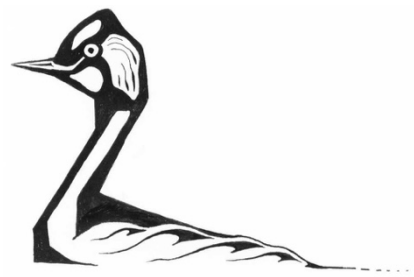


Carsington Bird Club



MARCH 2019 BIRD NOTES

Highlights: Great Northern Diver, Red Kite, Osprey, Avocet, Mediterranean Gull, Kittiwake, Brambling and Crossbill.

The Great Northern Diver remained all month and was seen to be showing a few white spots on its upperparts. Water bird maximum counts come from the WeBS survey on 24th unless stated: 10 Little Grebe, 34 Great Crested Grebe, 22 Cormorant on 2nd, a Little Egret on 21st, 5 Grey Heron on 8th, 11 Mute Swan on 22nd, 29 Greylag Geese on 24th, 141 Canada Geese, 27 Barnacle Geese on 23rd, a Shelduck on 3 dates, at least 7 Mandarin on 27th, 5 Wigeon on 17th, 19 Gadwall on 19th, 17 Teal, 68 Mallard, 4 Shoveler on 26th and 27th, 6 Pochard on 20th, 41 Tufted Duck, 8 Goldeneye on 28th, 2 Goosander on 5th, a showy Water Rail was in the Brown Ale Bay area on several dates and another was heard at the Hopton end on 5th, 7 Moorhen on two dates and 102 Coot.

A Red Kite drifted over the Visitor Centre on 25th and another was over Millfields on 31st, 2 Sparrowhawk were seen on 18th and 28th, 13 Buzzard were aloft on 19th, an Osprey flew in to Fishtail Creek carrying a fish at 0700hrs on 31st before appearing to fly West sometime later, 2 Kestrel and 2 Peregrine were noted on 12th and 8th respectively.

Waders included a maximum 15 Oystercatchers on 27th, single Avocet on 24th and 31st, the first returning Little Ringed Plover on 14th was the earliest ever for the site, 80 Lapwing on 3rd, 2 Dunlin on 2nd and 6th, 4 Ruff from 1st to 13th, 14 Snipe on 3 dates, 5 Woodcock on 2nd, 42 Curlew on 11th and 12 Redshank on 24th.

Gulls were represented by a now seemingly site scarce Mediterranean Gull on 25th, the usual Black-headed Gull, Common Gull and Lesser Black-backed Gull (although these species went uncounted), 20 Herring Gull left roost on 2nd, 3 Yellow-legged Gull on 8th, 6 Great Black-backed on 14th included a Norwegian ringed individual and an adult Kittiwake was in Brown Ale Bay on 16th following classic weather conditions for this species.

Eight Stock Dove on 18th included an individual flight displaying in Tail Bay, 5 Tawny Owl were calling at the Hopton end on 2nd and 23rd and a Kingfisher was also noted on the latter date. A Sand Martin flew past Flat Island on 3rd and is the earliest ever by a full 8 days and the first Swallow was over Sheepwash on 30th. Meadow Pipit were on the move with 63 Northwest on 21st and there were 7 Grey Wagtail on 2nd and 15th. Two observers covered the whole site on 29th and recorded some impressive counts: 87 Wren, 37 Dunnock, 91 Robin, 57 Blackbird, 17 Song Thrush, 8 Mistle Thrush, 7 Blackcap (first arrival 24th), 104 Chiffchaff, 4 Goldcrest, 18 Long-tailed Tit, 18 Willow Tit, 17 Coal Tit, 116 Blue Tit, 75 Great Tit, 18 Nuthatch, 12 Treecreeper, 3 Jay, and 24 Magpie. Other counts of note included: 6 Raven on 8th, 150 Starling on 17th, 24 Tree Sparrow on 16th, 25 Chaffinch on 29th, single Brambling on 3rd and 29th, 30 plus Siskin on 27th, at least 20 Lesser Redpoll on 27th, a single Crossbill on 18th, 14 Bullfinch and 12 Reed Bunting both on 29th.

100 species this March compared with 102 in 2018 110 in 2017, 108 in 2016, 103 in 2015 and 95 in 2014.

Recorder Clive Ashton cliveashton@btinternet.com