Geese on 2nd, 203 Canada Geese on 1st, 34 Barnacle Geese on 18th, a Shelduck on 4 dates, 28 Wigeon on 12th, 34 Gadwall, 26 Teal on 12th, 97 Mallard, 2 Pintail on 14th, 3 Shoveler on 2nd, 30 Pochard, 96 Tufted Duck, 3 female Scaup, 15 Goldeneye, a Goosander on 10th, 1 Water Rail, 11 Moorhen and 291 Coot.

A nice spread of raptors included: a Red Kite on 19th, 3 Sparrowhawk on 26th, 11 Buzzard on 29th, 3 Kestrel on 18th, a Merlin on 25th and 2 Peregrine on 23rd.

Waders were represented by 10 Oystercatcher on 19th and 21st (including the 2 ringed birds from Dawlish Warren of previous years from 15th), 600 Lapwing on 8th, a single Dunlin on 22nd, 3 Jack Snipe on 22nd, 64 Common Snipe on 15th, 4 Woodcock on 8th, 29 Curlew on 27th and 6 Redshank also on 27th.

Gull counts on 20th recorded 3,000 Black-headed Gull, 1,000+ Common Gull and 212 Lesser Black-backed Gull. Other maxima were 4 Herring Gull on 19th, 4 Yellow-legged Gull on 20th, 2 Great Black-backed Gull on several dates and a first winter Kittiwake on 12th.

Five Stock Dove were noted on 2nd, 7 Tawny Owl on 8th and Kingfisher were regular throughout the month. Other counts were 3 Great Spotted Woodpecker on 2nd and 16th, 5 Skylark on 14th and 25th, 4 Meadow Pipit on 18th, 3 Grey Wagtail on 25th, 6 Fieldfare on 26th, 23 Song Thrush on 8th and 230 Redwing on 16th, 2 Chiffchaff on 22nd and 26th (a brief burst of song on 27th was the earliest ever at the reservoir) and 6 Goldcrest on 25th. As part of the national Willow Tit survey on 26th a healthy 16 were counted between Middle Wood and Stones Island via the west side, indicating the importance of Carsington to this declining species. Further counts this month produced 700 Jackdaw, post roost, on 4th, 3 Raven on several dates, 150 Starling on 12th, 12 Tree Sparrow on 4th, 35 Siskin on 2nd, 18 Lesser Redpoll on 16th and 10 Bullfinch on 11th.

93 species this month compared to 92 in 2019, 87 in 2018, 90 in 2017, 87 in 2016, 86 in 2015 and 81 in 2014.

JANUARY 2020 BIRD NOTES

Highlights : Great Northern Diver, Black-necked Grebe, Great Egret, Whooper Swan, Pink-footed Geese, Red Kite, Water Rail, Jack Snipe and Cetti's Warbler.

The 2 Great Northern Divers remained all month, although the juvenile could be elusive at times. A single observer sighting of a Black-necked Grebe will require notes submitting to the Derbyshire Ornithological Society to become a formal record. Water bird maxima come from the WeBS survey on 12th unless stated: 15 Little Grebe on 3 dates, 57 Great Crested Grebe on 21st, a Black-necked Grebe on 20th, 29 Cormorant on 4th, a Great Egret on 1st, 3 Grey Heron on 29th, 5 Mute Swan on 12th and 14th, 9 Whooper Swan on 17th, 220 Pink-footed Geese on 19th, 22 Greylag on 21st, 172 Canada Geese on 15th, 30 Barnacle Geese on 4th, 5 Shelduck on 9th, 54 Wigeon, 38 Gadwall on 8th, 62 Teal, 147 Mallard, 11 Pintail on 28th, 4 Shoveler on 3rd, 355 Pochard on 29th, 133 Tufted Duck, 15 Goldeneye on 29th, 8 Goosander on 5th, a Water Rail on 3 dates, 8 Moorhen and 487 Coot.

Bird of prey records included: a Red Kite on 28th, regular sightings of Sparrowhawk, 5 Buzzard on 2nd and 15th, 2 Kestrel on numerous occasions and single Peregrine on 3 dates.

An Oystercatcher returned on 28th and other waders this month included: a Golden Plover on 12th, 600 Lapwing on 4th, a Dunlin on 29th, 3 Jack Snipe on 12th and 19th, 45 Snipe on 23rd, 4 Woodcock on 2nd, 3 Curlew on 20th and 2 Redshank regularly.

Gull counts were: 4,000 Black-headed on 22nd, 765 Lesser Black-backed on 18th, 5 Herring on 19th, 2 Yellow-legged on several dates and a single Great Black-backed from 7th to the month-end.

Five Tawny Owl were calling at dawn on 12th and regular Kingfisher sightings included 2 on 12th and 29th. A Great Spotted Woodpecker was drumming on 10th, single Skylark flew over on 12th and 22nd, 3 Meadow Pipit were recorded on 18th and 4 Grey Wagtail left their roost in the Hopton reedbed on 30th. Winter thrushes were in evidence with 5 Fieldfare on 19th and 170 Redwing on 13th and 23rd. The, often elusive, Cetti's Warbler remained around the Wildlife Centre reedbed until 24th at least and the over-wintering Chiffchaff, on Stones Island, was present until the month-end. Other counts of interest this month were: 5 Goldcrest on 30th, 8 Willow Tit on 20th, 5 Treecreeper on 10th, 600 Jackdaw on 4th, 52 Rook on 13th, 5 Raven on 3rd, 200 Starling on 29th, 15 Tree Sparrow on 4th, 30 Chaffinch on 13th, 5 Greenfinch on two dates, 50 Goldfinch on four dates, 40 Siskin on 23rd, 15 Lesser Redpoll on 8th, 14 Bullfinch on 8th and 9 Reed Bunting on 19th.

94 species recorded this January compared with 91 in 2019, 96 in 2018, 91 in 2017, 91 in 2016 and 81 in 2015.