

## MAY 2010 BIRD NOTES

### **May Highlights: Great Northern Diver, Red Kite, Osprey, Hobby, Sanderling, Turnstone, Mediterranean Gull, Black Tern, Cuckoo and Pied Flycatcher.**

The long staying adult Great Northern Diver was last seen flying around in full summer plumage on 8<sup>th</sup>. There are no broods of Grebe, Swan, Barnacle Geese, Moorhen or Coot yet but, hopefully, this is only due to the late Spring, and June will be catch-up time. There was only 1 further brood of Mallard to add to last month's total of 4 broods, probably another indicator of delayed breeding for these water birds. Significant wildfowl counts were all from the WeBS survey on 16<sup>th</sup> and included 16 Little Grebe, 40 Great Crested Grebe, 40 Mallard, 147 Tufted Duck and 57 Coot. Additionally, there was a Shelduck on 8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> and a female Scaup, present from April, was last seen on 7<sup>th</sup>.

A Red Kite drifted over Sheepwash on 2<sup>nd</sup> and an Osprey perched on a buoy for an hour consuming a fish before flying up Fishtail Creek on 26<sup>th</sup>. The first Hobby was noted on 2<sup>nd</sup> and a Peregrine flew over on 1<sup>st</sup>. There has been little Buzzard activity recorded and there are no signs of breeding, which is not surprising following the well publicised local find of 6 dead buzzards, suspected of being poisoned.

At least 6 pairs of Oystercatchers have so far only produced 1 brood of 3, first noted on 5<sup>th</sup> on Millfields Island. Last month's Lapwing brood on Big Island showed 2 well grown young on 17<sup>th</sup> and there were further broods of 4 on 16<sup>th</sup> and 3 on 26<sup>th</sup>, both on Horseshoe Island. A pair of Redshank with 2 young were on Big Island on 12<sup>th</sup>. Passage waders included a Ringed Plover on 12<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>, 2 Sanderling on 12<sup>th</sup>, a Dunlin on 1<sup>st</sup> and following days, 3 Black-tailed Godwit on 5<sup>th</sup>, 1 Bar-tailed Godwit on 21<sup>st</sup>, 15 Whimbrel on 8<sup>th</sup>, 2 Curlew on 10<sup>th</sup>, a Greenshank flying through on 10<sup>th</sup>, 3 Common Sandpiper on 7<sup>th</sup> and a Turnstone from 7<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>.

A first summer Mediterranean Gull on Horseshoe Island on 1<sup>st</sup> obviously stayed over from 30<sup>th</sup> May and an adult Little Gull was also on the island on 22<sup>nd</sup>. The Black-headed Gull colony at the Wildlife Centre took over the tern raft again, forcing off a nesting Moorhen. These gulls seem to have squeezed what looks like 8 nests onto the raft and 2 young were noted on 29<sup>th</sup>. A pair also have a nest on Horseshoe Island and another pair have bred on the raft at Paul Stanley Hide, showing 3 young on 31<sup>st</sup>. Three Common Terns were noted from 1<sup>st</sup> and a pair have settled on Flat Island again this year. The maximum number of Arctic Terns was 6 feeding off Stones Island on 7<sup>th</sup> and a Black Tern was present on 27-28<sup>th</sup>.

Three Stock Doves were feeding on spilled seed in Sheepwash car park on 13<sup>th</sup>, a Cuckoo was noted near Middle Wood on 19<sup>th</sup>, and a Barn Owl on 15<sup>th</sup> and a Tawny Owl on 16<sup>th</sup> were both around Sheepwash. The first Grey Wagtail since early January was recorded on 2<sup>nd</sup>. A Redstart was singing near the Wildlife Centre on 1<sup>st</sup> and there was a male Whinchat on the dam wall on 5<sup>th</sup>. A Greenland race female Wheatear, a Sedge and a Reed Warbler were all seen on 1<sup>st</sup> and 13 Garden Warblers plus 42 Blackcaps plus 29 Willow Warblers were counted on a circular walk on 17<sup>th</sup>. A Spotted Flycatcher was noted from 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2 singing Pied Flycatchers on 13<sup>th</sup>, a pair of Raven with 3 young on 20<sup>th</sup>, 4 Linnet on 2<sup>nd</sup> and a Bullfinch was heard singing on the Club Dawn Chorus Walk on 8<sup>th</sup>.

106 Species recorded compared with 108 in May 2009, 112 in 2008, 103 in 2007, 107 in 2006, 107 in 2005, 114 in 2004 and 110 in 2003.