

# Carsington Bird Club



## FEBRUARY 2019 BIRD NOTES

### **February Highlights: Great Northern Diver, Pink-footed Geese, Water Rail, Barn Owl, Stonechat and Snow Bunting.**

A mainly dry, often foggy month, ended with unseasonal temperatures in the high teens giving a very spring like feel. Thanks go out to Severn Trent Rangers for some sterling work erecting nest boxes on site which should benefit several species. The Great Northern Diver was present all month and other water bird maximum counts come from the WeBS survey on 10<sup>th</sup> unless stated: 32 Little Grebe, 54 Great Crested Grebe on 5<sup>th</sup>, 20 Cormorant on 7<sup>th</sup>, a Little Egret on 4 dates, 2 Grey Heron regularly, 6 Mute Swan on 24<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>, 70 Pink-footed Geese on 1<sup>st</sup>, 24 Greylag Geese on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 350 Canada Geese on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 29 Barnacle Geese on 26<sup>th</sup>, 3 Shelduck on 12<sup>th</sup>, 47 Wigeon, 63 Gadwall on 4<sup>th</sup>, 239 Teal, 115 Mallard, 4 Pintail on 9<sup>th</sup>, 2 Shoveler on 15<sup>th</sup>, 5 Pochard, 23 Tufted Duck, 11 Goldeneye, 6 Goosander on 1<sup>st</sup>, a Water Rail on several occasions, 8 Moorhen and 281 Coot.

Very quiet raptor wise with 2 Sparrowhawk on 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>, 6 Buzzard on 4<sup>th</sup>, the usual Kestrel reports and several sightings of Peregrine.

Oystercatchers were back with 8 on 20<sup>th</sup> (including the barcode ringed male returning for his 14<sup>th</sup> breeding season and again paired with the ringed female from last year). Other wader highlights were 407 Lapwing on 6<sup>th</sup>, 3 Dunlin from 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup>, 5 Ruff on two dates, at least 30 Snipe on 10<sup>th</sup>, 2 Woodcock on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 12 Curlew through on 27<sup>th</sup>, and 6 Redshank on several dates.

Gull records included 5,000 Black-headed Gull on 9<sup>th</sup>, 350 Common Gull on 7<sup>th</sup>, 300 Lesser Black-backed Gull on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 45 Herring Gull on 10<sup>th</sup>, 3 Yellow-legged Gull on 7<sup>th</sup> and 3 Great Black-backed Gull on 10<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>.

A Barn Owl was near the dam at dusk on 9<sup>th</sup> and 6 Tawny Owl were calling at dawn on 2<sup>nd</sup>. Kingfisher were reported on 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>, 12 Skylark flew over on 22<sup>nd</sup>, 8 Meadow Pipit were at Watersports on 5<sup>th</sup> and 8 Grey Wagtail left their roost at the Hopton end at dawn on 2<sup>nd</sup>. A Stonechat was a good find on 19<sup>th</sup> and a walk from the Hopton end to Stones Island on 6<sup>th</sup> produced 20 Dunnock, 36 Robin, 35 Blackbird and 11 Song Thrush. Four Mistle Thrush on 28<sup>th</sup> included a pair with a well-built nest in a traditional area. A Chiffchaff sang for a while on Stones Island on the morning of 28<sup>th</sup> and became the earliest record of song for this species. Further counts from the walk on 6<sup>th</sup> were 19 Long-tailed Tit, 13 Willow Tit, 10 Coal Tit, 61 Blue Tit, 36 Great Tit, 5 Jay and 12 Magpie. Other counts of note were 4 Raven on 9<sup>th</sup>, c30 Tree Sparrow on 4<sup>th</sup>, 15 Chaffinch on 6<sup>th</sup>, 3 Brambling on 6<sup>th</sup>, 4 Greenfinch on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 12 Goldfinch on 6<sup>th</sup>, 20 Siskin on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5 Lesser Redpoll on 9<sup>th</sup>. A Valentine's Day walk paid off spectacularly for one observer when 3 Snow Bunting flew over the Visitor Centre towards Stones Island but, unfortunately, they could not be relocated. Eleven Reed Bunting left the Hopton reed bed at dawn on 10<sup>th</sup>.

92 species this month compared with 87 in 2018, 90 in 2017, 87 in 2016, 86 in 2015, 81 in 2014 and 90 in 2013.

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