

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

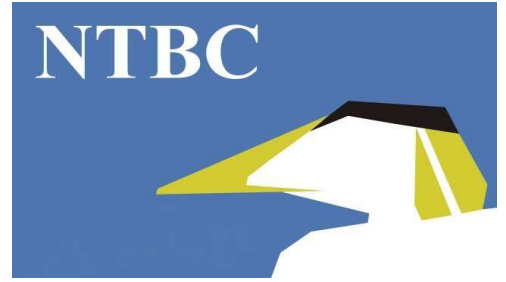
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Bulletin 2011 No 1

MONTHLY SUMMARY – JANUARY

4th March 2011



HIGHLIGHTS

Taiga Bean Goose
Greenland White-fronted Goose
Sooty Shearwater
Red-necked Grebe
Bittern
Grey Phalarope
Little Auk
Great Grey Shrike
Hooded Crow
Waxwing
Mealy Redpoll
Arctic Redpoll
Hawfinch

Four at North Sunderland on 3rd.
Four at Woodhorn from 15th.
An unusual winter sighting of one at Cresswell on 11th.
Noticeable winter influx.
Sightings at Cresswell, Druridge, East Chevington and Gosforth.
Single North at Druridge on 8th.
Several records both alive and dead.
Single in Harwood Forest from 9th.
Single near Weldon Bridge on 8th.
Many sightings especially in S/E.
Influx with sightings at several sites.
First county record since 1996 with one at Widdrington Tip from 3rd to 8th.
A popular duo at Morpeth from 16th.

CONTENTS

The next **indoor meeting** is at Newcastle Falcons on Thursday 10th March at 7pm **Tracking Migration by Nick Moran**.

The next **Field Trip** is to Kielder on March 20th.

Descriptions Wanted for 2010 rarities.

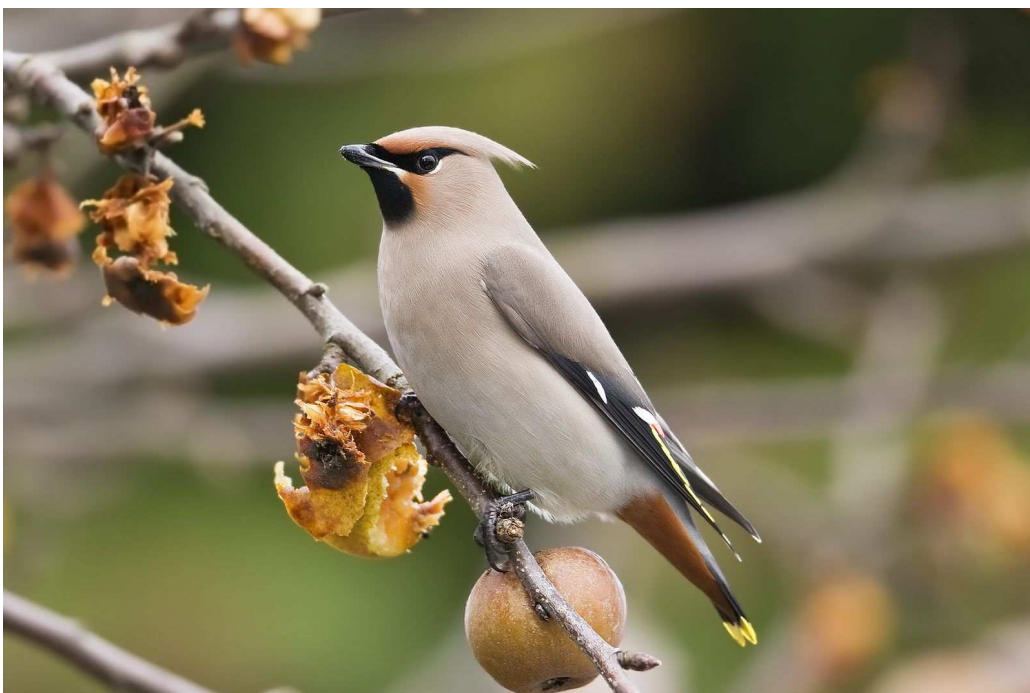
Not Bothered – two intrepid birders scour North Tyneside.

Result of the **record cards** survey.

Bring out your dead – an appeal for corpses.

Indoor Meetings - March 31st **Fundraising talk** for Atlas and **Members' Night** contributions requested.

Seaton Sluice Watch Tower



A handsome Waxwing at Cramlington
by Colin Bradshaw

WEATHER

1st to 7th: The month began with fine weather but some wintry showers, especially in the east, and sharp frosts. On 5th, southward-moving weather fronts gave heavy falls of snow to many areas. By the end of 6th there was as much as 50 cm in higher parts of the north-east. This was followed by an exceptionally cold night. The following nights were almost as cold.

8th to 14th: During the evening of 8th heavy snow spread to parts of Yorkshire. The 9th and 10th were bitterly cold, especially near the east coast in a strong north-easterly wind. From 12th to 14th, the very cold spell came to an end as rain and less cold air spread in from the south-west although most places experienced a further interval of snow. There was also some localised freezing rain and fog became widespread at times.

15th to 24th: Temperatures rose closer to average, although there were still some sharp frosts and fog at times. Bands of rain spread in from the west. In addition it was still cold enough for the rain to turn to snow at times.

25th to 31st: The last week started with a ridge of high pressure bringing generally settled, albeit rather cold, conditions with overnight frosts in many areas. However on 27th weather fronts moved southwards bringing rain. During 28th further fronts moved in from the west bringing another spell of rain, followed by a return to a cold north to north-westerly airflow from 29th to the end of the month. Many areas were dry with plenty of sunshine during these last few days, although there were reports of 10 to 15 cm of fresh snow in parts of Northumberland on 30th.

CLASSIFIED LIST

The following account consists of unchecked reports. The species/subspecies marked * require descriptions.

A complete list of all sightings that need notes is included in the NTBC website www.ntbc.org.uk under the County Records Committee section and in Birds in Northumbria 2009 page 224.

The Inland and Coastal Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) tables are at the rear of the bulletin. These contain counts additional to those in the Classified List.

TARGET SPECIES

The target species for 2011 are Gadwall, Snipe and Stonechat.

Please report all records for these species.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Five flew N at Southfield Lea (Cramlington) on 2nd (DM) and two flew over High Heaton (Newcastle) on 24th. By far the largest gathering was 167 taking off from QEII Lake just after dawn on 16th to feed in fields to the north of the lake (CDH). Other gatherings were 43 at nearby Woodhorn on 21st (RHAr//Mar), 36 at Capheaton on 19th (STE), 32 in the Tweed Estuary on 14th, 12 at Mount Carmel (Norham) on 23rd (MHu) and ten at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 24th (DM). One to nine were at Arcot Pond, the Blyth Estuary, East Chevington North Pool, Elswick Wharf, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Grindon Lough, Hauxley, Linton Pond, Newcastle Quayside, Ovingham, West Hartford and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.



A juvenile Whooper with Mute Swans
QEII Lake on 26th January
by Ron Armitage

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Three flew N at dusk at Prestwick Carr on 3rd (PCF). The only large gathering was that in the Linton area peaking at 43 on 1st, with 37 still present on 23rd (TB/IRD *et al.*). Elsewhere 17 (seven juveniles) were at Mount Carmel (Norham) on 23rd (MHu), 18 (three juveniles) at Harper's Heugh (Budle Bay) on 1st (JR), and 14 (four juveniles) at Hepple on 21st (TRD). One to six were at Catcleugh Reservoir, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Eshott, Ingram, Killingworth Lake, Linton Pond, Newton Pool, Otterburn, QEII Lake, Swallow Pond, West Ord and Woodhorn.

***Taiga Bean Goose** *Anser fabalis fabalis*

Four were at Burnhouse Moor Farm (North Sunderland) on 3rd (MSH/CGK).

***Tundra Bean Goose** *Anser fabalis rossicus*

One was amongst 2,000 Pink-footed Geese at Cresswell Pond on 22nd (TB).

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Northerly movement was noted during the month with 304 over Alexandra Park (Cramlington) on 18th (DM), 240 at Cheswick Black Rocks on 19th, 230 at Cocklawburn on 17th, 200 at Berwick Little Beach on 5th (MHu), 200 at Rothbury on 26th (TRD/JD), 72 at East Ord on 13th (MHu), 70+ over Northburn (Cramlington) on 16th with 50 there on 26th (PJA/LJM), 50 at Ordley on 2nd (BNR) and Blyth Harbour on 11th (BB), 40 at St Mary's Island on 13th (BB), 36 at Black Knowe on 27th (SW), 35 over Inner Farne on 18th (MH/AA), 25 at Kittybrewster (Blyth) on 1st (DM/STH/PJA) and 23 at Prestwick Carr on 23rd (PCF). One to 37 were at Big Waters, Cheswick, Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough, Hepple, Newton Pool, Tughill Links, Wark and the Whiteside tetrad.

Eurasian White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*

Eight were at Newton Flash on 23rd (DM/STH/PJA) with seven on Newton Pool with Greylag Geese on 11th (TRD/JD).

Greenland White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons flavirostris*

A group of four were in Woodhorn/Ashington Hospital area from 16th-26th (AT/MSH/JGS *et al.*).

An un-raced bird was feeding with Greylag Geese in fields next to the River Tyne at Bywell on 30th (AA).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

On 17th 150+ flew NW at Ross Village and 100+ flew N at Spindleston on 20th (MSH/JCD). Smaller N movements were 25 at Thirwell Common on 6th and 15 at Druridge Pools on 3rd. Eight flew S at Ordley on 18th. The highest counts were 1,050 briefly at the Beehive Flash (Earsdon) on 19th before flying off N (MNC), 327 near Druridge Pools on 25th (MSH), 310 in the Tweed Estuary on 14th (MHu), 275 at Newton Flash on 23rd (DM/STH/PJA), 270 at Caistron on 21st (TRD), 265 at Outchester Farm (Waren Mill) on 3rd (CGK/MSH), 250 in fields N of Druridge Pools on 23rd (IDR), 221 at Crowhall Farm (Holywell Dene) on 1st (MSH), 183 at Derwent Reservoir on 18th (IFo), 152 at Woodhorn Flashes on 26th (PRM), 127 at Elford on 17th, 114 at Yarrow Slake on 26th and 76 at Prestwick Carr on 2nd. One to 25 were noted at Annstead Farm (Seahouses), Berwick Hill, Big Waters, Cresswell, Fenham-le-Moor, Hauxley NR, and QEII Lake).

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

The highest counts were 172 at Ladyburn Lake on 4th (TRD/JD), 98 at Angerton Lake on 30th (MSH), 40 at Caistron on 19th (STE), 30 at QEII Lake on 16th (CDH), 28 at Grindon Lough on (PRM), 22 at Leazes Park Lake (Newcastle) on 4th (DM) and 21 at Newburn Riverside CP on 9th (PCF). One to nine were at Druridge Pools, West Ord and Woodhorn Flashes.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

On 8th a group of 14 was on the north side of Budle Bay (TRD/JD). Two were in the Woodhorn/QEII Lake area from 1st-16th with one present until 27th (DM/STH/PJA *et al.*).



Barnacle Goose at QEII Lake on 27th January
by Peter Fletcher

Dark-bellied Brent Goose *Branta bernicla bernicla*

300 remained on Holy Island throughout the month (IK). Two were near QEII CP on 1st (DM/STH/PJA). Two were at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 1st (DM/STH/PJA) and at Easington Demesne on 3rd (MSH/CGK) and a single was in the Blyth Estuary on 2nd (MSH).

Pale-bellied Brent Goose *Branta bernicla hrota*

On 1st 12 flew N at Stag Rocks (TRD/JD). At Fenham Flats 3,004 were present on 23rd (DM/STH/PJA). 1,100 were at Ross on 8th (TRD/JD), 300 at Easington Demesne on 3rd (MSH/CGK) and 60 were at Elford on 17th (MSH). One to 14 were noted from Annstead Farm (Seahouses), Beacon Point (Newbiggin), Meadow Haven (Berwick) and Newbiggin Golf Course.

A gathering of 223 at Boulmer Flash on 14th was mainly comprised of pale-bellied birds (JSB/EC). At Cocklawburn 29 un-raced birds grazed in coastal fields on 12th (Mhu).

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Fenham Flats held peaks of 950 on 8th (TRD/JD) and 698 on 6th (AA/MH), and 131 were in Budle Bay on 6th (MH/AA). A count of 32 at Beal saltmarsh on 15th was unusual for this section of Lindisfarne NNR (IK). Further south, 13 were at Cresswell Pond on 28th (MT/NT), six at East Chevington on 23rd (DM/STH/PJA), six at Hauxley Reserve on 15th (HRS), and one to three at the Blyth Estuary, Castle Island and Elswick. Two were at Bothal Pond on 20th (AT) and Prestwick Carr on 16th (PCF), and further inland two were at Branton GP on 15th (IBDa/KDa).

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

About 500 at Doddington on 2nd was a large number for that area (TRD/JD). Other peak counts were 500 at the 'rocket field' (Holy Island) on 6th (JMA), 440 at Cresswell Pond on 1st (DM/STH/PJA), 285 at Druridge Pools on 31st (IDR), 267 at Hauxley NR on 15th (HRS), 260 at Bell's Pond (Cresswell) on 1st (IRD), 223-250 at Alnmouth and Bothal Pond, and 105-134 at Castron, Gosforth Park NR, QEII Lake and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Counts of 52-64 also came from Capheaton and Linton Ponds, and 38-40 at Derwent Reservoir and Grindon Lough. Two to 15 were at nine further sites.

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Peak concentrations were 18 at Woodhorn Flashes on 26th (PRM), 13 at Castle Island on 16th (DM/STH/PJA), 12 at Castron on 21st (TRD), eight at St Mary's on 13th (BB), seven at the Blyth Estuary on 2nd (MSH), seven at QEII Lake on 16th (CDH), four at Druridge Pools on 15th (IDR), four at Linton Ponds on 16th (CDH), four at Marden Quarry on 15th (KWY), four at Summerhouse Lane Pond (Newbiggin) on 9th (STH/MHp), and three at Holywell Pond and Ladyburn Lake. Singles were also at Hauxley Reserve and, less typically, Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Gadwall is a **target species** for 2011. Please report all records.

Teal *Anas crecca*

Peak concentrations were 530 at the 'rocket field' (Holy Island) on 2nd and 510 there on 27th (IK), 325 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 19th (SR), 226 at Druridge Pools on 15th (IDR), 170 at St Mary's on 13th (BB), 150 at Doddington on 2nd (a large count for that area; TRD/JD), 76-90 at the Blyth Estuary, Cresswell Pond, Elswick, Linton Ponds and Woodhorn Flashes, 52-60 at Big Waters, Castle Island and Grindon Lough, and 25-42 at Arcot, Backworth and Middle Ord Ponds (Berwick), Capheaton, Derwent Reservoir, Elford, Hartburn Reservoir, Haughton Strother GP and Hauxley Reserve and Monk's House and Newton Pools. One to 16 were at four further sites.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

The Tweed Estuary held 214 on 14th (MHu), 210 were in Budle Bay on 3rd (CGK/MSH), 200 at Espley on 15th (TAC/MLC), 164 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 4th (MR), 150 at Marden Quarry on 9th (KWY), 115 at Derwent Reservoir on 18th (IFo), 76-88 at Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough and Newcastle Leazes Park, 44-65 at Cresswell, Linton and West Allotment Ponds, and Hauxley Reserve, and 17-38 at Arcot and Middle Ord Ponds, Byker, Jesmond Dene, Newcastle Exhibition Park, QEII CP Lake, Wark and Woodhorn Flashes. One to 14 were at 14 further localities.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

231 were counted at Fenham Flats on 6th (AA/MH) and 23 were there on 23rd (DM/STH/PJA). Elsewhere, a pair was at Druridge Pools on 27th and 31st (SWA/IDR/AT), and a duck at Cresswell Pond on 23rd (IRD).

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Ten were at the 'rocket field' (Holy Island) on 2nd (IK/SR/AH), six at Budle Bay on 3rd (CGK/MSH) and four to five there on 11th and 29th (AT), three at Low Newton on 18th (AA/MH), two at Druridge Pools on 23rd (IDR) and Monk's House Pool on 23rd (DM/STH/PJA), St Mary's Wetland on 3rd (MT/NT), and West Allotment Pond on 19th (MSH), and singles at Backworth Pond on 2nd (MNC) and Druridge Pools on 14th-15th (IDR).

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Swallow Pond attracted 18 on 28th (CGK), 15 were at Killingworth Lake on 3rd (PCF), four at Linton Ponds on 16th (PCF), three at Ladyburn Lake, Newton Pool and Woodhorn Flashes, and one at Whittle Dene Reservoirs. More unusual, and probably the result of hard weather, were three at Bates Minewater Treatment Plant (Blyth) on 2nd (MSH) and singles at Tweedmouth Dock on 2nd (MHu) and the Tweed Estuary on 14th (MHu).

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Killingworth Lake held peaks of 134 on 16th (LJM) and 118 on 27th (IF), 87 were at Ladyburn Lake on 25th (MSH), 72 at Marden Quarry on 15th (KWY), 46 at QEII Lake on 16th (CDH), 40 at Capheaton Lake on 19th (STE), 31-38 at Linton Ponds, Newcastle Leazes Park, and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, 13-20 at Castle Island, East Chevington, Holy Island Lough, Newcastle Exhibition Park, West Allotment Pond and Woodhorn Flashes. One to seven were also at six further sites. Less typical were 22 at Bates Minewater Treatment Plant (Blyth) on 2nd (MSH), four at the Tweed Estuary on 14th (MHu), three at Tweedmouth Dock on 2nd and two on 23rd (MHu), and singles at the Blyth Estuary and Spittal Bay.



Tufted Duck at Killingworth Lake
3rd January by Peter Fletcher

Scaup *Aythya marila*

Ten were at Beadnell Bay between 1st-6th (JPL), three were at Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 2nd and one on 30th (MHu).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

About 250 were off Cresswell on 13th (SWA), 230 were at Newbiggin on 9th (STH), 120 at Fenham-le-Moor on 8th (TRD/JD), 36 at the Tyne Estuary - North Shields Fish Quay on 30th (DMT), 21-26 at Blyth South Harbour, Dodd's Well (Berwick), Meadow Haven (Berwick), and 12-19 at Cheswick Black Rocks and St Mary's. One to six were also off Druridge Links and Whitley Bay.

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

One flew S at St Mary's on 26th (MSH). A peak of 52 was noted at Stag Rocks on 18th (AA/MH) with seven to 12 on three dates between 14th-28th (DGB/AJH/RNa), 12 were at Ross Back Sands on 17th (MSH), six at Holy Island on 30th (SR/AH), three off Cresswell on 28th-29th (ADM/MT/NT) and two there on 8th-9th and 13th (TRD/JD/JR), two at St Mary's on 3rd and 8th (MT/NT), and singles at Cocklawburn, Fisherman's Haven and Spittal Bay.

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

About 350 were off Cresswell on 13th (TRD/JD), 70 at Stag Rocks on 23rd (DM/STH/PJA), 50 at Holy Island on 3rd and 30th (IK), 40 at Newbiggin on 3rd (STH/MHp), 37 at Cambois on 22nd (ASH), 30 at Cheswick Black Rocks on 3rd (MHu), and 19 off Druridge Links on 31st (IDR). Three to eight were also at Meadow Haven (Berwick), Ross Back Sands, and Seaton Sluice.

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

Three flew N at Beadnell on 1st (JR). Four were feeding in Druridge Bay on 27th (AT), three were off Cresswell on 13th (SWA), and one was at Stag Rocks on 30th (MSK/NEWT).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

The largest concentrations were 158 at the Tweed Estuary on 14th (MHu), 122 at Beadnell Bay on 2nd (ASJ), 54 at Caistron on 21st (TRD), 36 at Capheaton Lake on 19th (STE), 32 at Low Newton on 18th (TRD/JD), 28 at QEII Lake on 16th (CDH), and 22 at West Ord on 23rd (MHu). Counts of ten to 17 came from Branton GP, Castle Island, East Chevington, Killingworth Lake, Seahouses and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, five to nine at Big Waters, the Blyth Estuary, Fisherman's Haven, Grindon Lough, Horncliffe, Howick, QEII Lake, St Mary's and Wylam, and three to four at Dodd's Well (Berwick), Hauxley Reserve, Hipsburn, Ladyburn Lake and Newton Pool. One to two were at 12 further sites.



A pair of Goldeneye at Caistron
21st January by Tim Dean

Smew *Mergellus albellus*

A 'redhead' was regularly reported at Whittle Dene Reservoirs between 1st-29th (AA/MR/SR *et al.*).

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

One flew N and eight S at Cambois on 11th (MSH) and three flew S at Hauxley Reserve on 25th (STE). Ladyburn Lake held 14 (seven drakes) on 13th (JMA), 13 on 25th (MSH) and six to ten on three dates between 4th-23rd, 12 were at Holy Island Harbour on 30th (IK), six at Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 9th (MHu), and five at Blyth Harbour, Cresswell Pond and Spittal Bay. Three to four were at Cheswick Black Rocks, Druridge Links & Pools, Fenham Flats and Newbiggin, and one to two at Beadnell Bay, Budle Bay, Cambois, East Chevington, Hauxley Reserve, Stag Rocks, Tweedmouth and Tynemouth. Less usual was one on Holy Island Lough on 14th (IK).

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

15 were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 11th (SR), 13 between Newburn-Wylam on 29th (AJN), 12 at Horncliffe on 12th (MJC), ten at Branton GP on 15th (IBDa/KDa), nine at Foxton (JR), eight at Newcastle Leazes Park and the Tweed Estuary, six to seven at Airy Holm Reservoir, Morpeth, Stakeford and the Tweed Estuary, and three to five at Chatton, Killingworth Lake, Marden Quarry, Newburn, Ovingham-Prudhoe and Thropton-Rothbury. One to two were at 14 further localities.

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

Two-hour TTVs to Acton (Blanchland) on 23rd and Blanchard Moor on 31st both produced counts of 61 (RMH). Other high counts were 40 at Langleeford (Harthope Valley) on 7th (TRD/JD), 31 at Asholme Common (Whitfield Moor) on 5th (BNR), 28 at Fellhouse Fell (Plenmeller Common) on 24th (MH/AA) and 17 at Beldon Burn-Riddlehamhope on 30th (BNR). On 23rd ten in the Emblehope tetrad were the only birds counted during a 2-hour TTV (MJC). One to nine were noted at Coanwood, Emblehope Moor, Foulplay Knowe, Harwood Shield, Linhope, Longframlington Common, Riddlees Cairn, South Hope Burn, Wellhope Moor and Willyshaw (Whitfield Moor).

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

On 25th 20, including 11 males some of which were lekking, were at Haltonlea Fell (SG). Visits to Swinhope Shield on 23rd and 30th produced 12 males and nine males and two females respectively (ASH). Four were at Acton (Blanchland) on 23rd (RMH), three males at Fellhouse Fell (Plenmeller Common) on 6th, two males at Barhaugh Burn on 19th and a male at Plenmeller on 24th.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

A 2-hour TTV visit to the Clennel tetrad noted 13 on 13th (MJC), eight were at Widdrington on 13th (TRD/JD) two at Lucker on 29th and one at Haughton on 4th.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

The species was again very well reported this month with peak counts of 36 in three coveys at Newham on 6th (MRS), 31 at Druridge Pools in two coveys on 3rd (IDR), 27 at Lesbury on 13th (IBDa/KDa), 23 in the Cresswell Pond area on 7th (ADMc) and 21 in Druridge Bay on 1st (MT/NT). Counts of 15 came from Chevington Burn dunes on 8th (ADMc), Fenham-le-Moor on 23rd (DM/STH/PJA) and Fenham Flats on 29th (AT). 14 were at Bell's Dunes (Cresswell) on 28th (ADMc), 11 were at Hemscott Hill Farm (Cresswell) on 1st (DM/STH/PJA), North Sunderland on 3rd (CGK/MSH) and West Ord on 9th (MHu) with ten at Beal on 9th (TAC/MLC). One to nine were noted from Acklington, Blyth, Callerton Pond, Chibburn Farm (Widdrington), Doddington, East Dissington, East Ord, Eshott, Holy Island, Kentstone (Beal), Kirkley, Lucker, Maiden's Hall, Ponteland, St Mary's Island, Spittal House Farm (Newbiggin) and Woodhorn Flash.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

On 6th 23 were counted in a 2-hour TTV at Happy Valley (Wooler) (MJC) and 16 were counted in a 2-hour TTV at Maiden's Hall on 20th (MJCo). Nine were at Druridge Pools on 3rd (IDR) and up to seven all month in an Old Hartley garden (RJP). One to four were noted at Chibburn Farm (Widdrington), Druridge Bay CP, East Chevington, Holywell Pond, South Middleton, The Dod (Cheviots), Warkworth and a Beatty Avenue (South Gosforth) garden on nine dates.

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

One flew S at Newbiggin on 28th (MT/NT). The peak counts were 23 in Druridge Bay on 9th with 14 there on 8th (ASJ/IDR), 11 at Birling Carrs (Warkworth) on 29th (AT) and ten at Cresswell on 13th (SWA/TRD/JD). Three were off Newbiggin on 8th/9th, Cheswick Black Rocks on 19th and in Spittal Bay (Berwick) on 25th. One to two were noted at Berwick, Blyth Harbour, Meadow Haven (Berwick), Seaton Sluice and Stag Rocks.

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*

A single was in Druridge Bay on 13th (SWA).

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

Singles flew N at Newbiggin on 5th (ADMc) and through Inner Farne Sound on 16th (MH/AA). Two were off Druridge Links on 8th (IDR) and 13th (SWA), with singles off Ross Back Sands on 17th (MSH), Stag Rocks on 18th (AA/MH), off Cresswell Pond on 27th (ADMc) and Druridge Links on 31st (IDR).

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

One flew N at Snab Point (Cresswell) on 23rd (DM/STH/PJA). Birds returned to several breeding sites during the month with ca. 25 pairs around the Farne Islands on 29th (AT), 30 birds in Coves Bay (Holy Island) on 14th (IK), 11 pairs at Old Hartley on 16th (ASJ), 17 birds on Tynemouth cliffs on 28th (DMT), six pairs at Whitley Bay cliffs on 16th (ASJ), ten at Bamburgh Castle on 13th (JPL) and three at Union Bridge (Berwick) on 14th. One to five were noted from Bamburgh Golf Course, St Mary's Island, Spittal Burn and Point (Newbiggin) and an unfortunate tide-line corpse found at Druridge on 13th.

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

Light N movement was noted on 26th with four at St Mary's Island in 30 minutes (MSH) and three at Newbiggin (AT). On 1st two flew at Beadnell and Beacon Point (Newbiggin) and singles at Druridge Links and Newton Bay on 23rd, Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) on 28th and Druridge Links on 31st.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

The peak roost counts were 89 at Blyth South Harbour on 29th, 76 at North Shields Fish Quay on 22nd (DMT) and 14 at Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 9th (MHu). Eight were in Newton Bay on 23rd (DM/STH/PJA) and six were at QEII Lake on 16th (CDH) and Woodhorn Flashes on 26th (PRM). One to three were noted at Amble Weir, Berwick, and Berwick Pier, Druridge Bay, Elswick Wharf, Hagg Bank (Wylam), Hipsburn, Holywell Dene, Jesmond Dene, Leazes Park and Millennium Bridge (Newcastle), Northumberland Park (North Shields), Riding Mill, St Mary's Wetland, Spittal. Tweedmouth Lifeboat Station, Wark, Wylam and flying over South Gosforth.

***Continental Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis*

Four of this race were at QEII Lake on 25th and two on 21st (MSH) with a single at Killingworth Lake on 27th (IF).

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

The peak count at Blyth Harbour was 66, including 34 immatures, on 9th (DMT). 15 colour-ringed birds were noted here during the month (BB). Counts of 28 came from Berwick Pier on 9th and the Meadow Haven roost (Berwick) on 30th (MHu). On 23rd 12 were in Newton Bay (DM/STH/PJA). One to five were noted offshore in Cresswell Bay, Druridge Bay, Spittal Bay (Berwick) and at Newbiggin Point, Newton Point and Stag Rocks. On 29th a bird was seen carrying nesting material.

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

Two were at Gosforth Park NR on 8th (IK per SRB) and a single was seen there on several dates during the month. Singles were at East Chevington on 2nd/12th (MH/AA), Cresswell Pond on 8th/27th/29th/30th (CB/ADM/ASH), Druridge Pools on 13th (TRD/JD), QEII Lake on 21st (RHAr/MAR) and Woodhorn Flashes on 26th (PRM).

A striking pose from the
Druridge Pools Bittern
13th January by Tim Dean

**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*

The over-wintering bird survived the worst of the weather and was seen again on Beal shore on 4th (IK).

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

The peak count was 14 in the Tweed Estuary on 14th (MHu). Four were at Backworth on 16th (CGK). One to three were noted at Arcot Pond, Cramlington (Brockwell Centre and Horton Burn), Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, East Cramlington, Holywell Dene, Guyzance Mill, Kenton, Leazes Park (Newcastle), Newbiggin Golf Course, QEII Lake, Warkworth, Whittle Dene Reservoirs and Woodhorn Flashes.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

The peak counts were six at Caistron on 21st (TRD) and four in the Blyth Estuary on 2nd (MSH) and Yarrow Slake (Tweed Estuary) on 11th (MHu). One to three were noted on Amble Braid and at Fenton (Wooler), Holywell Dene, Horncliffe, Ladyburn Lake, QEII Lake, Rothbury, Seaton Sluice, Tweedmouth Dock and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Four were at Birling Carrs (Warkworth) on 29th (AT). Two were off Stag Rocks on 14th (JSB/EC). Singles were in Blyth South Harbour on 1st/4th (DMT/BB), St Mary's Island on 6th (MSH) and Druridge Bay beach on 31st (MJCo).

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

Three were off Ross Back Sands on 17th (MSH). A well-watched bird was in Blyth South Harbour from 5th-31st (BB *et al.*).

A Red-necked Grebe
Blyth South Harbour
27th January
by Tim Dean

**Slavonian Grebe** *Podiceps auritus*

The peak count was of 12 at Stag Rocks on 14th (JSB/EC) where up to eight were seen on eight further dates. A count of eight in Holy Island Harbour was the highest so far of the winter (IK). Six were at Ross Back Sands on 17th (SR/AH) and singles were off Snab Point on 28th and Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 29th.

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Three birds were up in the air together at Low Waskerley on 11th (IFo), while on 14th single birds were seen at Lemington and Heddon on the Wall (SR/AA) and other singles were at Derwent Reservoir on 18th (IFo) and at Ovingham on 25th (BNR).

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

Single female/ringtails were seen at several sites during the month and a male was seen at another site on 28th (per SW).

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

A female was hunting at one site on 5th (MH) and a male was at Kielder on 21st (MJC). On 22nd a single bird was noted at Midway Nick (TRD/JD).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Two birds were seen at Scotland Gate (SLB/MSK) throughout the month, and other pairs were at Castle Island (DM/STH/PJA), Morpeth (ADMc), Ross Village (MSH) and at Walbottle (MH/KR/LR). Single birds were noted at over 30 sites.

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

10 were at Haltonlea Fell on (SW), nine birds were seen at the Happy Valley (Wooler) on 6th (MJC) and in the West Allen Valley on 24th (MH/AA), eight were at Kilham on 24th (TRD/JD). 75 records of one to five birds were received this month.

Falcon *sp*

An unidentified falcon species was seen at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 24th (SR).

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Up to three birds were noted regularly on Holy Island during the month (IK); two were seen at Cramlington, East Chevington, Fenham-le-Moor, Ross Village and Seaton Delaval. 44 records of single birds were received.



A Kestrel and a full moon

Three photographs from a sequence
by Peter Fletcher

Prestwick Carr

17th January

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

A juvenile and a female were noted regularly on Holy Island (IK) and two were seen at Fenham Slake on 16th (IBDa/KDa). Single birds were seen at nine further coastal locations (ADMc *et al.*).



A Merlin at Holy Island
by John Clark on 23rd January

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

On Holy Island up to four birds were noted (IK *et al.*). A pair from over the Cumbrian border chased away a female at one site on 26th (SW). Pairs were seen on the Farne Islands (AT), West Chevington (JSB/EC) and Widdrington Tip (NF). There were 38 records of single birds this month.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Three birds were at Backworth Pond on 1st (CGK); two birds were at Cresswell Pond on 28th (ADMc). Single birds were seen at Big Waters on 22nd (AJN) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 26th (SR).

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

The highest counts this month were 37 at Druridge Bay CP on 20th (NF), 21 at Backworth Pond on 14th (MNC) and 16 at Woodhorn Flashes on 8th & 29th (STH). Up to 12 birds were at a further 16 sites.

Coot *Fulica atra*

The highest counts this month were 135 at QEII CP on 1st (DM/STH/PJA) and 130 at Killingworth Lake on 16th (LJM). 28 were at East Chevington, 22 at Woodhorn flash and 20 were at Leazes Park (Newcastle). One to eighteen were at a further nine sites.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

A regular flock at St Mary's peaked at 196 on 18th (ASJ) and 107 roosted at Cresswell Pond on 23rd (DM/STH/PJA). Cocklawburn held 86 on 17th (MHu), 50 were in Cullercoats Bay on 14th (MN), 15 at Beadnell on 1st and singles at Druridge Links and Pools and Hauxley NR.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Blyth South Harbour had 230 on 1st, 193 on 9th and 300 on 15th (DMT). There was a peak of 106 in the Cheswick area on 19th (MHu) and 48 at Little Beach, Berwick on 5th; 14-26 occurred at Ellington, Monk's House Pool and St Mary's.

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

About 200 were at Prestwick Carr on 16th (PCF) and at Newcastle Town Moor on 20th (STE) with 150 in the Cullercoats Bay/St Mary's area for much of the time. Small flocks were noted at Cocklawburn, Cresswell Pond and Wallsend.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

About 100 were at North Shore, Holy Island on 3rd (IK); 16-20 were at the Blyth Estuary, Cresswell Pond and Newbiggin. Single figures were noted at Berwick, Bondicarrs, Budle Bay, Cheswick, Cocklawburn, Fenham-le-Moor and the Tweed Estuary. Inland, one was on a flooded field at Outchester Farm, Waren Mill on 3rd (CGK/MSH).

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

Coastal flocks increased in number with 500 in the Coquet Estuary on 31st (JMA), 300+ at Cresswell Pond on 23rd (IRD/DM/STH/PJA), 220 at St Mary's Wetland on 31st and 200 at East Chevington on 13th (JMA); smaller numbers were seen at Berwick, Druridge, Hauxley, QE11 CP, South Middleton, the Tweed Estuary and Warkworth. As the month progressed more were found inland including 200 at Prestwick Carr on 16th (PCF), 130 at Castron on 21st, 120 at Derwent Reservoir on 18th and 80 at Coanwood on 19th.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

Fenham Slake had 2,500 on 16th (IBDa/KDa); 210 were at St Mary's on 18th (ASJ), 140 roosting on the pier in the Blyth Estuary on 14th (BB) and 120 in Budle Bay on 1st (TRD/JD). Bamburgh, Beadnell, Berwick, Bondicarrs, Cocklawburn, Cresswell and Seaton Sluice all had 15-67 at times.

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Regular flocks peaked at 150 at Berwick Little Beach on 16th (MHu) and 128 at St Mary's on 18th (ASJ); 12-38 were noted at Blyth Harbour, Cheswick, Druridge Links, Fisherman's Haven, Low Newton, Newbiggin and Spittal. Two at St Mary's on 13th and one in Blyth Harbour on 21st were colour-ringed - details awaited.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

At Stag Rocks there were 76 on 2nd and 54 on 23rd (ASJ/DM *et al.*) and about 50 roosted on the Farne Islands on 29th (AT). Cheswick, Fisherman's Haven and Low Newton held 10-24 at times and six or fewer appeared at Berwick, Bondicarrs, Cocklawburn, Druridge Links, Newbiggin and St Mary's. One was at Cresswell Pond on 27th (ADMc), a very rare record for the site with only two others in the last 25 years.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Berwick Little Beach had 410 on 16th (MHu), 300 were at Fenham-le-Moor on 8th (TRD/JD) and still 250+ in the Blyth Estuary on 2nd (MSH). The peak at St Mary's was 98 on 13th, 89 were on floodwater at Annstead Farm (Seahouses) on 3rd and 80 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 1st. Also 51 at Elswick Wharf on 5th, 39 on Holy Island on 2nd and 27 or fewer at Beadnell, Cheswick, Cresswell Pond, Dodd's Well, Druridge Bay CP, Hauxley NR and Low Newton.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

One was at Cresswell Pond on 22nd/23rd (TB *et al.*).

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyrtus minimus*

Singles were found at Haughton Strother GP on 3rd (MR) and Nafferton Farm on 9th (MR).

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

At West Hartford 18-19 were present throughout with also 25 on 30th (DM/LJM/STH/PJA); also 19 at Backworth on 22nd (CGK). Eight or fewer were seen at Castron, Doddington, Ellington, Killingworth, Newbiggin, Prestwick Carr, St Mary's Wetland, Warkworth and Widdrington Tip.

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

The most were at Druridge Links & Pools: 9+ on 3rd and six on 8th (IDR). Two to three were found at Branton GP, Clennel area, Ellington, Holywell Dene, Morpeth, Netherwitton, Newbiggin, Tranwell Woods and Widdrington and singles at a further 12 places.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Two were present throughout at Rocket Field Pools (Holy Island) (IK) and one visited St Mary's on 8th (MT/NT).

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

In the Berwick area 40 were at Fisherman's Haven and 40 at Dodd's Well on 30th (MHu); 20 were in the Blyth estuary on 14th (BB), 20 at Low Newton on 18th (JD) and ten at Fenham-le-Moor on 8th. Five or fewer were noted at Budle Bay, Newbiggin and St Mary's.

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

At Druridge Pools & Links 128 were in fields on 3rd (IDR) and 105 roosted at Cresswell Pond on 23rd (DM/STH/PJA); 74-75 were at St Mary's on 16th and 31st (MT/NT/JMA), 70 at Hauxley NR on 15th (HRS) and 35-58 at Amble, Blyth estuary, Cocklawburn and Newburn. Smaller counts were made at another 14 locations.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Three were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 18th and 20th (JWA/JSB/MR) with singles noted there on five other days; one was seen on the R. Coquet at Thropton on 20th and 31st (JD). One flew S over The Victory Pub (South Gosforth) at 23:30 on 13th (MJC).

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

One was with a small group of Redshank on the Tweed Estuary on 1st (BWG).

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

One was in Budle Bay on 1st (TRD/JD) and 20th (JPL).

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

The WeBS count at the Tweed Estuary produced 110 on 14th (MHu) and 98 roosted at Cresswell Pond on 23rd (DM/STH/PJA). Blyth South Harbour, Boulmer Flash, Druridge Pools and Elswick Wharf had 54-65 at times with small numbers at Doddington, Ellington, Newcastle city centre and St Mary's.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

The peak at St Mary's reached 61 on 19th (MT/NT) and 46 were at Berwick Little Beach on 2nd (MHu). Apart from 22 at Newbiggin on 1st, 11 or fewer appeared at Beadnell, Cheswick, Cresswell Pond, Low Newton and Stag Rocks.

***Grey Phalarope** *Phalaropus fulicarius*

One flew N off Druridge Links on 8th (IDR).

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

The only record noted was of one at Blyth South Harbour on 8th & 9th (BB/DMT). Wintering numbers are now very low at the two regular sites with specifically no sightings recorded this month at North Shields Fish Quay.

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

The sea roost between Tynemouth and Cullercoats saw the peak count of 4,160 on 21st (DMT) with a WeBS count on the Tweed Estuary recording 1,030 on 14th (MHu). The maximum count noted on the Tyne Estuary up to the North Shields Fish Quay was 311 on 9th (DMT). Groups of up to 150 were noted at Arcot Pond, Caistron, Druridge, Elswick Wharf, Exhibition Park, Hadston, Jesmond Dene, Leazes Park, Tynemouth and Whitley Bay. Two over South Middleton on 29th (IDR) in the Cheviots were of interest as the species is decidedly uncommon in the uplands in winter. Various ringed individuals were still present with East German, Finnish & Lithuanian birds present at St Mary's with a Danish-ringed bird at Killingworth Lake which had previously been noted there in November 2009 (MSH).

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

The peak count of 18 was at Newbiggin on 9th (ASJ) with smaller numbers present on other dates. The only other multiple count was of two at Woodhorn Flash on 15th (STH). The over-wintering adult was still present at Briardene until at least 7th (PCF/JPD) with another adult at Killingworth Lake on 19th (MSH) and a second-winter at QE II CP on 1st (DM/STH/PJA).

Common Gull *Larus canus*

The sea roost between Tynemouth & Cullercoats provided the peak count with 850 noted on 21st (DMT). An inland gathering of 581 was noted at South Charlton bog on 3rd (TAC/MLC) with 122 at Druridge Links & Pools (IDR). The regularly watched sites only saw small numbers with peak counts of only 30 at the Tyne Estuary up to North Shields Fish Quay on 9th and only four at Blyth South Harbour on 1st (DMT). Otherwise only one to three noted at Arcot Pond, Grindon Lough, Jesmond Dene and South Middleton.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

As always, very scarce in January. Singles were noted over Jesmond Dene on 9th (MJCo) and on Whitley Bay beach on 21st (TS). The wintering adult at Southfield Green (Cramlington) was present all month (DM).

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argentatus*

The peak gathering was at Backworth Pond on 1st when 1,040 were present (CGK). The regularly watched sites provided the other main counts with 830 offshore at Tynemouth on 28th, 754 at Blyth South Harbour on 9th and 282 on the Tyne Estuary up to North Shields Fish Quay on 8th (DMT). A WeBS count on the Tweed Estuary saw 72 present on 14th (MHu). Otherwise up to eight noted at various sites.

'Northern' Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argentatus*

Three adults of this Northern race plus a first-winter were found at Blyth South Harbour on 9th (DMT) with two adults at Cresswell Pond on 13th (TRD/JD) and another adult at North Shields Fish Quay on 1st (DMT).

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

The main count noted this month was 154 at Cambois on 11th (MSH) with peaks of 139 at Blyth South Harbour on 9th and 92 at the Tyne Estuary up to North Shields Fish Quay on 22nd (DMT). Almost half of the birds at Blyth & North Shields were first-winters. At Budle Bay 21 were noted on 23rd (DM/STH/PJA) with 18 at Goswick Sands on 3rd (MHu). Up to ten were at a wide variety of sites, coastal and inland. The inland birds were predominantly wandering first-winters.

Guillemot *Uria aalge*

The Farne Islands witnessed a mass early return again with 20,000 on the cliffs on 29th (AT). These early winter returns are normally short-lived with birds soon venturing back out to sea again. Movements of birds North were witnessed at St Mary's Island with four in 30 minutes on 26th (MSH) and two at Druridge on 3rd (IDR). Otherwise one to three noted at Bamburgh, Cocklawburn, Cresswell, Fisherman's Haven and Meadow Haven (Berwick), Newbiggin and Tyne Estuary.

Razorbill *Alca Torda*

Two to three were found at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 23rd and 28th (DM/STH/PJA/AJH) with a single at the Farne Islands on 29th (AT).

Little Auk *Alle alle*

Two were off Broad Sands (Cresswell) on 9th (ADMc) with another two N at Newbiggin on 27th (AT). There were also two corpses found on the north shore of Holy Island on 14th (IK) with another corpse on the beach at Blyth on 27th (JD). This latter bird was very fresh having been retrieved headless from a scavenging Great Black-backed Gull.

Rock Dove / Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

The peak count was 150+ at North Blyth on 2nd (MSH) with 69 at Blyth South Harbour on 1st, 55 at North Shields Fish Quay on 30th (DMT) and 50 at Tyne Green (Hexham) on 4th. Numbers at New Delaval peaked at 44 on 19th and 30+ at High Chibburn (Druridge) on 3rd with one to 13 at four further locations

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Small numbers but well reported with the maximum being 15 at Whittle Dene on 22nd (SR), 11 at Killingworth on 30th (LJM), 9 at Ellington on 2nd (TB) and 6 at Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 29th (MNC). Five were at Barhaugh Burn on 19th and Spartylea on 31st, 4 at Hagg Bank (Wylam) on 22nd with three at Kilham, Newbiggin, Parson Shields, Ross and Rothbury. Two were found at four further sites with singles at four places in Jesmond Dene and another four locations.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

A number of large gatherings with around 1,000 birds at Harpers Heugh (Budle Bay) on 1st (JR), 600 at Wylam on 14th (MH), 500 at Eshott on 8th and Warkworth on 24th (MJC), 300 at Netherwitton on 16th and 200 at Acklington on 8th (JR). 180 were at Woodhorn Flashes and Walbottle on 8th, 150 at Kiln Pit Hill with TTV counts of 109 at Happy Valley (Wooler) on 6th, 81 at Maiden's Hall on 20th and 67 from a Clennel tetrad on 13th. One to 50 birds were found at 11 further widespread localities.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

The maximum count of 21 was at Prestwick Village on 12th (PCF), 10 at Fenham-le-Moor on 23rd (DM), 9 in the observer's garden at Whitley Bay on 18th (MT/NT), 8 nearby at Marden Quarry on 29th (MNC), and seven at Hagg Bank Wylam on 22nd (BNR) and Hedley on the Hill on 30th. One to four were at Dinnington, High Chibburn (Druridge), Jesmond Dene, Maiden's Hall and regularly throughout the month in gardens at Whitley Bay, Walbottle and at New Delaval (Blyth). Early breeding was noted with a pair incubating in the observer's garden at Holy Island on 30th (IK).

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Birds were seen regularly in the Chevington Pools area throughout the month with the peak being four on the 25th (ADM). The resident pair at Holy Island were also present all month with food caching noted near a roost site on 1st (IK). Two were hunting at Hauxley and Cresswell Pond on 9th (BB) with singles at all the above sites on various dates and at Druridge Bay CP, Ellingham, Fenrother, Holywell Dene, Kirkwhelpington, Yellow Rigg, Stublick, Warkworth, Wellhope Moor, West Chevington and Widdrington. One casualty, presumably from the weather, was found dead on Newbiggin Golf Course.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

One was at Druridge Lane (Widdrington) on seven dates from 8th to 28th (IDR/JSB/EC) with singles at Whittle Dene on 22nd (SR) and at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 29th (TB).

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Reports generally of calling birds with the peak being three males at Great Whittington on 28th. Two were at Ordley on 6th (BNR), Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 10th (MNC) and around a Stamfordham garden all month (EC). Single birds were at Tyne Green (Hexham) on 2nd, Guessburn (Stocksfield) on 4th, Branton on 6th, Woolsington on 14th, Loughbrow (Hexham) on 21st, Borough Woods (Morpeth) and Ellington on 27th and Valley Park (Cramlington) on 30th.

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

A single sighting from the Budge Hide (Druridge Pools) on the 27th (SWA).

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

All records were of single birds with eight sightings throughout the month at various locations in Jesmond Dene (STE/MJCo) possibly indicating more than one individual. Single birds were also at Gosforth Park NR on 1st, 12th and 23rd (AJN/MNC), Tughall Hall on 1st (JR), Horton Burn (Cramlington) on 1st & 2nd (LJM/DM) and Wylam on 14th (MH).

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Two birds were at Swallowship Wood (Hexham) on 16th (AJH) with a single there on 21st. One bird was also at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 1st (TB), Gosforth Park NR on 10th and 12th (*per* SRB/MNC) and calling at Redpath on 23rd (TRD/JD).

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Well reported with the largest counts of eight on a two-hour TTV on the Great Dodd (Kielder) on 21st (MJC), six at Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 19th (MNC) and five at Whiteside (Scotchcoulter tetrad) on 2nd, Catcleugh Reservoir on 27th, Harwood Forest on 28th and Lewisburn (Kielder) on 30th. Four birds were at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 9th and on a TTV at Killingworth Village on 30th with three north of Blackburnhead (Kielder) and at Ogle, Riding Mill and Spindleston. Two were at Backworth, Higham Dykes, Jesmond Dene, Little Benton (Newcastle), Prestwick Carr and Widdrington tip. Singles were reported from a further 28 widespread localities.

*** Great Grey Shrike** *Lamius excubitor*

A single bird was reported from the favoured locality of Harwood Forest on 21st (ADMc) and 23rd (MT/NT).

Addition to November 2010 bulletin. Singles were noted in clear fell in the Tarsset Forest on 7th (MD) and at Paddaburn (Wark Forest) on 21st (MD). One was also found on the Otterburn Ranges on 13th in a high-impact area for artillery & rockets (JCD). All three sightings were as a result of BTO Atlas fieldwork.

Magpie *Pica pica*

A large pre-roost gathering of 68+ occurred at Walbottle Brick Works on 14th (MH) whilst a flock present at Marden Farm (Tynemouth) all month peaked at 40+ on 24th with 35 at Murton Village on the same day (MN). Another roost gathering at Paddy Freeman's (Jesmond Dene) peaked at 30 on the 4th (STE) with 14 at Hagg Bank (Wylam) on 22nd (BNR), 8 at Maiden's Hall on 8th (JR) and 7 at Druridge links and pools on 3rd (IDR). One to five were at these and another three locations.

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

The peak counts were five at Callaly on 13th (ASJ), three at Gosforth Park NR on 12th (MNC) and Tranwell Woods on 17th (ADMc) with two at Capheaton, Ellington, Haughton Mains, Morpeth, Parson Shields, Pegswood, Thrunton Wood, Spindleston and Scotland Gate all month. Singles were at a further 13 widespread locations.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

A count of 730 at Parson Shields / Williamston N on 19th included a flock of 630 moving N down the valley (BNR). 2-hr TTV counts returned 64 at a Clennel tetrad on 13th and 57 in the Happy Valley (Wooler) tetrad on 6th (MJC) with 48 at Holywell Dene on 22nd (MT/NT) and 43 at Druridge links and pools on 23rd (IDR). Nine to 57 were counted daily at New Delaval (Blyth) during the month with 16 – 25 at Killingworth Lake, Otterburn Ranges, South Middleton and Widdrington.

Two birds showing characteristics of the Nordic race ssp *monedula* were at Wark (North Tyne) on 25th (PRM) with singles at Killingworth Lake on 3rd & 26th (PCF) and Snab Point (Cresswell) on 27th (AT).

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

The largest counts were 200 at Belford on 6th (JMA), 120 at Derwent Reservoir on 18th (IFo), 110 at QEII CP on 16th (CDH) and 100 at Castron on 20th, Hipsburn on 13th and North Charlton on 22nd. 50 were next to the A1 at Fenwick and Fairmoor (Morpeth), 48 on a TTV in Happy Valley (Wooler) and 40+ at Druridge links and pools. Four to 30 were at Bamburgh Green, Otterburn Ranges and Chibburn Farm (Widdrington).

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

22 were in the Tyne Estuary up to the fish quay on 23rd (DMT), 21 at Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 3rd (MNC), 18 on a TTV at Maiden's Hall on 20th, 13 at Rothley Crossroads and Happy Valley (Wooler) with 12 at Shilford and Chibburn Farm (Widdrington). One to nine were at Blanchland Moor, Druridge, Harwood, Leazes Park (Newcastle), three locations on Otterburn Ranges, South Middleton, West Chevington and a Walbottle garden.

Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix*

A single bird was found near Ghyllheugh on 8th at High Hedley Farm and flew off SW towards Todburn after being digi-scoped (NFO).

Raven *Corvus corax*

On 22nd five were found on a two-hour TTV in the Paddaburn tetrad (MJC) with two reported from Howick and Lucker on 1st (JR/JHa), Harthope Valley on 7th (TRD/JD), Slaley Hall on 11th (RMH), Hareshaw Head (Bellingham) on 23rd (ADM), Linhope on 30th (TAC/MLC) and on TTVs at Emblehope and Bloody Bush (Kielder) on 23rd and 30th (MJC). Singles were reported from Acton (Blanchland), Brownieside, Dod Hill, Featherwood, Ridleeshope and Spring House (Slaley).

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

The peak count was 23 at Lewisburn (Kielder Forest) on 30th (MJC) with 2-hr TTVs by the same observer returning counts of ten to 19 birds from seven tetrads in the area and 17 from the Paddaburn tetrad. Three were also in the Emblehope Moor tetrad with other sightings all being singles at Acklington, Valley Park (Cramlington), Elswick, Jesmond Dene, Newbiggin and Whittle Dene.

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

An impressive 38 were trapped and ringed at Spindleston on the 20th and 27 trapped and ringed on the 29th (MSH/JCD) with ringing at Ellington Pond catching 21 birds on 30th (IDR/JF). Two-hour TTVs found 34 at Killingworth on 30th (LJM) and 26 at Happy Valley (Wooler) on 6th (MJC). 28 were at Barns Park (Cramlington) on 22nd (DM), 25 at Mount Pleasant on 21st (SWA), 22 at Holywell Dene on 3rd and 19 there on 24th (MT/NT). Elsewhere one to 12 birds were recorded from a further nine widespread localities.

Great Tit *Parus major*

At Holywell Dene 28 were counted on 24th, 23 on 3rd and 14 on 17th (MT/NT). 15 were found over 1km at Prestwick Carr on 30th and 13 on 8th (PCF). Trapping and ringing at Spindleston returned 12 on the 20th and 11 on the 29th (MSH/JCD). Elsewhere 11 were at Barns Park (Cramlington) on the 22nd with one to five at a further eight widespread localities.

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

Counts in Kielder Forest produced the largest numbers, the peak being 44 on a two-hour TTV north of Blackburnhead tetrad on 21st with 33 on the Great Dodd and 21 in the Bloody Bush tetrads. Other counts found a peak of 39 at Lewisburn and 17 in the Forest Lodge area. 38 were counted on TTV in Happy Valley (Wooler) on 6th and 35 in the Paddaburn tetrad on 22nd (all MJC). Ten singing males were noted at Kirkley Hall on 22nd (IK), 7 birds at Killingworth Village on 28th (CGK) and 5 at Druridge links and pools (IDR) and trapped and ringed at Spindlestone (MSH/JCD). One to four were at a further 11 widespread locations.

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

Three were at Prestwick Carr on 8th with two there on 20th & 30th (PCF). Two were also reported from Linden Hall on 8th (NFO), Gosforth Park NR on 21st (IK) and Mitford on 24th (MJC). Singles were at Arcot Hall, Swallow Pond and in gardens at Linden Hall and Scotland Gate throughout the month.

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

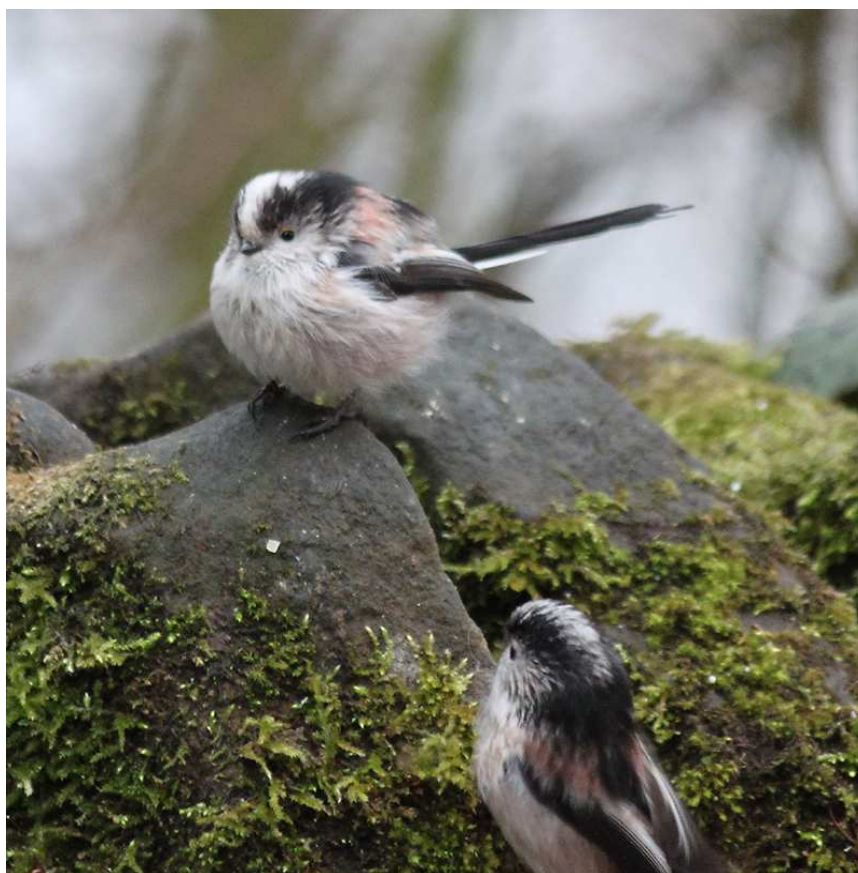
Four were found at Mitford on 17th (ASJ), three at Scotch Gill on 9th (ADMc) and Linden Hall on the 29th (NFO) with two at High House and Borough Woods (Morpeth), Mitford on various dates and Horncliffe on 12th. Singles were also recorded in the Mitford – Morpeth, Linden Hall area, Letah Wood (Hexham) and Newminster Cottage.

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

The exodus caused by the weather is clear to see with only four reports consisting of 160 at Monk's House on the 1st (JRD/TD) with the same observers finding a single at Ross on 8th, then reports of singles heard moving over at 22.05h in Wark (North Tyne) on 16th (PRM) and, to the observer's surprise, on King's Moss at Quarry House Moor on 17th (MH).

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

The largest gathering by far was a single flock of 35+ at Widdrington Tip on 9th (PRM). Other large tribes included 17 near Budle Bay on 1st (JR) 15 at Morpeth on 24th (MJC) 14 at Druridge Pools on 8th (IDR) and 13 at Alexandra Park (Cramlington) on 30th and Backworth on 16th (DM/CGK). Ten to 12 were also reported from a Cramlington garden, Ellington, Happy Valley (Wooler), Jesmond Dene, Kirkley Hall, Mitford, Prestwick Carr, Woosington and Wylam and one to nine from a further 20 widespread localities.



Long-tailed Tits
Bolam
by Peter Fletcher
6th January

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Nine to 11 individuals braved the arctic conditions. Two were at Spindlestone on 1st and 7th and singles at three separate Cramlington localities, Gosforth, Hauxley NR, Heddon-on-the-Wall, Killingworth, New Delaval (Blyth) and Whitley Bay.

Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus*

In Cramlington nine at the Burton House PH car park on 14th increased to 44 by 27th (PJA/ASJ/MT/NT) and 28 were in Lamb Street on 11th (LJM). At Prestwick Carr numbers fell from a peak of 33 on 19th to 15 by 28th (PCF). At least 20 were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 4th (RGW) and 20 at Benton on 29th (per IF). Other flocks included 15 in Jesmond Dene on 28th, 12 in the Freeman Hospital grounds on 31st, ten at Little Benton and six at Woodhorn windmill on 16th. One to three were also at Alnwick, Corbridge and Morpeth.



Two views of one of our most popular winter visitors, Waxwings

Top a photograph of a bird eating fruit at Cramlington by Colin Bradshaw and below an unusual picture of birds on the ground by Norman Tuck on 27th January

**Nuthatch** *Sitta europaea*

Seven were found in Borough Woods (Morpeth) on 25th (SWA), five in the Happy Valley tetrad (Wooler) on 6th (MJC) and four at Linden Hall on 13th (ASJ). Three were at Hareshaw Linn (Bellingham) and Jesmond Dene on 2nd and one to two at a further 17 localities including two at Catcleugh Reservoir on 27th and singles inspecting a nest hole at Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 19th and a re-trap at Spindlestone on 29th which had been ringed as an adult in February 2007 making it at least five years old.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Two were at Lewisburn (Kielder) and Ogle (MJC/MRS) and singles at Arcot Lane, Backworth, Dilston, Hareshaw Head (Bellingham), Holywell Dene, Milbourne, Preston Tower, Rothbury, Stamfordham and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

This species was either under-recorded or, more likely, decimated by the severe weather. Six at Prestwick Carr on 8th was encouraging (PCF), however other reports suggest a decline with three at Jesmond Dene and South Middleton and one to two at only eight other localities.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

Up to 2,000 roosted in an Alnwick garden all month (per NNBC), 250 were at Shilford on 1st (BNR), 200+ at Prestwick Carr on 23rd (PCF) and at Cramlington on 8th (DM) and 153 at South Charlton bog on 3rd. A Garden Bird Watch count produced 94 at Hipsburn on 3rd and 65 were at Spartylea on 31st. Elsewhere 27-51 were reported from a further six localities. Up to 18 visited a Whitley Bay garden and two to five were noted at a further two localities.

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

Five were found in the Clennel tetrad (Upper Coquetdale) on 13th and on the R. Coquet from Thropton-Rothbury on 20th (MJC/JD). Two pairs were resident on the Ouseburn between Ouseburn Park and Jesmond Dene during the month (DHWD) and two at three localities in Jesmond Dene, Happy Valley (Wooler) and Haughton Strother (Humshaugh). Singles were reported from Cottonshopeburnfoot, East Dissington, Harehaugh Hill, Langleeford (Harthope Valley), Lucker, Morpeth, Plessey Woods, Scotch Gill Woods, Wark (N. Tyne), West Woodburn and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Almost all records received this month were from gardens, with a count of 22 at Hipsburn the largest of these (TAC/MLC). Up to 18 visited a Walbottle garden (KR/LR) and likewise 16 at Mount Pleasant and ten at Whitley Bay. Seven were at Druridge Pools / Links on 3rd and six at Ellington Pond on 15th. One to four were reported from a further seven localities including a bird in full song at Chapel House on 15th.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

The highest count was 180 at Brownieside on 28th (TRD) followed by 105-130 at Capheaton, Hole (Bellingham) and Scotchcoulter. In addition 65-82 were also reported from Grindon Lough, Otterburn Ranges (Silloans), Plessey Woods, South Charlton bog, West Chevington and West Ord and 50-54 from Healey, Lampert, Scots Gap and Widdrington. Up to 44 were reported from a further 22 widespread localities.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

It was typically scarce this early in the year, although six at Killingworth village was the observer's highest count during the winter Atlas (LJM). Four singing at Holy Island village on 28th and two likewise at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 17th were the only other multiple counts. Singles were reported from a further six localities including singing birds at Kenton on 22nd and South Gosforth on 13th.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

Very scarce this month, the highest count 42 at Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 19th (MCN). Lesser numbers 20-25 were also reported from Blyth (Meggie's Burn), Capheaton, Earsdon, Scots Gap and Tynemouth and 11-15 from Killingworth village, Ouseburn Park, Walbottle / Blucher and Woodhorn Flashes. Up to ten were reported from a further 12 localities.



A handsome Mistle Thrush at Tynemouth
by Colin Bradshaw

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Fairly well reported this month with seven at Woodhorn Flashes on 26th the highest count (PRM). Cocklawburn had five on 12th (MHu) and four were at both Silverlink Biodiversity Park (North Shields) on 29th and West Fleetham on 2nd. Well inland three were reported from Kirkheaton and Spartylea and one to two were noted at a further 12 widespread localities.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Again it was rather scarce after the prolonged spell of snow and ice. Six in Holywell Dene on 3rd (MT/NT) and four in a Walbottle garden on 9th and at Maiden's Hall on 20th (KR/LR/MJCo) were the highest counts. Three were in Jesmond Dene on 2nd and two at Brierdene (Whitley Bay), Druridge Pools/ Links and South Middleton and singles at a further four localities. Singing was noted from 13th.

Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*

Reported from only three localities this month as the decline continues. Two males were at Cresswell on 17th (ASJ), two (a pair) at Low Hauxley on 25th (STE) and a female at Druridge Pools on 25th-28th (MSH/JSB/EC). Stonechat is a **target species** for 2011. Please report all records.

Duncock *Prunella modularis*

Two were at Holywell Dene between 3rd-17th (MT/NT) and Ellington Pond on 30th (IDR/JF). Singles were also at Heaton Park and gardens at South Gosforth and Whitley Bay.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Gatherings included 70+ at Brown's Point (Whitley Bay) all month (MN), ca. 60 at St. Mary's Island on 2nd (RHAr/MAR), 40 at Collingwood Grange (Cramlington) on 15th (DM) and North Shields on 19th (ASJ), 36 at Crow Hall Farm (Holywell Dene) on 24th (MT/NT), 35 at a Marden Estate (Tynemouth) garden all month (ASJ), 30 at a Hipsburn garden during month (TA/MLC) and Battlesteads Hotel (Wark) feeding station on 16th (CB), 26 at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 30th (DM) and 18 at Druridge Pools and Links on 23rd (IDR). One to ten were at a further six typical urban localities.

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

40 were found at Lowmoor Crossing (Fenham-le-Moor) on 23rd (DM/STH/PJA), 30 at Linden Hall on 13th (ASJ), 25 at Big Waters on 20th (BB), 12 at Kirkley on 20th (MRS) and a Hipsburn garden on 26th (TAC/MLC), ten at Branton all month (IBDa/KDa), East Fleetham near Seahouses on 3rd (CGK/MSH), a Warkworth garden on 22nd (JMA) and Scaffold Hill Farm on 31st (JPD), nine at Druridge Links and Pools on 23rd (IDR), eight at Newham on 6th (MRS) and at a feeding station at Battlesteads Hotel (Wark) on 16th (CB), seven at Milbourn on 14th (MRS) and up to eight at a Riding Mill garden during month (BNR). One to five were also at Butterlaw (West Newcastle), Cheswick, Harlow Hill, Haughton Mains, Haughton Strother GP, Lucker and Wark.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Two were on roof tops at Battle Hill (Hexham) on 11th (BNR). Singles were observed at Jesmond Dene on 9th and 13th (MJCo), Newcastle City Centre (Eldon Garden) on 13th, R.V.I. on 19th, Bigg Market on 24th all month (DM), Blyth Estuary on 14th (BB) and St. Mary's Island on 21st (LMo).

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrellii*

100 were at Woodburn on 15th (TS). Other large gatherings were 39 at Q.E.II CP on 23rd (RHAr/MAR) and 30+ at Lynemouth on 18th (MSH). Seven were at Prestwick Carr on 23rd (PCF), six arrived at Ordley from north-east (local weather movement) on 2nd (BNR), five were at Newbiggin beach on 29th (STH) and four at Cresswell on 13th (TRD/JD). One-two were also at Dinnington, Druridge Links and Pools, East Chevington Pools/Burn and St. Mary's Island.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Numbers were low. 15 were flushed by a low-flying Buzzard over the moor edge at Agarshill Fell (Whitfield) on 5th (MH). Singles were at Newbiggin beach on 3rd (AT), St. Mary's Island on 17th (MT/NT) and Woodhorn Flashes on 26th (PRM).

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Two were at Beadnell on 1st (JR). Singles were found at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 1st (DM/STH/PJA), Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 1st (TRD/JD), St. Mary's Island on 2nd and 22nd (MT/NT), Blyth South Harbour on 16th (DM/STH/PJA), Low Newton on 18th (TRD/JD), Spittal Point (Newbiggin) on 22nd (STH) and the saltmarsh at Fenham-le-Moor on 24th (DM/STH/PJA).

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

120 (mostly males) were feeding on a game crop at Haughterslaw Farm (Quarry House Moor) on 17th (MH), 120 at Harwood Village (Harwood Forest) on 31st (EC), 90 at Wallridge on 31st (EC) 80+ a North Seaton (Ashington) on 15th (MSH), 55 at Ros Castle on 9th (ASJ), 50 at Whittle Dene on 20th (ASJ), 45 at Lewisburn (Kielder) on 30th (MJC), 39 at Druridge Links and Pools including 32 at High Chibburn Farm on 23rd (IDR), 32 at Clennel during an Atlas visit on 13th (MJC), 28 along a km of Prestwick Carr on 8th (PCF) and 26 at Happy Valley (Wooler) on 6th (MJC). One to 25 were at a further 15 widespread localities. 16 were ringed at Spindleston on 29th (MSH/JCD).

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

50 were at North Shop north of Wylam on 6th (SRB), 40 were amongst a mixed finch flock at St. Nicholas Park (Gosforth) all month (AJN), 20 at Dilston (Corbridge) on 12th (RB/MB), 15 at Catton on 2nd (BNR), 12 at Branton on 10th (IBDa/KDa), ten at Ordley on 10th (BNR), eight at Ellington Pond on 15th (IDR/JF) and Grindon Hamlet on 17th (AA), six at Bedlington on 2nd (ASH), Mill Haugh on 16th (ALT) and one to five at a further 15 widespread localities. Gardens were popular with 21 at Corbridge on 3rd (MR), 20 at Heddon Steads on 7th (IK), 17 at Cramlington on 15th (STH), eight at Rothbury on 8th and 31st (TRD/JD), seven at Linden Hall all month (NFO) and one to three at Alnwick, Cramlington, Ellington, Hexham, Hipsburn, Kenton, Marden Estate, Riding Mill, Scotland Gate, Swarland and Whitley Bay.

Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*

110 were roosting in Laurels at Berwick Station on 27th (MHu), 30+ at Preston Cemetery (North Shields) on 26th (MNC), 25 at Linden Hall on 22nd (NFO), 15 at a Whitley Bay garden on 11th (MT/NT), ten at a Barns Park (Cramlington) garden on 22nd (M), eight at a Beacon Hill (Cramlington) garden on 1st (DM/STH), Brierdene (Whitley Bay) on 25th (MT/NT) and Riding Mill on 28th (BNR), six at Berrington Lough on 15th TAC/MLC) and Dinnington on 29th (PCF). One to three were at a further seven widespread localities.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

100+ were observed at Widdrington Tip on 2nd (NF), 62+ at Woodhorn Flashes on 26th (PRM), 50 at Woosington Ponds on 12th (SRB) and Preston Cemetery (North Shields) on 26th (MNC), 34 at Brierdene Farm (Whitley Bay) on 22nd (MT/NT), 32 at a Whitley Bay garden on 11th (MT/NT), 30 at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 10th (DM) and West Mulley on 28th (SWA), 28 at Prestwick Carr on 1st (PCF), 25 at Darras Hall on 4th (PCF) and one to 20 at a further 13 widespread localities.

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

Gatherings involved 80+ at Bassington Industrial Estate (Cramlington) on 14th (LJM) and Big Waters on 20th (BB), 60 at Branton GP on 5th (IBDa/KDa) and Blackburnhead (Kielder) on 21st (MJC), 53 at Great Dodd (Kielder) on 21st (MJC), 50+ at Choppington Woods almost daily (SLB/MSK) and near the entrance to Newcastle United Academy training ground at Little Benton (Newcastle) on 23rd (LMO). 47 were noted at Paddaburn during an Atlas visit on 22nd (MJC), 45 at Pauperhaugh on 8th (NFO) and the Dod (Cheviot Hills) on 29th (IDR/JF), 42 at Newcastle Airport on 2nd (PCF), 40+ at East Cramlington LNR on 11th (LJM), Haughton Strother GP on 16th (MR) and Rising Sun CP (Wallsend) on 28th (CGK), 38 at Prestwick Carr on 23rd (PCF), 32 at Lewisburn (Kielder) on 30th (MJC), 30 at Tranwell on 17th (ADM) and 27 north of Blackburnhead (Kielder) during an Atlas visit on 21st (MJC). One to 25 were at a further 33 widespread localities including gardens at Cramlington, Dinnington, Gosforth and South Gosforth.

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

Largest flocks involved 200 in a stubble field at Seahouses on 14th (JSB/EC) and Swallow Pond on 31st (JPD), 110 at Wallridge on 20th (EC), 55 at Charity Bank on 5th (TRD), 34 at Bates Minewater Treatment Project (Blyth Estuary) on 1st (DM/STH/PJA), 25 at Heddon Steads on 7th (IK). 15 at Holy Island on 14th was the first group back here after big freeze in December 2010 but poor compared with several hundred normally present in winter (IK). Eight were at Newbiggin GP on 1st (DM/STH/PJA) and Holywell Dene on 14th (TS).

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*

40 at Newton Links on 6th (*per* NNBC), 13 at favoured Hemscotthill Links (Cresswell) on 5th (SRB) and five at Bates Minewater Treatment Project (Blyth Estuary) on 1st (DM/STH/PJA).

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis caberet*

Birds continued to find Widdrington Tip attractive this month with a maximum of 40 on 8th (CB). Elsewhere, 14 were at Doddington on 2nd (TRD/JD), 11 at Harehaugh Hill on 28th (TRD), ten at a Corbridge garden all month (MR) and Harwood Forest on 24th (MSH), eight at Happy Valley (Wooler) during an Atlas visit on 6th (MJC), six at Gosforth Park NR on 8th (IK), North Seaton on 16th (DM/STH/PJA) and Bellingham on 23rd (ADM). One to four were also noted at Branton GP, a Cramlington garden, near Epsley Hall, Holystone Common, Linden Hall and Rushy Knowe (Kielder).

Common 'Mealy' Redpoll *Carduelis flammea flammea*

Favoured Widdrington Tip saw numbers vary from 30 on 2nd (NF), 20+ on 3rd (AT), ten on 4th (IDR/TRD/JD). 100 on 8th (CB) and 11 on 27th (NF). Elsewhere, 20 were at Wooler on 6th (SVM/AJM), two at a Corbridge garden all month (MR) and Swallow Pond on 1st (JPD) and singles at Doddington on 2nd (TRD/JD), Branton GP on 5th and 22nd (IBDa/KDa) and Druridge Bay CP on 10th (CN).

Arctic Redpoll *Carduelis homemanni*

One belonging to subspecies *exilipes* 'Coues's', was noted amongst the Redpolls at Widdrington Tip between 3rd-8th (AT/TRD/JD/CB).

Common Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

Breeding occurred throughout Kielder Forest with fledged juveniles included in the followed Atlas counts:- 72 at Great Dodd on 21st, 69 at Upper Lewisburn on 30th, 53 north of Blackburnhead on 21st, 35 at Lewisburn on 30th, 28 at Blackburnhead on 21st and Bloody Bush on 30th, 27 at Emblehope on 23rd, 20 at Blakehope Nick on 23rd (MJC/MSH). Breeding was also observed at Harwood Forest during month with a peak count of 32 on 23rd (MT/NT). Elsewhere, 76 were recorded at Paddaburn on 22nd (MJC), 43 at Scotchcoulter (Whiteside) on 2nd (MC), 30 in the Butterburn/Paddaburn area during an Atlas visit on 22nd (MJC), seven at Allenheads on 23rd (ASH), six at Churnsike on 16th (TAC/MLC) and Beldon Burn on 30th (BNR). One to five were at Addycombe (Rothbury), Borough Wood (Morpeth), Catcleugh Reservoir, Cottonshopeburnfoot, Dod Hill, Great Dour, Hareshaw Head (Bellingham) and Spartylea.

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

16 were counted on a half-mile walk around Wylam on 18th (EC). Nine were at Branton GP on 9th (IBDa/KDa) and Midgeholme on 26th (SW), eight at Meggie's Burn (Blyth) on 3rd (BB), six at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 22nd (DM) and Eland Hall (Ponteland) on 23rd (IK), five at Newbiggin Sewage Works on 1st (DM/STH), Elford on 3rd (CGK/MSH), Chapel House (Newcastle) on 20th (SR) and Kilham on 24th (TRD/JD), four at Lucker all month (Hu), Shildonhill on 2nd (PCF), Happy Valley (Wooler) on 6th (MJC), Prestwick Carr on 8th (PCF), Longframlington Common on 14th (MT/NT), West Mickley on 28th (SWA), Silverlink Biodiversity Park (North Shields) on 29th (CGK) and Holystone on 30th (TRD/JD). One to three were at a further 31 widespread localities.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Two birds were seen in the Abbey Mills Farm area of Morpeth on 16th (MW). A well observed individual was noted here on 17th (ADMc), Highford Bridge (Mitford) on 17th (CN) and Mitford on 17th (ASJ), Abbey Mills Farm on 18th (ADMc) and Morpeth on 18th (BB), Abbey Mills Farm on 22nd-26th (ADMc/PRM) and Borough Woods (Morpeth) on 27th (TRD/JD).

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Birds were observed virtually daily at Blyth South Harbour with a peak of seven on 5th (BB *et al.*). Two were at St. Mary's Island on 9th (JPD) and inland, one at Bloody Bush (Kielder) on 30th (MJC).

Lapland Bunting *Calcarius lapponicus*

One was found in a stubble field at Chare Ends (Holy Island) on 29th, the first noted since severe weather drove off large flocks in late 2010 (IK).

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

70 were in a stubble field west of Shilbottle on 26th (KVB), 64 at Cheswick on 24th (MHu), 50 at East Fleetham near Seahouses on 1st (JR), 45 at Fenham on 2nd (ASJ), 34 at Thirston New Houses on 22nd (NFO) and Norham on 23rd (MHu), 30 at Fenham-le-Moor on 23rd (DM/STH/PJA) and one to 20 at a further 14 widespread localities.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Ten were at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 29th (TB), three at Fenham-le-Moor on 23rd DM/STH/PJA) a Dinnington garden on 30th (PCF) and one to two at Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools and Links, Ellington Pond, Maiden's Hall, Plenmeller Common and Upper Lewisburn (Kielder).

ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN**Escapes****Muscovy Duck** *Cairina moschata*

Two were found at Middleton Hall on 7th with one on the small pond there and the other nonchalantly walking down the road where it happily posed for photos (TRD/JD).



The Middleton Muscovy Duck
by Tim Dean on 7th January

Speckled Teal *Anas flavirostris*

The bird last seen in November turned up again with sightings at Marden Quarry on 9th (KWY) and St Mary's wetland on 13th and 22nd (BB/MT/NT).

Hybrids

Canada Goose x Greylag Goose *Branta canadensis* x *Anser anser*

Three hybrids were found on 26th on the Tweed Estuary at Yarrow Slake (MHu) with a single at Killingworth Lake on 27th (IF).

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Those observers marked with an asterisk after their name(s) have submitted records online using the club spreadsheet. Copies are available by emailing Dick Myatt at dick@dickmyatt.co.uk.

Apologies for any accidental omissions

BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION

This bulletin was compiled by Lindsay McDougall (Swans to Geese, Game birds, Divers to Herons), Graeme Bowman (Ducks), Trevor Blake (Birds of Prey to Rails), Ian Forsyth (Waders to Skuas), Tim Dean (Gulls to Auks, Escapes, Hybrids and Unknown Origin, List of Contributors, Highlights), Peter Fletcher (Doves to Dunnock), Mike Richardson (Robin to Warblers), Dee McKeown (Flycatchers to Buntings), Julie Roper/Dan Turner (WeBS Coastal Counts) and Steve Holliday (WeBS Inland Counts). Thanks again to Ann McKeown for typing the section Flycatchers to Buntings. Thanks to Barbara Welch of NNBC for providing data. Proof reading was by Mike Smith.

Edited by Steve Barrett Sscmagpie@aol.com

Distributed by Alan Watson apusx@blueyonder.co.uk

RECORD SUBMISSION

Please send all record cards to Tim Dean, 2 Knocklaw Park, Rothbury NE65 7PW, to arrive on, or preferably before, the 8th of the month following that in which the records were collected. Please write cards legibly to ensure that your sightings are correctly recorded.

E-mail: Members are encouraged to e-mail their records on an Excel-style spreadsheet. Please e-mail Dick Myatt at dick@dickmyatt.co.uk for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and Grid references: The use of standard location names and the inclusion of grid references greatly increases the value of records in subsequent analyses. A 1km square grid reference is the ideal e.g. NY8067 for Grindon Lough, but 2km square references (tetrads) are also acceptable e.g. NY86D in this case. A list of localities and their tetrad grid references (tetrad/Locality List) can be downloaded from the 'Resources & Downloads' section of the Club website at <http://www.ntbc.org.uk> – the use of these names, wherever possible, would be highly appreciated.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Please keep submitting your articles, photographs, sketches and illustrations for the bulletin. Thanks again to those who have supplied the excellent photographs. Please send to Steve Barrett at Sscmagpie@aol.com

ELECTRONIC BULLETIN

The NTBC bulletin can be received electronically or as hard copy. The electronic bulletin arrives earlier than the printed version, it is in colour and we save the cost of printing and stamps. Ask for an e-mailed bulletin from jo.bentley@waitrose.com.

IINDOOR MEETINGS

The next meeting is, as usual, at Newcastle Falcons on Thursday 10th March at 7pm.

Tracking Migration by Nick Moran.

Nick is the Bird Track organiser for BTO. A fascinating meeting is in prospect. The highlights of 2010 will be discussed together with the forthcoming spring migration and recent developments in the Birdtrack Project.

FIELD TRIPS

The next trips are;

Kielder on March 20th. Crossbills and several raptor species should be seen on this popular trip.

A trip to the **Harthope Valley** is planned in May .

These trips are ideal as an introduction to young people to the local countryside and, of course, to the birds of our area. So why not bring along your friends and family.

For further information please contact Trevor Blake Email: trevor.1958@live.co.uk

NTBC WEB SITE

The Club website is an excellent resource for all interested in birds in the north east. There are numerous interesting sections, including a photograph gallery, site information and trip reports together with extensive reference information for birding in our area.

The site is at www.ntbc.org.uk

If you have any ideas or things you would like to see or hear about on the site then let Chris know on 0751 582 5024 or email christopher.knox@o2.co.uk.

NTBC SIGHTINGS PAGE

The club sightings web page gives listings of birds seen locally. Adding a sighting is simple. A short email is all that is needed. If anyone would like to be added as a contributor please contact Alan Tilmouth at ntbcorg@gmail.com. The sightings page can be found at <http://ntbcsightings.posterous.com>.

ATLAS FUNDRAISING EVENING

The club has organised an additional Indoor Meeting on 31st March 2011 at Kingston Park. The evening is open to members and non-members to raise funds for the forthcoming Atlas. Our speaker will be Martin Garner, author and identification guru, who will be delivering what is sure to be a stimulating talk on

The Next Frontiers of Birding in Britain.

Tickets are £5 and are available to collect at Indoor Meetings from Alan Tilmouth or by post (£0.25 p&p). Send cheques payable to NTBC to Alan Tilmouth, 12 Stowe Gardens, Pegswood, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 6TH.

The Club are looking for volunteers to help with the fundraising needed for the publication of the Atlas book(s). If you have a few spare hours over the next year or so why not contact any committee member.

MEMBERS' NIGHT

We are now looking for members who may be interested in making a short presentation for Members' Night in April on any subject of ornithological interest. Please contact any member of the committee.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS 2011

Annual subscription is £23. For membership inquiries please contact jo.bentley@waitrose.com.

SEATON SLUICE WATCHTOWER

Essential Repair Work on Seaton Sluice Watchtower will be carried out week commencing 28th February, this work may occur over a couple of days depending upon the weather. Part of the work will be to install a new lock on the watchtower door and this will necessitate new keys being issued to members. The committee has decided to offer a replacement key to all members who hold a current key free of charge. £2.50 to cover the costs of key cutting will be levied for any members who do not currently have a key but would like one.

Please bring old keys to the Indoor Meetings on 10th March or 14th April or alternatively post them with a SAE to:

Alan Tilmouth, NTBC, 12 Stowe Gardens, Pegswood, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 6TH.

RECORD CARDS QUESTIONNAIRE

Many thanks to all 50 members who replied to this questionnaire. The results are summarized below and will greatly assist the Committee in formulating future policy in this area.

Please note, not everyone replied to all questions.

1 Should NTBC seek to retain (45 responses)

a) the record cards	1	
b) the data contained on the cards	23	51%
c) both.	20	44%
No	1	

2. Should NTBC enter into data sharing arrangements with one or more of the options available to us and in doing so make the data available to the public (minus any sensitive breeding information)? (43 responses)

Yes	36	84%
No	7	16%

3. If a searchable product containing all past NTBC bulletins was produced would you purchase a copy? (46 responses)

Generally Positive	25	54%
Yes	14	
Probably	11	
Generally Negative	21	46%
Possibly	3	
No (including probably not)	18	

A number of members replied "Yes, as long as the price is right" – all of these were classified as "Probably".

NOT BOTHERED! - NORTH TYNESIDE YEAR LIST 2010

Like most of these things it started off with someone saying "I think I'll keep a list for North Tyneside next year" within earshot of several other North Tyneside Birders probably while out for a quiet drink at the festive season. Fatal mistake that, as it was bound to be taken as a challenge although no-one would actually admit to this! So two intrepids started out their lists on 1st January 2010 although it was suspected that a third was also angling that way but not really admitting such initially. A fourth birder kept well and truly silent and non-committal, even lasting like this until the end of the year. So Chris Knox, Alan Janes (who 'came out' early in the year) & Mike Hodgson were off and running. We cannot give the name of the non-existent fourth birder but he did see at least two extra species that the other combatants didn't see!

Like the true gentlemen we are, lots of information on sightings passed between the listers and sites were freely disclosed as to the best chances for seeing certain species within the boundaries of North Tyneside. The 'rules', although not formally written down, allowed species seen whilst standing within North Tyneside boundaries to be admitted on to lists. How else would you get Manx Shearwater? We believe that a North Tyneside Year List probably hasn't been done before but stand to be corrected.

Year Listing is a stupid pastime but quite good fun at the same time! During the year we discovered or re-discovered many excellent birding places in our immediate area, amassed a number of sightings for both the bird club records and the ongoing Atlas and were surprised by what we didn't know about our local patch. Marsh Tit is mega rare but Pallas's Warbler just about annual! There are probably more breeding pairs of Fulmars than Garden Warblers and you can see a long way with a telescope from our very own 'Hawk Mountain'!

Of course 'to win' you have to get out into the field and see the birds and in such an intense non-competition like this, woe betide the birder who doesn't act upon information received immediately. One lister didn't hurry out for Black-throated Diver in January or Puffin in the summer and paid the price – no others were seen! Another failed to go and watch a pair of Long-eared Owls feeding their fledged young just a couple of miles from his home feeling confident that he would find his own autumn immigrant. Fool! Everyone was skating on thin ice with Tawny Owl until a mutual friend located a regular roosting bird in December. Tree Sparrow can be tricky and white-winged gulls are just plain difficult nowadays!

So to the results! The three managed totals of 171, 172 and 177 but it should be borne in mind that two of the three work full-time and the third is just a Grumpy Old Birder who does little to make a living! These totals are not really significant because we know now that a combined total of 189 species at least was recorded in North Tyneside in 2010. Not bad for such a relatively small area which has huge chunks of urban/suburban habitat, loads of people and seemingly many more cars, cats, dogs and other impediments conducive to birding!

And the 'Not Bothered' bit? Well, that became a standard reply text message between the listers when told of a species they hadn't seen yet, usually followed by them turning up at the site within milliseconds!!! If anyone wants to take up the challenge in 2011 please feel free as we shall not be listing this year (perhaps!).

AJ/CGK/MSH

CORPSES - bring out your dead

Dan Gordon of The Great North Museum spotted the photograph of the dead ringed Stone Curlew in the last bulletin and has said:

"It is exactly the sort of specimen that the museum would be interested in collecting. We are keen to get as representative a sample of the local bird community as possible so anything (fresh!) is welcome, but these rarer records are of special interest "

So if you have a specimen please contact;

Daniel Gordon
Keeper of Biology
Great North Museum:Hancock
Barras Bridge
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE2 4PT
Tel: ++ (0) 191 222 6784
Fax: ++ (0) 191 261 6753
e: daniel.gordon@ncl.ac.uk
e: daniel.gordon@twmuseums.org.uk

DESCRIPTIONS WANTED FROM 2010

Given below is a full list of sightings in 2010 where no documentation has yet been forwarded to the County Recorder. These are all species where the County Records Committee has deemed it pertinent to have a description due to the species' rarity in the county. The Birdguides website has been gleaned for any rare sightings together with all submissions to NTBC via email submissions or record cards.

All sightings given need written documentation for the County Records Committee to pass judgement and for the records to pass into the official annual report 'Birds in Northumbria 2010'. Descriptions need to be forwarded by late May to allow the records committee meeting in July time to vet them. A complete list of all species needing notes is included in the NTBC website www.ntbc.org.uk under the County Records Committee section. This is also replicated in Birds in Northumbria 2009 on page 224. A copy of the Rarity report form can be downloaded from the website and is also printed with month's bulletin.

Many of these outstanding records may well be due to the observers feeling that they are unable to document the sighting in full due to the brevity of the sighting which is particularly a problem with sea-birds and birds of prey. 2010 was a bumper year for scarce migrants with Hobby, Barred Warbler and Great Grey Shrike all featuring strongly. It would be disappointing if these influxes were not shown in the annual report for want of descriptive notes.

Hopefully many of these records will be written up in order for them to appear in 'Birds of Northumbria 2010' as the observers may only now be aware that I am still waiting for a description. I have given the initials of those observers who I know were involved in the sighting (although not necessarily the finders) but would welcome descriptions from anyone who happened to see the bird in question.

March is a good time for people to buckle down to writing , No Atlas work and Spring still over the horizon!

Thanks
Tim Dean

Outstanding Records 2010

Descriptions Required

4	Tundra Bean Goose	11 – 16	Grindon Lough	26/01/10	02/02/10	AA/SJH/PRM
4	Tundra Bean Goose	2	East Allerdean	25/02/10		?
4	Tundra Bean Goose	1	East Chevington	28/02/10		PHH
4	Tundra Bean Goose	1	Druridge	07/03/10		ADMc
5	Taiga Bean Goose	12	Grindon Lough	26/01/10		Aco
5	Taiga Bean Goose	10	East Allerdean	25/02/10		?
5	Taiga Bean Goose	1	Bradford Kaims	02/03/10		PRM
5	Taiga Bean Goose	1	Hauxley	04/03/10		JA
5	Taiga Bean Goose	8	Spindlestone	06/03/10		MW
10	Ross's Goose	1	Doddington	08/11/10	16/11/10	AW
10	Ross's Goose	1	Newton Flash	29/11/10		GW
10	Ross's Goose	1	Howick	03/12/10		SS
14	Egyptian Goose	1	Whittle Dene Res	09/10/10	13/10/10	GT / SR
15	Ruddy Shelduck	2	Cresswell Pond	17/08/10		?
22	Green-winged Teal	M	Druridge Pools	26/02/10	01/03/10	PRM
33	Ring-necked Duck	M	Branton GP	30/10/10		Ida/KDa
67	White-billed Diver	1	Stag Rocks, Bamburgh	18/01/10		GS
87	Leach's Petrel	1	Blyth	08/11/10		?
92	Continental Cormorant	1	Whittle Dene Res	30/01/10		PRM
92	Continental Cormorant	6	Blyth South Harbour	31/01/10		PRM
92	Continental Cormorant	1	Hauxley	22/04/10 & 29/04/10	JA	
92	Continental Cormorant	2	QE II CP	18/11/10 & 18/12/10	AT	
105	Great White Egret	1	Monk's House	05/11/10		Rna
105	Great White Egret	1	Alnwick	12/11/10	14/11/10	KH/TRD/JD
105	Great White Egret	1	Jockey's Bridge / Branton / Hedgeley GP	17/11/10	25/11/10	Ida / Kda
109	White Stork	1	Chatton	17/04/10	18/04/10	MSK
110	Glossy Ibis	1	Cresswell Pond	15/10/10		ADMc
112	Honey Buzzard	1	Shirlaw Pike	25/05/10		MS
112	Honey Buzzard	M	Slaley	25/08/10		BNR
112	Honey Buzzard	M	Hexham	26/08/10		BNR
112	Honey Buzzard	M	Bywell	03/09/10		BNR
112	Honey Buzzard	1	Slaggyford	16/09/10		BNR
112	Honey Buzzard	1	Holywell Pond	17/09/10		ASJ
113	Black Kite	1	Budle Bay	04/06/10		?
113	Black Kite	1	Rennington	05/06/10		?
115	White-tailed Eagle	Imm	Linton	28/03/10		PG
115	White-tailed Eagle	Imm	Prestwick Carr / Bellasis Bridge	31/03/10	01/04/10	PCF/GB
115	White-tailed Eagle	1	Staple Island, Farne Islands	28/08/10	12/09/10	FIW

Wing-tagged

125	Rough-legged Buzzard	1	Glorum	06/01/10	Jha	
125	Rough-legged Buzzard	1	Bradford Kaims	11/01/10	Jha	same as above
125	Rough-legged Buzzard	1	Murton	15/03/10	DB	
125	Rough-legged Buzzard	1	Longhirst GC	26/12/10	TB	Probable
125	Rough-legged Buzzard	1	Hebron	27/12/10	TB	
134	Hobby	1	Newbiggin, Beldon Burn	22/05/10	BNR	
134	Hobby	1	St Mary's Island	27/05/10	?	
134	Hobby	1	Shilford	28/05/10	BNR	
134	Hobby	2	Corbridge, Farnley	31/05/10	BNR	
134	Hobby	1	Newton Pool	09/06/10	GW et al	
134	Hobby	1	Haughstrother Wood	14/06/10	BNR	
134	Hobby	1	East Chevington	25/06/10	PHH	
134	Hobby	1	Hallington Reservoir	28/06/10	PRM	
134	Hobby	1	Killingworth	02/07/10	MIM	
134	Hobby	1 st	Sum Holywell Pond	03/07/10	?	
134	Hobby	1	Ordley	06/07/10	BNR	
134	Hobby	1	Snope Burn	10/07/10	BNR	
134	Hobby	1	Haughton Strother GP	11/07/10	MR	
134	Hobby	Juv	Druridge Pools	15/07/10	MSK	
134	Hobby	1	Grindon Lough	18/07/10	PRM	
134	Hobby	1	Blanchland	20/07/10	BNR	
134	Hobby	1	Oakpool / Hollybush	24/07/10	BNR	
134	Hobby	Ad	Tynemouth	15/08/10	PRM	
134	Hobby	2 ^{Ad.2 Juv}	Softley	05/09/10	BNR	
134	Hobby	1	Holy Island	05/09/10	CP	
134	Hobby	1	Barhaugh Hall, Shawhead	05/09/10	BNR	
134	Hobby	Juv	Hemscott Hill, Cresswell	07/09/10	TB	
134	Hobby	1	Rising Sun CP	22/09/10	SPP	
134	Hobby	1	Parson Shileds / Williamston N	25/09/10	BNR	
134	Hobby	1	Holy Island	26/09/10	IBDa / Kda	
134	Hobby	Juv	Druridge Pools / Links	29/09/10	IDR / DE	
149	Common Crane	1	Warkworth	10/03/10 & 23/03/10	PT	
149	Common Crane	1	Acklington	14/04/10	KS	
149	Common Crane	3	West Monkseaton	23/04/10	?	
149	Common Crane	2	Whitley Bay	16/11/10	MNC	11:30 South
149	Common Crane	2	Newbiggin	16/11/10	GCP / JC	11:10 South
157	Stone Curlew	1	Holy Island	01/05/10	Ida/KDa	
157	Stone Curlew	1	Holy Island	12/12/10	LJ	Dead. Photo
170	Dotterel	1	Murton	10/05/10	NNBC	
185	Temminck's Stint	1	Woodhorn Flash	23/05/10	SJM	
190	Pectoral Sandpiper	1	Newton Pool	11/09/10	GW	
230	Grey Phalarope	1	Newton Point	12/09/10	GW	
230	Grey Phalarope	1	Newbiggin	24/09/10	TRC	
230	Grey Phalarope	2	Emmanuel Head, Holy Island	23/10/10	RA	
230	Grey Phalarope			11/11/10		

233	Long-tailed Skua	Juv	St Mary's Island	12/08/10	?
233	Long-tailed Skua	Juv	Newbiggin	29/08/10	STH/GB/JGS
233	Long-tailed Skua	Juv	Newbiggin	30/08/10	GB/STH/JGS et al
233	Long-tailed Skua	Juv	Snab Pt, Cresswell	24/09/10	PRM
233	Long-tailed Skua	Juv	St Mary's	26/09/10	DRW
233	Long-tailed Skua	1	Newbiggin	09/11/10	?
240	Sabine's Gull	Juv	Holy Island	26/09/10	IK
242	Bonaparte's Gull	Ad	Tynemouth	29/08/10	?
264	White-winged Black Tern	Juv	Cresswell Pond	15/09/10 & 18/09/10	TB/MSK/PRM/IF/KWR
276	Black Guillemot	1	Howick	30/08/10	SS
309	Pallid Swift	1	Newton	06/10/10	?
311	Alpine Swift	2	Alnmouth	23/03/10	PRM
311	Alpine Swift	1	Whittle Dene Res	18/06/10	BRG
323	Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	1	Wylam , Hagg Bank	07/12/10	BNR
332	Woodlark	1	Inner Farne	19/11/10 20/11/10	FIW
341	Red-rumped Swallow	1	Gosforth Park	20/04/10	per SRB
351	Scandinavian Rock Pipit	1	Low Newton	13/03/10 & 02/04/10	GW
351	Scandinavian Rock Pipit	1	Boulmer	01/04/10	PRM
351	Scandinavian Rock Pipit	1	Newbiggin	15/11/10	AT
352	Water Pipit	1	Whittle Dene Res	24/03/10	MR
373	Bluethroat	1	Inner Farne	27/09/10	FIW
386	Desert Wheatear	M	Seahouses	14/11/10 17/11/10	RY
419	Marsh Warbler	1	Hauxley	17/06/10 18/06/10	IF/TM et al
419	Marsh Warbler	1	Newbiggin	08/09/10	DD/SJM/TRC/AGi/PHH
430	Barred Warbler	1 st Win	St Mary's	31/08/10 & 09/09/10	CGK/AC/MPF et al
430	Barred Warbler	1 st Win	Newton Pool	05/09/10	Pha
430	Barred Warbler	1 st Win	Cresswell Pond	07/09/10	JSB
430	Barred Warbler	1 st Win	Hauxley	30/09/10	MH/AA
430	Barred Warbler	1 st Win	Druridge Pools	30/09/10 09/10/10	IDR et al
430	Barred Warbler	1 st Win	Cambois	30/09/10	ST
430	Barred Warbler	1 st Win	Cullernose Pt	02/10/10	SS
430	Barred Warbler	1 st Win	Straight Lonnen, Holy Island	02/10/10 04/10/10	TRC / TF
430	Barred Warbler	1 st Win	Howick	29/10/10	SS
441	Greenish Warbler	1 st Win	Newbiggin	08/09/10 10/09/10	PRM
451	Iberian Chiffchaff	1	Druridge Bay CP	14/09/10	FG
451	'Siberian' Chiffchaff	1	High Newton church	10/10/10	GW
451	'Siberian' Chiffchaff	1	High Newton church	09/11/10	GW
457	Red-breasted Flycatcher	1	Holy Island	10/09/10	CP
457	Red-breasted Flycatcher	1 st Win	St Mary's	09/10/10	AC
481	Great Grey Shrike	1	Hogwood Moor, Kielder	30/01/10	MD
481	Great Grey Shrike	1	Harwood Forest	23/03/10 09/04/10	TS / AT
481	Great Grey Shrike	1	Shildon Plt, Blanchland	14/04/10	MJS
481	Great Grey Shrike	1	Bamburgh	27/09/10	?
481	Great Grey Shrike	1	Cambois	08/10/10 09/10/10	ST

Photo

481	Great Grey Shrike	1	Harwood Forest	13/10/10	14/10/10	NF	
481	Great Grey Shrike	1	Tarset Forest	07/11/10		MD	
481	Great Grey Shrike	1	Otterburn Ranges	13/11/10		IK	
481	Great Grey Shrike	1	Paddaburn, Wark Forest	21/11/10		MD	
481	Great Grey Shrike	1	Featherstone Castle, Coanwood	28/11/10		?	
489	Nordic' Jackdaw	2	Brunswick	21/02/10		GB	
489	Nordic' Jackdaw	1	Corbridge	23/02/10		MR	
489	Nordic' Jackdaw	1	Grindon Lough	10/04/10		PRM	
489	Nordic' Jackdaw	1	Wideopen	17/10/10		GB	
489	Nordic' Jackdaw	1	Wark	03/12/10		PRM	
489	Nordic' Jackdaw	1	Killingworth Lake	06/12/10 & 16/12/10		GB / PCF	
489	Nordic' Jackdaw	1	Rising Sun CP	15/12/10		SPP	
489	Nordic' Jackdaw	1	Weetslade Colliery CP	18/12/10		GB	
519	Common Rosefinch	1 st yr M	Howick	22/05/10		SS / JAR et al	Photo
521	Northern' Bullfinch	F	Straight Lonnen, Holy Island	10/11/10 & 20/11/10		IK / NNBC	
521	Northern' Bullfinch	M	Wark	20/11/10		PRM	
521	Northern' Bullfinch	M & F	Straight Lonnen, Holy Island	11/12/10		IK	
521	Northern' Bullfinch	F	Old Widdrington Tip	17/12/10		NF	
558	Ortolan Bunting	3	Inner Farne	07/09/10	11/09/10	FIW	
563	Little Bunting	1	Greymare Farm, Belford	08/04/10		CL	Photo
568	Corn Bunting	1	Embleton GC	12/05/10		STE	

COASTAL WeBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND

January 2011		MHu	M. Hutchesson	AC	RP	A. Craggs	SS	S. Sexton	A. Brunt	MSK	TW	T. Watson	LJM	KVB	L.J. McDougall	DMT	D.M. Turner																							
Site	TOTAL	MHu	Tweed: A1 By-Pass to Horncliffe	Spital - Cocklawburn	Lindisfarne NMR (including Budle Bay)	Budle Pt - Seahouses	Seahouses - Beadnell	Beadnell - Howick	Howick - Boulmer	Boulmer - Alnmouth	Aln Estuary	Alnmouth South	Coquet Estuary	Amble - Chevington	Cresswell - Cresswell	Newbiggin - Newbiggin	Newbiggin - Cambois	Blith Estuary - Seaton Sluice	Tyne North Pier - Fish Quay	Walsend, (north bank)	Redneigh - Scotswood Bridge	Scotswood - Newburn Bridge, (north bank)																		
Counter		14	16	12	16	16	17	14	23	6	2	1	17	23	31	22	15	14	21	22	22	22																		
Date					15	4		2	6	2	2	1			6																									
Red-throated Diver	36		5										2																											
Little Grebe	10																	1																						
Great Crested Grebe	1				1	nc																																		
Red-necked Grebe	3					2																																		
Slavonian Grebe	6					4																																		
Cormorant	303	7	7	4	40		12	14	7	12			44	11				38	7	76	15	6																		
Shag	97			3	16		6	1	2	3					1			36				3																		
Grey Heron	44	16	2	1	8			29	2	3																														
Mute Swan	50	32		1	4	4			2	1	1	2	2	1		1				8	1	2																		
Whooper Swan	17								1		2	4																												
Pink-footed Goose	1,829	220		3	800						14																													
Greylag Goose	523	310			1609																																			
Canada Goose	9		9		207			6																																
Barnacle Goose	42				42																																			
Dark-bellied Brent Goose	95				95																																			
Light-bellied Brent Goose	4,039			29	3820		3		119	68																														
Shelduck	1,819				1,751			2	4	14			2					14		27	5																			
Migdon	1,843				727			500	2	24	235		350	2						3																				
Gadwall	1																			1																				
Teal	1,140		22		369			6			131							114		159	287	52																		
Maral	962	214	60	2	419	6	8	32	24	44	53	7						25		12	18	38																		
Pintail	136				136																																			
Pochard	1	1																																						
Tufted Duck	25	4			4		1																																	
Eider	1,056	6		24	208	116	160	106	59	75	26	82	34	27	nc	16		8	8	11																				
Long-tailed Duck	42				33	9																																		
Common Scoter	371			52	150	71	2		1	45	20																													
Goldeneye	433	158	70		26	6	56	64	23	8	8		10					4																						
Red-breasted Merganser	93			1	8	14	3				1			2				3	2																					
Goosander	15	8	7																																					
Moorhen	7	1									5										1																			
Coot	7	3			2															2																				
Oystercatcher	1,983	5		53	808	45	116	319	20	91	18	48	5	72	70	32	15	126		31																				
Ringed Plover	101				51			28			14			4		3		1																						
Golden Plover	1,200			66	1,132		1	1																																
Grey Plover	341			1	147	20	52	27	93		27							64	1																					
Lapwing	654	139		1	39	200	1	31					150								1																			
Knot	3,778				3563	23	16	28				90		48																										
Sanderling	182				52	2	25	25	32	12		2	8	19																										
Purple Sandpiper	160					49	73	27	3	32		2		4				14	3																					
Dunlin	1,310			8	810	9	160	1	5	35		21	1	39		10	30		45	132	4																			
Shipe	1						1																																	
Bar-tailed Godwit	728				581	70	76	7		53				8				3																						
Curlew	2,060	14		18	1,464	28	1	101	98	12	98		17	7	2	7	6	71	2	1	2	58																		
Redshank	1,284	110		1	373	48	16	139	80	19	28	41	18	57	4	26	11	93	23	5	151	65																		
Greenshank	1																					4																		
Turnstone	317	3		2	27	48	12	105	66	18	48	5	7	15				5	3	1																				
Black-headed Gull	3,909	1030	7	1	365	nc	173	117	354		59	nc		25	nc			59		213	738	100																		
Common Gull	341		82	1	115			10	37		22			4	nc					21	11	27																		
Herring Gull	1,022	72	5	14	172	nc	59	80	114		8		12		nc			89		266	24	104																		
Great Black-backed Gull	269	8	1	4	20	nc	7	35	9		4	nc		2	nc			53		92	2	6																		
Kingfisher	1						1																																	
ADDITIONAL SPECIES																																								
Eurasian	46	2					2	42																																
TOTALS - WILDFOWL	15,055	979	184	124	9,836	1,563	228	257	764	250	286	451	48	503	48	66	1	16	244	17	87	243																		
- WADERS	14,100	1	150	9,047	191	428	872	733	218	407	198	168	207	273	76	78	0	0	201	0	89	284																		
- GULLS & TERNS	5,541	1,110	95	20	672	0	239	242	514	0	93	0	0	43	0	0	0	0	20	592	775	805																		

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

<http://www.ntbc.org.uk/>

Bulletin 2011 No 2

MONTHLY SUMMARY – FEBRUARY

3rd April 2011



HIGHLIGHTS

Taiga Bean Goose
Greenland White-fronted Goose
Bittern
Great Skua
Iceland Gull
Kumlien's Gull
Little Gull
Great Grey Shrike
Nordic Jackdaw
Waxwing
Mealy Redpoll
Arctic Redpoll

Four at Bradford Kaims on 5th and 12th.
Four at Woodhorn all month plus another on 28th.
Sightings at Cresswell and Gosforth.
Unusual winter record of one S off Newbiggin on 20th.
Singles at North Shields and Newbiggin.
One at Monk's House Pool mid month, only 4th County record.
Adult and first-winter off Newbiggin on 19th.
Singles in Harwood Forest and near Holystone.
Up to three at Bothal Pond and singles at Elsdon and Lynemouth.
Several flocks especially in south east.
Influx with sightings still at several sites.
One at Swallow Pond from 9th to 10th.

CONTENTS

Species sponsorship for the County Bird Atlas.

The next **indoor meeting** is at Newcastle Falcons on Thursday 14th April at 7pm. **Members' Night.**

Descriptions now required for two additional species.

Sand Martins' new home.



A Nuthatch at Wallington
by Colin Bradshaw

WEATHER

1st to 7th The main feature was the strong, generally westerly, winds. These were strongest overnight on 3rd to 4th and during 7th. There were also frequent outbreaks of rain, occasionally heavy. Between 4th and 6th this rain turned more persistent, particularly across central and northern parts. Temperatures started below average, with overnight minima close to or just below freezing. However it then became very mild in places.

8th to 12th A generally settled period. Low cloud and fog formed quite widely overnight, particularly on 10th and 11th, persisting through the day in places. There were also some outbreaks of rain, particularly in the south and on 10th and 11th. Where cloud did break, overnight temperatures dipped close to freezing.

13th to 17th This period saw a return to more unsettled conditions. Outbreaks of heavy rain spread eastwards on 13th, but became lighter. This was followed by heavy and occasionally thundery showers, with some hail, on 14th. Further heavy rain spread north-eastwards through 15th, with widespread and occasionally heavy showers following behind. On 16th and 17th outbreaks of rain continued in western parts, whereas eastern areas remained generally dry, with some sunshine developing after early mist and fog.

18th to 23rd Pressure was low to the west and high to the east, introducing colder air particularly to eastern areas. The 18th started rather cloudy and misty. Snow spread eastwards across northern hills, giving depths of 5 to 10 cm quite widely. This pattern continued through the rest of the period, with bands of rain slowly spreading from the west and turning to snow over northern and eastern hills.

24th to 28th This period saw a transition to an anticyclonic pressure pattern. The 24th was generally fine after some early rain, however some western parts were rather misty. The 25th saw another fine start before outbreaks of heavy rain spread from the west to all parts. Frequent, occasionally heavy showers on 26th and 27th.

CLASSIFIED LIST

The following account consists of unchecked reports. The species/subspecies marked * require descriptions.

A complete list of all sightings that need notes is included in the NTBC website www.ntbc.org.uk under the County Records Committee section and in Birds in Northumbria 2009, page 224.

The Inland and Coastal Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) tables are at the rear of the bulletin. These contain counts additional to those in the Classified List.

TARGET SPECIES

The target species for 2011 are Gadwall, Snipe and Stonechat

Please report all records for these species.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

The largest gathering throughout the month was at Killingworth Lake where 154 were present on 26th (DM) with a lower count of 115 on 9th (MSH). The QEII CP and adjacent fields in the Linton area held 112 on 28th (ASJ). Other flocks were 36 at Capheaton Lake on 27th (STE), 35 on the River Tweed Estuary on 14th (MHu), 25 on Woodhorn Flashes on 14th (STH), 21 at Gosforth Park on 5th (SL), 15 at Druridge Bay CP on 7th (JMA) and 11 at Scotswood on 17th (MH). Elsewhere one to ten birds were at 14 sites namely Arcot Pond, Broomlee Lough, Cocklawburn Pond, Crag Lough, Ellington Pond, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Grindon Lough, Hauxley NWT, Leazes Park, North Seaton, Rising Sun CP, Scotswood, Shield on the Wall and Tynemouth Boating lake.



A Mute Swan eyeballing Colin Bradshaw

Druridge

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

The Linton area continued to hold the only large gathering throughout the month with peak counts of 44 on 28th (ASJ) and 40-42 on other dates from 12th-25th (CDH/IRD *et al.*). On 10th 30 were at Fenwick (ASJ) with other double-figure counts comprising 24 coming in to roost at Cresswell on 17th (MSK/NEWT) and 19 (four juveniles) at Amble Braid on 5th (NFO). One to ten were at Catcleugh Reservoir, Doddington Bridge, Druridge Bay CP, Druridge Pools and Links, East Ord, Gosforth Park, QEII CP, River Tweed (Donaldson's Lodge) and West Ord.

***Taiga Bean Goose** *Anser fabalis fabalis*

Four birds were at Hoppen Kiln Pool (Bradford Kaims) on 5th (MSH) and 12th (BCFT), almost certainly the four reported last month from nearby North Sunderland.

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

At Newton-by-the-Sea 500 flew N on 10th (JMA), at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) 450 moved N on 24th (MJC) and 300 flew NW over Swallow Pond on 18th (JPD). Smaller flocks of up to 100 moved N at Berwick (MHu), East Ord (MHu), Ordley (BNR), the River Tweed Estuary (MHu) and Tynemouth (KWY) on various dates throughout the month. The largest wintering flock of 3,500 was at Doddington on 9th (TRD/JD) and a second large flock peaking at 3,000, which often dispersed into mobile smaller groups, was in the Cresswell/Druridge/Stobswold areas throughout the month (TB/TRD/ASJ *et al.*). A flock of 400 was feeding inland of Goswick on 8th (AA/MH) and on the same day at least 400 were at New Shoreston (near Bamburgh) (MSH). At Bradford (near Lucker) 297 were reported on 5th (MSH). One to 56 were at Belford, Caistron, Druridge Links and Pools, Elwick, Grindon Lough, Harwood Forest, Linton Ponds and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Eurasian White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*

Only two reports were received, probably involving the same single bird, at Druridge on 22nd (MSH) and at North Seaton on 28th (MSH).

Greenland White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons flavirostris*

Four birds remained in the Woodhorn/Ashington Hospital localities throughout the month (STH/TB *et al.*) with a fifth bird joining them on 28th (MSH). At Grindon Lough only one bird was found again this month during the WeBS count (MRS).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Four skeins totalling 550 birds flew N at Brierdene Farm (Whitley Bay) on 13th (MJC) and 70 moved W at Elsdon on 26th (PCF). A flock of 640 at Caistron on 14th was the observer's highest-ever site count (TRD) and other large gatherings were 435 at Bradford Kaims on 8th (MSH), 291 on 15th at Belford (MSH), 184 at Hauxley NWT on 12th (HRS) and 175 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 22nd (SR). Flocks of 137 were at North Seaton (Ashington) on 20th (MSH), 105 at Elwick on 5th (MSH) and ca.100 at Woodhorn on 25th (MT/NT/BB). Smaller groups of 54-64 were at Earsdon and Brierdene Farm (Whitley Bay); elsewhere one to 13 were reported from Callerton Pond, Capheaton, Cresswell, Druridge Links and Pools, Gosforth Park, Seaton Sluice and the Wanneys.



A neck-ringed Greylag at Newton
Photographed by Gary Woodburn on 5th February.

This bird has been recorded most years since 1999 in the north of Scotland and Orkney

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

The highest counts came from Grindon Lough where the flock which was present throughout the month peaked at 280 on 16th (MRS), recorded during a *WeBS* count, with lesser totals of 123-223 noted on other several dates (PRM/AJR/JSB/EC). At East Stobswood 186 were seen on 5th (MSH). Elsewhere, Killingworth Lake held 56 on 9th (MSH), 42 were at Rayburn Lake on 9th (MSH), 35 at Leazes Park Lake on 1st (DM), 28 on the Hauxley NWT Reserve on 12th (HRS) and 25 at Druridge Bay CP on 7th (JMA). One to ten were at Arcot Pond, Castle Island (DM, *WeBS* count), Ellington Pond, Gosforth Park, Rising Sun CP (Duke's Pond), Wallington Hall and Woodhorn Flashes.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Four birds moved SW at Druridge Pools on 25th (IDR/JF). At Grindon Lough 12 were present from 14th-28th (MRS/PRM/AJR) and elsewhere one to six were at Budle Fields, Druridge Pools and New Shoreston (near Bamburgh).

Dark-bellied Brent Goose *Branta bernicla bernicla*

The Rocket Field Pools at Holy Island held 17 on 10th (ASJ) and the only other record was of a single bird at Fenham Flats recorded on a *TTV* on 8th (MSH).

Pale-bellied Brent Goose *Branta bernicla hrota*

A flock of 500 was at the Holy Island Rocket Field pools on 3rd (JMA) rising to 600 on 10th (ASJ). Other gatherings were at least 300 feeding inland at Granary Point (Fenham) on 8th (AA/MH) and on the same day 105 were recorded on a *TTV* (MSH) on Fenham Flats, 140 at the Long Nanny on 20th (ASH), 43 on Monk's House Rocks on 15th (MSH) and ca.30 at Annstead Links on 25th (AT).

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

The Fenham Flats area of Lindisfarne NNR held 125 on 8th (MSH), 30 were in Budle Bay on 10th (JMA), and 26 at Cresswell Pond on 17th (ASJ). Four to five were at the Beehive Flash (Earsdon) and Hauxley Reserve, and one to two at Beadnell, Castle Island, Druridge Pools, Elswick and West Hartford. Further inland, one to two were at Grindon Lough, Haughton Strother and Highthorn.

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

Peak counts were about 350 at Druridge Pools on 7th (IDR), 350 at Cresswell Pond on 21st (PCF), 310 at Grindon Lough on 16th (AJR), 300 at Hauxley Reserve on 6th (SL), 142-155 at Bothal Pond and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, and 75-98 at Beadnell, QEII Lake and Swallow Pond. Counts of 40-50 came from Budle Bay, Fenham Flats, Gosforth Park and Middle Ord Pond, and 16-32 from Capheaton and Rayburn Lakes, Linton Ponds and Woodhorn Flashes.

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Peak gatherings were 20 at Druridge Bay CP on 24th (TB), 12 at Woodhorn Flashes on 5th and 8th (TRD/STH), ten at Linton Ponds on 12th (CDH), nine at Bomarsund on 16th (JR), five to six at Capheaton, Druridge Pools, East Chevington and Ellington Pond, and three at Gosforth Park and Hauxley Reserve. Two were at Arcot, Holywell and Swallow Ponds, Holy Island Lough, Newton Pool and QEII Lake, and singles at Cresswell Pond and Crookham Eastfield.

Gadwall is a **target species** for 2011. Please report all records.

Teal *Anas crecca*

Numbers at the Rocket Field (Holy Island) dropped from 300 early in the month to 230 by the end (IK). Other peak concentrations were 221 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 10th (MR), 220 at Druridge Pools on 3rd and 7th (ASJ/IDR), 140 at Grindon Lough on 28th (PRM), 74-88 at Middle Ord Pond and St Mary's Wetland, and 54 at Linton Ponds. Counts of 20-38 came from Arcot Pond, Beadnell, Capheaton, Derwent Reservoir, Haughton Strother GP, Newton Pool, Prestwick Carr, Scotswood and West Hartford, and ten to 18 at four further sites.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

176 were at Fenham Flats on 8th (MSH), 94 at Killingworth Lake on 12th (LJM), 86 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 10th (MR), 82 at the Tweed Estuary on 14th (MHu), 80 at Grindon Lough on 1st (PRM), and 40-56 at Arcot Pond, Druridge Pools, Ladyburn, QEII Lake and Rayburn Lakes, and Newcastle Leazes Park, and 14-30 at Derwent Reservoir, Hauxley Reserve, Jesmond Dene, Linton and Middle Ord Ponds, Newcastle Exhibition Park and Tweedmouth.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

A count of 118 at Fenham Flats on 8th consisted mostly of pairs (AA/MH). Druridge Pools held a peak of nine on 28th (ASJ) and two to five regularly between 1st-26th (SWA/IRD/IDR *et al.*), a pair was at Cresswell Pond on 24th (SWA), and single drakes at Arcot Pond on 5th (chased off by a Harris' Hawk!, GMi) and East Chevington on 26th (JPD).

Garganey *Anas querquedula*

Two very early birds were at Gosforth Park on 14th (SL).

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

12 displayed at Druridge Pools on 26th (IRD), 11 there on 20th included ten drakes (IDR), and three to ten were there on several dates between 3rd-27th. Five drakes were at East Chevington on 10th (CN), a pair was at Monk's House Pool on 10th (JMA) and a drake was at Arcot Pond on 26th (GMi). Less typical were two pairs on the sea off Stag Rocks on 10th (ASJ).

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Killingworth Lake held 37 on 12th (LJM) and 24 on 28th (IF), 28 were at Swallow Pond on 15th (JPD/SPP) and 15 on 26th (CDH), 12 (nine drakes) at Grindon Lough on 28th (PRM) and four to ten there between 14th-16th (PRM/AJR/MRS), six at Capheaton on 27th (STE), five at Woodhorn Flashes on 14th (STH), three at East Chevington on 25th (TRD/JD), and one to two at Arcot Pond and QEII Lake.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Killingworth Lake proved attractive with a peak of 127 on 12th (LJM), 104 remaining until 28th (IF). Other peak gatherings were 49 at QEII Lake on 12th (CDH), 45 at Marden Quarry on 5th (KWY), 36 at Newcastle Leazes Park on 24th (DM), 20-25 at Capheaton, Druridge Pools and Woodhorn Flashes, and 14-19 at Holywell, Linton and West Allotment Ponds, Newcastle Exhibition Park and Rayburn Lake. Five to eight were at Arcot, Backworth and Duke's Ponds, Bomarsund, Bywell Cottagebank, Druridge Bay CP, Hauxley Reserve and Jesmond Dene. Singles were at Blyth South Harbour (DMT) and the Tweed Estuary (MHu) on 14th.



A drake Tufted Duck at Tynemouth
by Colin Bradshaw

Scaup *Aythya marila*

Two were at Holy Island on 24th and 28th (SR/AH), and singles at Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 6th (MHu) and off East Chevington on 24th (JPD).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

140 were at Newbiggin on 26th (STH), 79 at Fenham Flats on 8th (MSH), 52 off Cresswell on 10th (ASJ), 37 at Blyth Harbour on 12th (STH), 33 at the Tyne Estuary-North Shields Fish Quay on 19th (DMT), 18-20 at Meadow Haven (Berwick) and Seahouses, and two to ten at Beadnell and Newton by the Sea. A pair was on the River Blyth at Bebside on 16th (JR). Display was noted at Seahouses Harbour on 24th (IDR).



Drake Eider reflecting
Seahouses Harbour
Iain Robson
24th February

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

The Bamburgh-Stag Rocks area held 27 on 8th (AA/MH) and 10th (ASJ) but only two on 16th and 21st, 16 were at Ross Back Sands on 5th (MSH), four at Cocklawburn on 10th (MHu), three at Snab Point on 5th and 8th (TB/JSB/EC), two at Fenham Flats, Holy Island Harbour and St Mary's Island, and one at Whitley Bay. Eight drakes displayed to a single duck at Bamburgh on 8th (AA/MH).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

Three flew N off Druridge Bay CP on 10th (CN). Peak counts were 90 at Holy Island on 27th-28th (IK/SR/AH), a total of 80 in Druridge Bay on 23rd (BB), 45 at Newbiggin on 5th (STH), 45 at Stag Rocks on 16th (IDR), 30 at Ross Back Sands, 12-19 off Cocklawburn, Cresswell, Druridge Links and East Chevington, and eight at Cheswick.

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

A pair was at Stag Rocks on 8th (AA/MH) and 12th (BCFT), and a drake was off East Chevington on 24th (JPD).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

The Tweed Estuary held 210 on 14th (MHu), 71 were at QEII Lake on 22nd (MSH), 60 at Coves Bay (Holy Island) on 24th and 28th (AH/SR), 41 at Capheaton Lake on 27th (STE), 38 at Caistron on 14th (TRD), 33 at East Chevington on 3rd (ASJ), 19-21 at Killingworth Lake and Warkworth, and ten to 15 at Amble, Arcot and Bothal Ponds Boulmer, Marshall Meadows, Newton Pool, Seahouses Harbour, West Ord and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Five to nine were also at Castle Island, Dunstanburgh Castle, Grindon Lough, Holywell Pond and Wark on Tweed, and three to four at Broomlee Lough, Hauxley Reserve and Tweedmouth. One to two were at seven further sites.

Smew *Mergellus albellus*

A mobile pair (adult drake and probable adult female) was at QEII Lake on 22nd (MSH) and 26th-27th (TB/JPD/ASH/SPP), Ladyburn Lake on 25th (JSB/EC) and East Chevington north pool on 28th (JD/TRD). The drake displayed to the female on 27th at Ladyburn (SPP). A female at Whittle Dene reservoirs regularly between 1st-26th (AA/CB/OBr/SR *et al.*) was joined by a first-winter drake on 14th only (SR).

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

12 were at the Tweed Estuary on 14th (MHu), 11 (seven drakes) at Cresswell Pond on 22nd (TB) and three to ten there regularly between 5th-26th, nine at Hauxley Reserve on 12th (HRS), six to seven at Cheswick and Fenham Flats, four to five at Cocklawburn, East Chevington north pool and Ross Back Sands, and three at Meadow Haven (Berwick), Ladyburn Lake and Newbiggin. One to two were also at Blyth Harbour, off East Chevington, Seahouses Harbour and Stag Rocks. Display was noted at Cresswell Pond on 24th (SWA).

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

The largest counts were 14 (ten drakes) at Wylam on 14th (MH), 11 (two drakes) at Alnmouth on 7th (JMA), nine (four drakes) at Greenlee Lough on 16th (MRS), nine at QEII Lake on 22nd (MSH), eight at Killingworth Lake on 12th (LJM), five to six at Tyne Green (Hexham) and West Ord, and three to four at Bellingham, East Chevington, Linbriggs, Marden Quarry and Newburn. One to two were at 13 further localities including singles at on the Coe Burn at Thrunton Woods and at West Allotment Pond.

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

Counts of 38 and 25 came from two localities on Whitfield Moor on 14th (BNR) and a tetrad on Broadhope Hill in the Cheviots held 19 on 8th (IDR/JF). One to 12 birds were seen at eleven localities elsewhere namely Allenheads, Allendale Common, Dryburn Moor (near Allendale), Carrshield Moor, Coalcleugh, Deadwater (Kielder), Dod Hill, the Grasslees tetrad (11 birds, MJC), Hawsen Burn and the Harthope Valley,

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

The highest count came from Swinhope Shield where 14 males, some lekking, were present on 22nd and on the same day six males were at Carrshield and a single male at Meadow Cottage near Allenheads (all JSB/EC). Six males were on Dryburn Moor (near Allendale) on 25th (*per* EC) and six males were also at Black Cleugh on 24th (MSH). On Plennmeller Common two males were near Boghead on 8th (PT/LM/IW) and on 18th five males were recorded (MH). Other records were two males at West Stublick Moor, two on the slope of Cheviot and a single male at Acton, near Blanchland.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

26 birds had survived the winter, some still around release pens, on Whitfield Moor on 14th (BNR): elsewhere 18 were at Beaufront Hillhead (near Hexham) on 20th (RMH) and 14 at Bywell Cottagebank on 7th (BNR). Six were at New Reaveley Greens and four near Wooperton on 14th (PT) with pairs at the Beehive Flash (Earsdon), Middle Ord (Berwick) and New Bingfield. A single bird was noted at Earsdon Moor Farm.

A Grey Partridge at Cresswell
by John Clark on 8th February

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Well reported again this month with more than 20 records submitted, the maximum count being 15 at Fenham-le-Moor on 8th (AA/MH). Four pairs were at Dam Dykes Farm (Cramlington) on 20th (DM) and groups of five were noted at



three localities, Summerhouse Lane Pond (Newbiggin) on 5th (STH), Blyth Links also on 5th (BB) and at West Hartford on 10th (STH/PJA). Two pairs fed at Hemscott Hill Links on 25th (JSB/EC) and three birds were at Holywell Dene on 12th (SL). At ten other localities pairs were present namely Backworth, Cresswell Village, East Chevington, Great Whittington, Haughton Strother GP (a first record for this site), High Horton, Pallinsburn House, Plessey Checks, Stickle Heaton and Todridge Fell. Singles birds were also at Bywell and Cresswell Pond.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

On 4th nine were in a Hexham garden (AJH) and up to eight inhabited an Old Hartley garden throughout the month (RJP). A maximum of eight was also recorded at Druridge Links and Pools on two dates in the month (IDR) and four were at Cresswell on 5th (SL) and at Ellington Pond on 27th (IDR/JF). One to three birds were noted at Bomarsund, Holywell Pond, Seaton Delaval Hall, South Gosforth (Beatty Ave) and a Walbottle garden.

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

Druridge Bay again provided the favoured locality with peak counts of 19 and 10 on 3rd and 23rd respectively (ASJ/BB). In the north of the county seven were at Cocklawburn on 10th (MHu), six at Cheswick on 18th (MHu), five near St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) on 10th (ASJ), two at Spittal Bay (Berwick) on 21st (MHu) and a single at Stag Rocks on 12th (RB/MB). Elsewhere two were recorded at Newbiggin on 5th (STH) and singles were at Hartley Bay and St Mary's Island.

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*

Two records each comprised a single bird, one at Ross Back Sands on 5th (MSH) and at Holy Island Harbour on 26th (IK).

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

Two records this month, the first being a single bird initially on the sea off Spital Point (Newbiggin) on 5th (STH) before flying off S, and secondly a single flying S out at sea, recorded on a pelagic trip on 22nd (MSK/NECP).

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

At Newbiggin Church Point 13 birds flew S in an hour and one bird flew N over East Chevington North Pool on 28th (TRD/JD). Birds returned in good numbers to their breeding sites with a maximum of 38 pairs on the cliffs at Marshall Meadows on 16th (MHu) and elsewhere 46 birds were at Coves Bay (Holy Island) on 26th (IK), 38 on ledges at Whitley Bay South Promenade (MSH) on 13th, 16 on Tynemouth Cliffs (MSH/DMT) on 13th and ten at St Mary's Island (MT/NT) on 28th. Small numbers were recorded offshore at Stag Rocks and Newbiggin.

Sooty Shearwater *Puffinus griseus*

Bulletin addition. There was an unusual sighting of a bird at Cresswell on 11th January (EC).

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

Apart from 240 moving S in half an hour at Berwick Pier on 20th (MHu) noted passage was very light with high numbers of ten N at Stag Rocks on 16th (IDR), eight N at Emmanuel Head and Holy Island on 12th (IK) with two N and five N at other localities further south. One to five were seen moving S at three sites in the north of the county. Two birds were seen out to sea on a pelagic trip on 11th (MSK/NECP).

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

The maximum monthly counts were 108 at Blyth South Harbour on 3rd (SWA), 97 at North Shields Fish Quay on 17th (DMT) and 79 at Amble Harbour on 14th (LJM); one bird found at the latter site (MSH) had been colour-ringed as a nestling at Inverbervie in NE Scotland in July 2010. Counts elsewhere included 18 at Newbiggin on 10th (PRM), 12 at QEII CP Lake on 12th (CDH), singles at four coastal sites, Cresswell, Druridge Links and Pools, Hartley Bay and Seaton Sluice Estuary and one to three at the inland localities of Castle Island, Derwent Reservoir, Gosforth Park, Greenlee Lough, Newcastle Quayside and the River Tyne at Newburn.

***Continental Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis*

Seven of this race were at Blyth South Harbour on 10th (PRM) with four at Amble Harbour on 14th (MSH).

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

The peak count from Blyth Harbour was 43, including 31 immatures, on 24th (DMT) and ten colour-ringed birds were noted here during the month (DMT). The only records from elsewhere were five birds in Spital Bay (Berwick) on 21st (MHu) and two at Cresswell on 8th (TRD).

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

A single bird was seen at Gosforth Park on several dates throughout the month (SL/*per* SRB) and one was at Cresswell Pond on 21st (PCF).

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

The peak counts were an exceptional 19 at Druridge Pools on 24th (TB) and 16 at Prestwick Carr on 14th (PCF) where the birds were seen together in the air over the heronry following disturbance by a Buzzard. Druridge Pools continued to hold good numbers throughout the month with counts ranging from one to 14 on various dates and courtship/territorial display was observed here (ASJ/IRD/SWA *et al.*). The WeBS count in the Tweed Estuary produced 12 birds on 14th

(MHu). On 10th eight flew in from the NE to the Blagdon opencast site (LJM). One to three were noted at Arcot Pond, Beacon Hill (Cramlington), Catcleugh Reservoir, Cresswell, Gosforth Park, Hauxley NWT, Holywell Pond and Dene, Monk's House Pool, QEII CP Lake and St Mary's Wetland.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Two pairs were setting up territory at Capheaton Lake on 27th (STE) and three were at Bywell Haughs on the River Tyne on 14th (MH). One to two were recorded at Berwick Old Bridge, Linton Pond, Seaton Sluice Estuary, Swallow Pond and Wark on Tweed.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Three were on the sea at Birling Carrs on 10th (AT). One to two were at three other localities, Snipe Point (Holy Island) on 24th (SR), Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 25th and 26th (SR) and at Killingworth Lake, in summer plumage, on 26th (DM).

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

Single birds flew N at Church Point (Newbiggin) on 13th (AT) and S at Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) on 12th (IK). The popular Blyth Harbour bird was last recorded on 3rd (SWA) and sightings elsewhere were two at The Heugh (Holy Island) on 12th (IK), one at Stag Rocks on 21st (CB/OBr/MBr) and one at Cheswick on 25th (MHu).

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

An impressive 43 were at Ross Back Sands on 5th (MSH) where six were seen on 21st (BCFT). Gatherings of three to 18 birds were at Bamburgh Stag Rocks on many dates (AA/MH/IDR/CB/OBr/MBr *et al.*) and on Holy Island six birds were present in the Harbour on 26th (IK) with four near St Cuthbert's Island on 10th (ASJ). A TTV on Fenham Flats South on 8th recorded four birds (MSH). One was on the sea at Birling Carrs on 10th (AT).

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Single birds were seen at Low Waskerley on 5th (IFo), Bywell Cottagebank on 7th (BNR), Stocksfield (West Mickley) on 14th (MH) and at Shaw House (Newton) on the A69 on 18th (RMH).

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

A ringtail was seen at one site between the 2nd and 13th (AA/ASH *et al.*), and other singles were seen at New Shoreston (MSH) and at Stanington (CS).

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

A male and two females (AT) were seen at one site and singles (AA/MH/SRB) were noted at the same site during the month, another four sites had single birds (BNR/MSH/TRD/JD/PRM).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

The regular pair was seen throughout the month in a Scotland Gate garden (SLB/MSK) and a first winter male and a female were seen on several dates at Pegswood (AT). Another pair was seen at Jesmond Dene on 1st (STE); single birds were noted at 21 sites.

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

18 birds were seen from an observation point at Wylam on 14th (MH); nine birds were at Keenleyside Hill (Whitfield) on 8th (PT/LM/IW) and at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 14th (SR). Eight were seen at Staward Gorge on 12th (ASH), Blagdon Hall Estate on 24th (LJM) and N of Bellingham on 27th (ADM), seven were at Williamston Common on 1st (EC/JSB) and six were at Prestwick Carr on 2nd (PCF/MH). 56 records of between one and four birds were received this month.

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Eight birds were noted between Beal and Budle Bay on 10th (MSK/NEWT). Pairs were seen at Lamden Burn (Cheviots) and Prestwick Carr on 8th (IDR/JF/PRM) and at Hepple on 11th (MJC). Singles were noted at 16 further sites.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Up to three birds were regularly noted on Holy Island during the month (IK). Single birds were at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) on 13th (MNC), Fenham Flats on 8th (AA/MH) and St Mary's Island on 5th (KWY). Inland singles were seen at four sites (TRD/JD *et al.*).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

On Holy Island up to four birds were seen during February (IK *et al.*). Two birds were at one site on 28th (ALT) and singles were recorded at 13 sites including one which tried unsuccessfully to catch Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus* in the Harthope Valley (TRD/JD).

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

There were no records this month of this species.

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

The highest counts this month were 19 at Woodhorn Flashes on 20th (STH), 16 at Backworth Pond on 25th (MNC), 15 at Swallow Pond on 17th (JPD) and 14 at Druridge Bay CP on 7th (JMA). One to eight birds were at 17 other sites.

Coot *Fulica atra*

Killingworth Lake had the highest count this month with 80 birds on 26th (DM). Other high counts were 63 at Capheaton on 27th (STE), 25 at Swallow Pond on 10th (JPD) and 20 at Backworth Pond on 25th (MNC). One to nineteen were noted at 18 sites.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Along the coast 124 were at Cresswell on 5th (SL) and still 68 on 21st (PCF), 70 at Hauxley NR 14th (SRB), 59 at Dunstanburgh Heughs on 17th (AT) and 50 at Cullercoats Bay on 26th (MN); 19-39 were at Beadnell, Fenham Flats, Low Newton, Seahouses GC and Whitley Bay Links. Inland, 64 were at Castron on 14th (TRD), 16 at Merryfields GP (Bywell Cottagebank) and 13 at Haughton Strother GP on 19th. Others were filtering to potential/past breeding areas included pairs at Longhorsley on 11th, at Arcot pond on 17th, Blenkinsopp on 18th, Thropton on 23rd and Bellingham and Newcastle Airport on 26th. Singles were also found at Hexham, Upper Coquetdale and Wark (North Tyne).

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Long Nanny estuary held 161 on 20th (ASH) and 62 were at Cheswick on 25th (MHu). The few other records include 28 at St Mary's on 11th and 21 at Blyth South Harbour on 14th.

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

Apart from 800+ at Fenham Flats on 10th (ASJ) numbers were low: 35 at St Mary's on 28th, 31 at Prestwick Carr on 26th and 17-20 at Cramlington and Grindon Lough at times. Six were back in two areas of Whitfield Moor by 14th and two at each of Carrshield Moor and Dryburn Moor on 24th.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Records were scarce: 17 at Newbiggin Beacon Point on 26th (STH), five at Berwick on 13th and three at Newbiggin Church Point on 13th.

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

A 'huge' count on the eastern pit at Castron of 680 on 14th (TRD) was attributed to disturbance by bird scarers on nearby fields; 650 were at East Chevington on 24th (ASJ). A newly created lake on former opencast at Middle Stobswood attracted 317 on 18th (AT), 300 were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 17th (MN) and 100-250 were noted at Bywell Haughs, Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Links, Grindon Lough, Haughton Strother GP, Newton Pool, St Mary's and Yarrow Slake. In addition 50-60 were found at Alnmouth Wetlands, Bywell Cottagebank, Prestwick Carr, Rayburn Lake, Seghill, Swallow Pond and the Tweed Estuary and smaller numbers occurred at a further 16 locations.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

In the north-east 1,000 were at Fenham Flats on 10th (ASJ), 150+ flew S at Ross Back Sands on 5th (MSH) and 100 were on the Holy Island Causeway on 3rd (JMA). Further south, St Mary's had 92 on 28th, Hauxley NR 50 on 14th and Cresswell Pond 39 on 24th.

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

At St Mary's the flock peaked at 98 on 23rd with 87 on 28th (ASJ/MT/NT), 64 were at Spittal on 25th (MHu) and 54 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 26th (STH); 20-30 were noted at Boulmer, Cresswell, East Chevington and Newton.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

Stag Rocks held 82 on 12th, down to 70 on 21st (BCFT/CB/OBr/MBr) and 42 were at Dodd's Well (Berwick) on 13th (MHu). Elsewhere 24 were at Seahouses Harbour on 15th, 12 at Low Newton on 10th, ten at Cocklawburn on 10th and seven at St Mary's on 23rd; singles were at Newbiggin on 14th and again at Cresswell Pond, on 21st.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

By far the largest number was 1,800 at Fenham Flats on 10th (ASJ). At Ross Back Sands 300 flew S on 5th (MSH), 210 were at Long Nanny on 20th, 168 at Newbiggin at high tide on 14th, 125 at Cresswell Pond on 24th and 100 in Cullercoats Bay on 8th. Twelve or fewer were noted at Cheswick, East Chevington, Grindon Lough, Hauxley NR, Lyne Hill, Prestwick Carr and St Mary's.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

One was at Cresswell Pond on 5th/6th (SL/AT).

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

The maximum at West Hartford was 17 on 6th (LJM), 16 were at Arcot Pond on 20th (DM) and 12 at Druridge Pools on 6th (AT). Three were at Swallow Pond on 21st, singles at Prestwick Carr on 2nd, near North Yardhope on 26th and one was singing at Dod Hill on 26th.

Snipe is a **target species** for 2011. Please report all records.

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Just seven reports, all of singletons: at Druridge Pools & Links on 7th, Swallow Pond on 9th, Hauxley NR on 12th, West Hartford on 13th, at Backworth and at High Horton on 22nd and one roding at Slaley Hall on 23rd (RMH).

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Two were again present throughout at Rocket Field Pools (Holy Island) (IK *et al.*).

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

At Fenham Flats some 2,000 were present on 10th (ASJ) and 100 were noted from the Holy Island Causeway on 3rd (JMA). Dodd's Well (Berwick) had 48 on 13th, 27 were at Annstead Links on 25th, 20 at Boulmer on 12th and ten in Budle Bay on 21st. Seven were at Newton on 10th and one to three at East Chevington, Hauxley NR and St Mary's.



Bar-tailed Godwits on Beadnell Beach
25th February
Alan Tilmouth

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

A TTV to Lindisfarne NNR, Fenham Flats S produced 429 on 8th (MSH). Other larger counts were of 250 on Holy Island on 3rd (JMA), 200 at Newton on 10th (JMA), 174 at Beadnell on 20th (ASH), 149 at St Mary's on 23rd (ASJ) and 112 at Annstead Links on 25th; 40-77 were at Blyth Links, Boulmer, Cresswell Pond, Druridge, East Chevington, Hauxley NR, Monk's House Pool and Prestwick Carr. Smaller numbers appeared at a further 11 places including up to 18 inland at Grindon Lough late in the month.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Three records of singles: at Haughton Strother GP on 1st (MR), Corbridge on 4th (BNR) and at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 26th (SR).

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

The WeBS count in the Tweed estuary produced a high total of 575 on 14th (MHu); 129 were at St Mary's on 24th (MT/NT) with 100 in Cullercoats Bay on 26th (MN). Blyth South Harbour, Boulmer, Cresswell, Fenham Flats, Hauxley NR and the R Tyne held 23-61 at times and low numbers were found at Druridge Pools and Holywell Pond.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

There were 99 at St Mary's on 18th (MT/NT) but all other counts were in single figures: at Blyth South Harbour, Cresswell, Hartley Bay, Hauxley and Newbiggin.

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

One flew S at Newbiggin on 20th (STH).

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

A definite increase in numbers wintering at the two main sites was noted with peaks of six adults at the Tyne Estuary up to North Shields Fish Quay on 26th and five adults at Blyth South Harbour on 14th (DMT).

An early return was also noted at Newcastle Quayside with three present around nests on 10th (MH). An unusual inland sighting involved an adult at Haughton Strother GP near Humshaugh on 1st (MR).

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

The main roost noted was again on the sea between Tynemouth and Cullercoats with 2,600 present on 14th (DMT). At the Tweed Estuary a count of ca. 800 was made on 22nd when the Tweed was in spate (MHu). The other regularly watched sites showed peaks of 323 at the Tyne Estuary up to North Shields Fish Quay on 15th and 66 at Blyth South Harbour on 14th (DMT). Other large groups seen involved 280 at Elswick Wharf on 8th (DM) and 250 at Tynemouth on 25th (JMA). Other flocks of up to 200 birds were noted at many sites.

A ringed bird (J72J) at Amble Harbour was seen on 10th (SWA).

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

An adult and a first-winter were seen off Church Pt (Newbiggin) on 19th (AT) during a period of south- easterlies.

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

The peak count at Newbiggin this month was 15 on both 10th and 26th (PRM/STH) involving eight adults, three second-winters and four first-winters. All other reports involved singles with different adults at Swallow Pond on 17th and 22nd (JPD/SPP) plus singles at Amble on 14th (LJM) and Whitley Bay on 26th (TS).

Common Gull *Larus canus*

The peak counts this month were ca.700 at the Long Nanny (Newton) on 25th (AT) and ca.600 at Benridge (Morpeth) on 27th (JR). Other flocks of 200 to 300 were noted at Cramlington, Halton, Haughton Strother GP and Stanton Mill. The regularly watched sites saw peak counts of 129 at the sea roost between Tynemouth and Cullercoats on 14th plus 42 at the Tyne Estuary up to North Shields Fish Quay on 16th and only three at Blyth South Harbour on 24th (DMT). Up to 60 were noted at a variety of other localities.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

An obvious return to Northumberland was noted mid-month with two at Blyth South Harbour on 8th (PCF), a first-winter at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 10th (RGW), one at Dudley Lane (Cramlington) on 11th-12th plus single adults at Swallow Pond from 13th (SPP/JPD), Hemscott Hill (Cresswell) on 14th (MJCo) and Garleigh Hill (Rothbury) on 17th (TRD/JD). Further reports involved single adults at Seghill on 25th and Backworth on 28th (CGK), two at Cramlington on 26th & 27th (DM/LJM), two adults at Grindon Lough on 28th (PRM) plus four adults N offshore at Druridge on 27th (IDR/JF) and an increase to seven adults at Swallow Pond on 26th (CDH).

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

The largest flocks noted were 650 at Seghill tip on 27th (CGK) with 525 at the Tyne Estuary up to North Shields Fish Quay on 26th (DMT), 500 on the sea at Tynemouth on 25th (JMA) and 430 at the Tweed Estuary on 14th (MHu). Smaller concentrations involved 150 at Newton on 10th (JMA), 122 at Blyth South Harbour on 14th (DMT) and 100 at Budle Bay on 10th (JMA). Up to 25 were noted at a number of localities.

'Northern' Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argentatus*

30 adults of this Northern race were noted at Seghill tip on 27th (CGK).

Argentatus race Herring Gull

Derwent Bay CP

17th February

Alan Tilmouth



Iceland Gull *Larus glaucooides glaucooides*

An adult was seen off Church Point (Newbiggin) on 4th feeding off the outfall to the south on 4th (AT). A popular second-winter was found at North Shields Fish Quay from 14th to 16th (ASJ/JPD/MNC/BB/MT/NT).



Iceland Gull in flight at North Shields Fish Quay
15th February by Alan Tilmouth

*** Kumlien's Gull** *Larus glaucooides kumlieni*

A juvenile/first-winter was identified at Monk's House Pool on 15th (MSH) with almost certainly the same bird having been found previously on a Bird Cub Field Trip on the 12th (BCFT). This interesting form which is now widely thought to be a hybrid between Iceland Gull & Thayer's rather than a subspecies has only three previous county records. These were immatures at Tynemouth in April 1993 & 1999 and at Newburn in 2007.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

Counts were low this month with even the regularly watched sites recording only 68 at the Tyne Estuary up to North Shields Fish Quay on 15th and 37 at Blyth South Harbour on 24th (DMT). Up to 20 were found at a few other localities.

Guillemot *Uria aalge*

Only three records were received with three at Marshall Meadows on 16th, three at Cheswick on 25th and two at Berwick on 20th (MHu).

Razorbill *Alca Torda*

There was an early return to Dunstanburgh cliffs with 33 found on 17th. Elsewhere up to five were regularly reported at Bamburgh with singles at Holy Island on 26th & 27th and offshore at East Chevington on 28th.

Razorbill at Bamburgh by Colin Bradshaw



Rock Dove / Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

All but one record were from coastal locations, the peak being an impressive 2,000+ harried by a Peregrine at Berwick Granary on 26th (MHu). Peak counts elsewhere were 73 at North Shields Fish Quay on 19th (DMT), 70+ at South Promenade (Whitley Bay) on 13th (MSH), 55 at Blyth South Harbour on 24th, 40 at New Shoreston on 8th and 20 at Seahouses on 12th (DWS). Two were in the observer's garden at Whitley Bay on 21st and the only inland record was one at Beatty Avenue (South Gosforth) on 16th (MJCo).

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Well reported with the peak count of 24 at Swallow Pond on the 22nd (SPP) and 8 there on the 17th (JPD). Twelve were at Acomb on 18th, 11 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 12th, seven at Carrshield Moor on 24th and six at Budge Field (Druridge Pools) on 13th. Five were at East Woodburn on 18th and Backworth on 26th, four at Marden Quarry on 21st with three at Elford, Jesmond Dene and Northumberland Park (North Shields). Pairs were present at Jesmond Dene, a Walbottle garden, two at Coalcleugh, Staward Gorge and Whitley Shield with singles at Blagdon Hall and Wallington.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

Large counts of 2,000 at Woodhorn Flashes on 24th with 1,000 there on 5th (TB), 1,500 at Styford on 4th (SWA) and Crookham Westfield on 5th (TRD/JD). Around 650 were in a Walbottle field on 15th (KR/LR), 380 at Bywell Cottagebank/Short Wood on 7th (BNR), 290 at Swallow Pond on 22nd (JPD) with 250 at Newton and Stocksfield, 200 at Lindisfarne NNR, 150 at Hartburn and 100 at West Sleekburn. One to 15 were a seven further localities.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

The peak count was 34 found on a two hour TTV at Dinnington on 13th (LJM). 16 were at Northburn (Cramlington) on 5th (PJA) and High Weetslade on 11th (STH), 15 at Berwick Hill on 13th (DM), 14 at West Thirston on 20th (IDR) and 13 at Woolsington on 11th (SRB). Seven were at High Chibburn (Druridge) on 14th, six at Stannington on 4th and four at Furnace Bridge (Bedlington) with one to two at four further localities.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

The peak count was three on Holy Island with birds present throughout the month (IK). Two were hunting mid-afternoon at South Pool (East Chevington) on 28th (TRD/JD) with all other reports being single birds at this location on four dates and at Cresswell Pond on three dates, Druridge Pools, Ellington, Hauxley NWT, Holywell Dene and Gowk Hill (Rothbury). An adult male found dead on a road at Chevington Moor had been ringed at Acklington as a pullus by K Brooks four years ago (IDR).

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

A pair was at an established nest site near Allendale on 22nd (SAS) whilst all other reports were single birds at Doddington on 9th, Wallhouses on 17th, near Ovington on 26th and at Druridge Lane (Widdrington) on 27th.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Most reports were of calling birds with two males at Ellington on 10th and a male and female there on 17th (TB). Two were at Holywell Dene on 22nd with a bird regularly in the observer's garden at Heddon on the Wall all month (AA). Single birds were also at Woolsington on 1st, Kirkhill (Morpeth) on 6th, Houtley on 7th, Ordley on 10th, Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 11th and Valley Park (Cramlington) on 27th and 28th.

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

A single bird was at West Hartford on 6th and 10th (LJM/PJA/STH) and one at Swallow Pond on 17th (JPD).

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Many sightings at various locations in Jesmond Dene with a pair at White Bridge on 13th, two there on 24th (AA) and singles on seven further dates. Two were at Gosforth Park NR throughout the month (*per* SRB) with singles at Arcot Pond on 13th and 18th (LJM/STH), High Church (Morpeth) on 16th (MJC) and R Tyne at Corbridge on 22nd (EC/JSB).

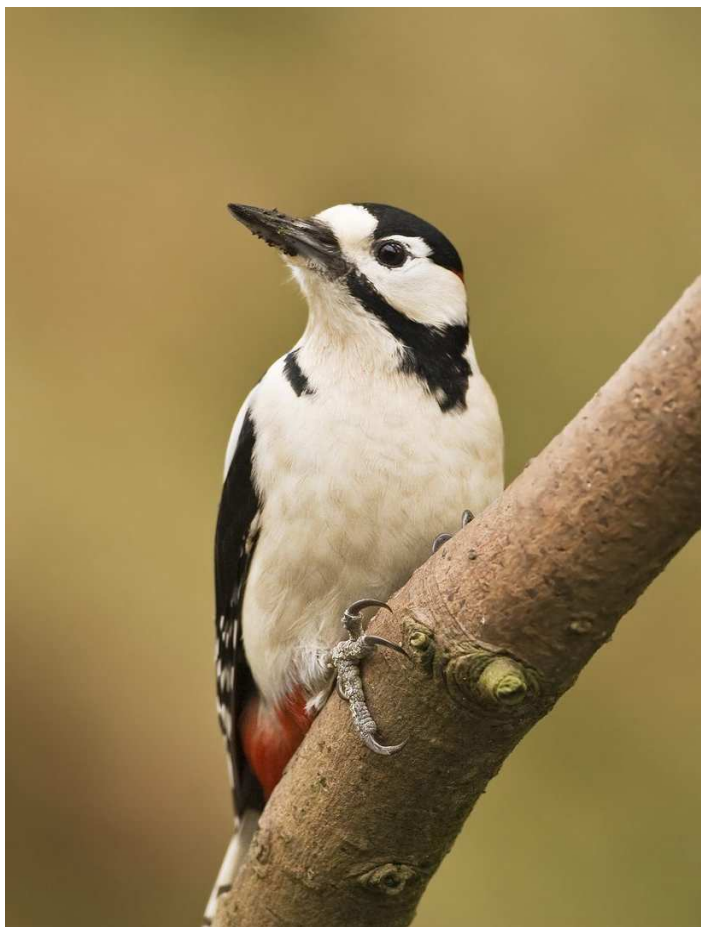
Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

All reports of single birds at Stocksfield on 1st and 22nd, North Farm (Hetton) on 13th (EC/JSB), Widdrington Tip on 14th (SRB), Wallhouses on 17th (IK), Aydon (Corbridge) on 22nd (RB/MB), Arcot Pond on 22nd (DM), Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 26th (TB), Tutehill Moss (Harwood Forest) on 27th (AT) and R Tyne at Newburn on 28th (KR/LR).

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Well reported again with the largest count of six on a two-hour TTV at Whiteside Hepple on 11th (MJC). Five were at Sleafy Hall on 3rd (RMH), Gosforth Park NR on 20th (IK) and Wallington Hall on 21st (DM), four at Netherwitton on 17th (MSH) and Redesmouth on 20th (ADM) with three at Holywell Dene, Gosforth Park and Blagdon Hall Estate. A pair was at Scotland Gate throughout the month with two at Bakethin, Attlee Park Bedlington, Harwood Forest, Holystone Common, Jesmond Dene and Pallinsburn House. Singles were reported from a further 24 widespread localities including five locations around Cramlington (DM).

A Great Spotted Woodpecker at Wallington
by Colin Bradshaw



Great Grey Shrike near Holystone Common
26th February by Janet Dean



Great Grey Shrike *Lamius excubitor*

The single bird was at Tutehill Moss (Harwood Forest) throughout the month with sightings on 14th, 22nd and 27th (BB/LMo/IWa/AT). Singles were also at North Yardhope (Otterburn Ranges) on 26th (TRD/JD) and Holystone on 27th (CB).

Magpie *Pica pica*

Swallow Pond was the hotspot with 95 there on the 21st (JPD) and a two-hour TTV on 24th recorded 59 including 25 in one field (SRB). A pre-roost gathering at Heddon Haughs Farm on 14th numbered 32 (MH), 26 were at Whitefield (Pegswood) on 13th (AT), 21 at Bebside Bridge on 16th (JR) and 18 at Budle Bay on 12th (BCFT). One to nine were found at 14 further widespread locations.

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Six was the peak count at Mitford on 17th (ASJ), three at Ellington on 27th (TB), 2 at Scotland Gate and Swallow Pond all month (SLB/MSK/JPD), Gosforth Park on 5th (SL) and Capheaton on 27th (STE). Singles were at Dam Dykes (Cramlington), Gosforth Park, Hauxley, Holystone, Jesmond Dene, Bull Crag (Kielder) and Rothbury.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

A flock of around 400 birds at Bothal Pond on the 18th included three showing characteristics of the nominate race *monedula* (AT). 300 were near Amble Braid on 7th (JMA), 200 at Newburn on 21st (KR/LR), 120 at Lynemouth on 27th (IDR/JF), 100 at Linnels on 16th (ALT), 82 at Elsdon on 26th (PCF) and 80 at Ross on 5th (MSH). One to 30 were at Druridge Links and Pools, Jesmond Dene, Rayburn Lake, Seaton Delaval Hall and a Walbottle garden.

Two birds showing characteristics of the Nordic race ssp *monedula* were at Lyne Sands on 24th (AT) with singles at Gosforth Park on 5th (SL) and Elsdon on 26th (PCF).

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

The peak count was 450 at Shaftoe Crags on the 18th with 300 in a field near Amble Braid on 7th, 250 at Wark on Tyne and 200 at Belford on 18th (JMA). 200 were also at Bellingham on 27th (ADM), 180 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 26th (SR) and 150 at Low Newton on 10th. Counts of two to 92 came from Stag Rocks (Bamburgh), Druridge Links and Pools, Grasslees, Highthorn, Hexham, Lindisfarne NNR, Rayburn Lake, Ross and Seaton Delaval Hall.

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

30 were at North Shields on the 25th (JMA) whilst 28 were in the Tyne Estuary up to North Shields Fish Quay on 26th (DMT) with 21 at Druridge Links and Pools on 14th (IDR) and 16 on a two-hour TTV at Fenham Flats on 8th (MSH). One to 11 were at Hirst Head and Sleekburn (Bedlington), Bebside Bridge, Bomarsund, Gosforth Park, South Gosforth, High Horton, and Leazes Park.

Raven *Corvus corax*

A pair in courtship display were among six birds in the Sipton Burn/Allendale Common area on the 8th (PT/LMo/IWa). Four were at Deadwater (Kielder) on 10th (SL), three at Shield on the Wall Dam on 14th (PRM), a pair in the Broadhope Hill tetrad in the Cheviots on 8th (IDR/JF) with two at Bushman's Crag and Windyhaugh (Upper Coquetdale) on 26th (TRD/JD). Singles were at Eslington, Hepple, Otterburn Ranges, Redesmouth and Thorngrifton Common.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Four singing birds were at Bakethin with another two at Bull Crag (Kielder) on 10th (MSH) and two at Attlee Park (Bedlington) on 12th (JR). Singles visited gardens at Barrasford Close (Gosforth) on 15th, Cramlington on 17th and were also found at Dipton Wood, The Grove (Gosforth), High Horton, Jesmond Dene and Tritlington.

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

TTVs combined with good weather produced the highest counts with 95 at Linnels on 16th (ALT), 49 in the Whiteside tetrad (Hepple) on 11th (MJC), 38 at Humford Mill (Bedlington) on 12th (JR) and 34 at Blagdon Hall Estate on 24th (LJM). Other counts in the Bedlington area were 28 at Furnace Bridge, 24 at Attlee Park, 18 at Hirst Head, Bomarsund and Ellington Pond, 16 at Bebside Bridge and 14 at Sleekburn (JR/IDR). 16 visited the feeding station at Wallington Hall on 21st with one to eight at ten further widespread localities.

Great Tit *Parus major*

The Linnels TTV again provided the peak count of 50 on 16th (ALT), with 23 at Humford Mill (Bedlington) on 12th (JR), 20 at Holywell Dene on 24th (MT/NT), 17 at Hepple on 11th (MJC) and 16 at Attlee Park Bedlington on 12th. One to 11 were at 19 further widespread localities.



Two photographs by Colin Bradshaw, both from Wallington,
left a Great Tit and right a Coal Tit

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

Around 40 were in the Redesmouth/Bellingham area on the 20th (ADM), 34 in the Whiteside tetrad (Hepple) on 11th (MJC), 24 at Attlee Park and 23 at Humford Mill (Bedlington) on 12th (JR). Twelve were around the Lamden Burn valley in the Cheviots on 8th (IDR/JF) and at Hirst Head (Bedlington) on 12th (JR). One to six were at ten further widespread localities.

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

All reports of single birds at Prestwick Carr on 5th (PCF/ASH), Wallhouses on 10th (EC), Backworth on 16th (MNC) and at the Wallington Hall feeding station on 27th.

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

Four were found on a 2-hour TTV at Linnels on 16th (ALT) all other reports being singles on feeders at Stocksfield Community Woodland on 1st and 22nd (JSB/EC), Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth) on 13th (DM/STH), Acomb on 18th (AJH) and Borough Woods (Morpeth) on 24th (PRM).

Marsh Tit

10th February Stocksfield

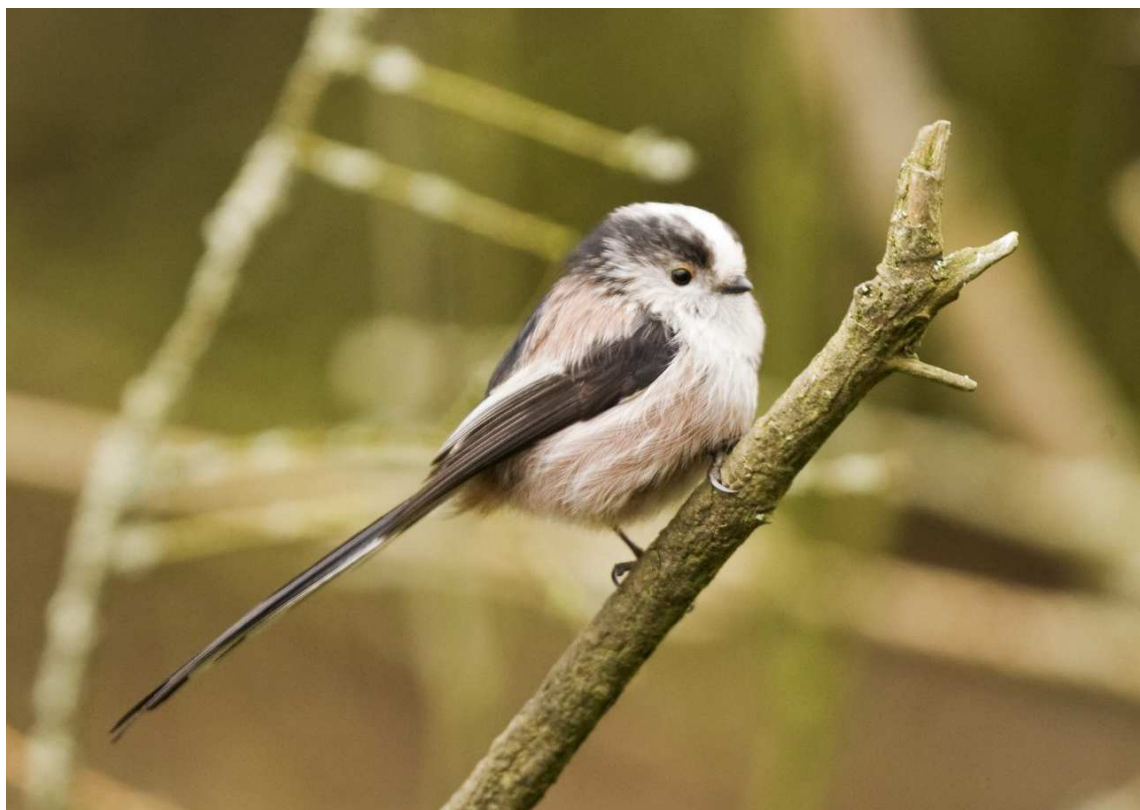
by JohnClark

**Skylark** *Alauda arvensis*

The reporting rate returned to normal as birds returned to sing and display with the largest flock of 50 feeding in maize stubble at Chare End (Lindisfarne) on 26th (IK). 16 including seven singing birds were at Snab Point (Cresswell) on 15th (ASJ), 13 on a TTV at Fenham Flats on 8th (MSH) and at Todridge Fell on 28th (ALT). Twelve birds were at Haughton Strother and Steel Rigg with ten at Ellington and Otterburn Ranges, eight at Beacon Lane (Cramlington), seven at Elsdon, and six at Briardene Farm and Monkridge Hall. One to five birds generally in song were reported from 18 further widespread localities.

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

The largest tribe was 24 at Bebside Bridge (Blyth) on 16th (JR). Garden feeding stations attracted birds throughout the month, including a peak of 17 at Scotland Gate (SLB/MSK), 14 at Ordley and 12 at Walbottle (BNR/KR/LR). At Swallow Pond up to 15 were recorded on 18th (JPD) and ten were at Cramlington on 20th, East Ord on 22nd and Marden Quarry on 22nd (DM/MHu/MN). Six to nine were also reported at Bakethin, Bedlington, Cobalt Business Park (N. Shields), Druridge Links/Pools, Haughton Strother, Holywell Dene, Jesmond Dene, Low Alwinton and QE II CP and one to five from a further 28 localities.



A Long- tailed Tit at Wallington by Colin Bradshaw

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Only two birds were reported; singles in gardens at Gosforth and Monkseaton (KAS/AAMcf).

Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus*

A Chapel House garden attracted a flock of 50 on 7th and 12-35 from 8th-10th (IK). About 50 flew upriver at North Shields Fish Quay on 19th (DMT), 43 were at Dene Grove (Gosforth) on 2nd (PT) and 30 at Regent Centre (Gosforth) on 27th (IK). Elsewhere 20-25 were also noted at Gosforth Garden Village on 26th, Heaton Road (Newcastle) on 21st, Jesmond Dene on 27th, West Allotment on 17th and Westerhope on 28th. There were 12 in an Embleton garden on 6th (JMT) and at Prestwick Carr 11 flew E on 26th (PCF). One to nine were reported from a further five localities in the south and south-east of the county and also eight well inland at Harwood Forest and six on the coast at Hauxley NR on 17th.

In January 90 were at Paddy Freeman's (Jesmond Dene) on 30th (MPF)

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Five were reported from Humford Mill (Bedlington) on 12th (JR) and four to five in the Redesmouth-Bellingham area on 20th (ADM). Four were also noted at Blagdon Hall on 24th (LJM), two to three at Atlee Park (Bedlington), Gosforth Park, Hepscott, Jesmond Dene, Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth), Walbottle and Wallington Hall and singles at a further 13 localities.



A Wallington Nuthatch
by Colin Bradshaw

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

On-going BTO Atlas work produced counts of eight during 2-hour TTVs at Hepple Whiteside and Linnels on 11th and 16th (MJC/ALT). Three were reported from Bellingham on 20th and one or two from a further 12 localities.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Three Bedlington tetrads supported a total of 21 birds (JR) which is probably fewer than might be expected for this very common and vocal resident. Elsewhere records were thin on the ground, with three at Bomarsund and Jesmond Dene and singles at a further seven localities.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

The highest count was 1,000 at Thirlwell Common on 15th (IFo). Flocks of 300-350 were reported from Beaconhill (Cramlington) and Darras Hall on 18th and West Brunton on 21st and 200+ at Prestwick on 18th. Further counts included 100 at Newton Pool, Smalesmouth and Whitley Bay, 75 at Cresswell, 30 at Aydon (Corbridge) and three to eight from a further five localities.

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

Well reported from Upper Coquetdale with one-three noted at Usway Burn (three), Shillmoor, Windyhaugh and Linbriggs (JR/TRD/JD). Elsewhere two were recorded at Chollerton, Heaton Park, Jesmond Dene, Linnels, Matfen and Smalesmouth (N Tyne) and singles at Barhaugh Burn, Bywell Bridge, Guyzance, Holywell Dene and Langleeford. Nesting activity included nests either started or completed at Elsdon, Linbriggs and Low Alwinton by 27th (JR).

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Quite scarce this month, although a total of 56 were counted in four tetrads in the Bedlington area from 12th-16th (JR). In a Walbottle garden the highest count for the month was 11 on 13th (KR/LR), up to eight were reported from Bomarsund on 16th and Ellington Pond on 27th and six from a Whitley Bay garden on 7th and 21st. Elsewhere one to four were noted at a further ten localities including singing birds at Gosforth Garden Village by 8th and Scotswood Road on 28th.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

Largest flocks were 210 at Beehive Flash (Earsdon) on 14th (MNC), ca.200 near West Woodburn on 27th (ADM), 150 at Wanneys on 5th (IK) and 100 at Brierdene Farm (Whitley Bay) on 18th (MT/NT). Elsewhere 50-80 were reported from Halton (Corbridge), Monkridge Hall, Swallow Pond, Swinhoe Moor and West Brunton and 34-40 from Aydon (Corbridge) and Prestwick Carr. Counts of 15-25 came from a further five localities.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

A return to some areas was detected after a winter absence. At High Brunton one on 14th, the first since November 2010, increased to three-four by 16th (JWP). Six singing males were at the Linnels on 16th (ALT) and four birds at Elsdon on 26th (PCF). There were three in Jesmond Dene on 20th, two at Sleekburn and Bomarsund on 16th and at Holywell Dene on 24th and singles at a further five localities including Great Whittington, the first bird of the year.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

The species was scarce this month with the largest flocks in urban/suburban areas. Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) held 40 on 12th (KWY), 30-40 were at Jesmond Dene on 16th (DHWB) and 30-35 in Northumberland Park (North Shields) from 15th-18th (MNC). Flocks of 20 were reported from Tynemouth and Whitley Bay, 12-15 from Aydon (Corbridge) and Cramlington, nine from Jesmond Dene and two at Linden Hall.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

BTO Atlas work produced counts of 16 singing and active males at the Linnels on 16th (ALT) and six, including three singing males in the Hepple Whiteside tetrad on 11th (MJC). Elsewhere there were four at Seaton Delaval Hall on 24th, three at Staward Station on 12th, two at Arcot Pond, Catcleugh Reservoir, Jesmond Dene and Northumberland Park (North Shields) and singles at East Chevington and Gosforth Park.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

In the Bedlington area a total of 52 were recorded from five tetrads, the most productive of which were at Furnace Bridge (16) and Atlee Park (15)(JR). Further Atlas work produced 22 at Blagdon Estate on 24th and 21 at Hepscott on 1st (LJM). One to eight were reported from a further 11 localities.

Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*

Very few were reported again this month, and all from coastal sites. A pair was reported from the Cresswell Pond area from 5th-15th (SL/ASJ/EC/JSB), another pair at East Chevington on 8th and 28th (ASJ/NFO) and singles at Druridge Pools on 15th and Warkworth Gut on 5th.

Stonechat is a **target species** for 2011. Please report all records.

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

11 were found at Atlee Park (Bedlington) on 12th (JR), elsewhere in the Bedlington area five were at Furnace Bridge on 16th and four at Hirst Head on 12th (JR). Three were at South Gosforth on 16th (MJCo) and Bebside Bridge (Blyth) on 16th (JR). One-two were at a further ten widespread localities including singing birds at High Church (Morpeth) and Kenton (Newcastle). One was ringed at Ellington Pond on 27th (IDR/JF).

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

59 were observed around Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 21st (DM), 36 during an Atlas visit at Dinnington on 13th (LJM), 33 at Linden Hall on 12th (NFO), 25 at Belford silos on 10th (JMA), 20 at Cockles (Tritlington) on 24th (MJCo), 18 at Crow Hill Farm (Holywell Dene) on 24th (MT/NT) and Elsdon on 26th (PCF), 13 at Atlee Park (Bedlington) on 12th (JR) and one-12 at a further four widespread localities.

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

55 were noted in a cover crop at Harpere's Heugh near Budle Bay on 18th (IDR), 50+ at New Shoreston on 8th (MSH), 25 at Matfen on 10th (EC). 15 on feeders at Scaffold Hill Farm on 22nd (JPD), ten at Linden Hall all month (NFO), eight at Wark on Tweed on 3rd (TRD/JD) and Red House Farm on 5th (CS), four at the Cockles (Tritlington) on 24th (MJCo) and one to three at a further seven widespread localities including a Walbottle garden.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Two were at Jesmond Dene between 24th-28th (AA/MJCo). Singles were also at Brown's Point (Whitley Bay) on 1st (MN), Morpeth and Ouseburn (Byker) on 8th (TRD/JMA), Spital Burn (Newbiggin) and Riding Mill on 10th (PRM/BNR), the Gate (Newcastle) on 11th (DM), Spittal (Berwick) on 17th (MHu), Whitley Bay on 18th (MT/NT), Elsdon on 26th (PLF) and the Bigg Market (Newcastle) on 28th (DM).

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrellii*

46 were found at Lynemouth on 14th (MSH). Two were at South Beach (Blyth) on 12th (JMA) and singles at St. Mary's Island on 18th (MT/NT), Forum Shopping Centre (Wallsend) on 21st (CDH) and Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 24th (MJC).

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Numbers remained low throughout month with two at Thorneyburn Fell on 7th (SRS) and singles at Prestwick Carr on 5th (PCF), Fenham Flats on 8th where it was the "passerine highlight" (AA/MH), Holy Island on 10th and 28th (ASJ/IK) and West Hartford on 22nd (LJM) the only records.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Six were observed at Rumbling Churn (Dunstanburgh) on 17th (AT), three at Budle Bay on 12th (BCFT) and Holy Island Harbour on 26th (IK), two at Newbiggin on 10th (PRM), Amble Little Shore on 14th (LJM), St. Mary's Island on 28th (MT/NT) and singles at Spital Point (Newbiggin) on 5th (STH) and Whitley Bay South Promenade on 13th (MSH).



Rock Pipit
Dunstanburgh
17th February by Alan Tilmouth

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

87 were found in the Hepple Whiteside tetrad during an Atlas visit on 11th (MJC), 86 at the Wallington Hall feeding station on 21st (DM), 54 at Middle Ord (Berwick) on 4th (MHu), 40+ at Harwood Forest on 1st (MSH) and Linnels on 16th (ALT), 31 at Hirst Head (Bedlington) on 12th (JR), 25 at feeders at Kielder Castle on 18th (JMA) and 19 at Attlee Park (Bedlington) on 12th (JR). One to nine were at a further 17 widespread localities. One was ringed at Ellington Pond on 27th (IDR/JF).

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

A flock present at West Mickley peaked at 30+ on 21st (SWA). 20-30 were part of a mixed flock with Chaffinch and Greenfinch at St. Nicholas Park (Gosforth) between 11th-20th (AJN), 15 at Ellington on 19th-20th (TB), 14 at an Ovington garden on 6th (SAS), nine at Bywell Cottage Bank on 7th (BNR), eight at a Scotland Gate garden all month (SLB/MSK), Featherstone Park on 2nd (AJR/JMA) and on feeders at Shildon (Blanchland) on 11th (JMA), seven at a Beaconhill (Cramlington) garden on 5th (STH), six at Sundaysight (Bellingham) on 27th (ADM), five at Wallington Hall on 2nd (TRD/JD), Swallow Pond on 13th (ASJ) and a Kenton (Newcastle) garden on 28th (MRS). Four were also at Grindon Hamlet on 10th (AA) and Linden Hall on 13th (NFO). One to three were at a further 24 widespread localities including gardens at Cramlington (Northburn and Southfield Green), Greenhead, Heddon-on-the-Wall, Little Benton (Newcastle), Monkseaton (Whitley Bay) and Rothbury.

Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*

27 were observed at a Walbottle garden on 13th (KR/KR), nine at Heaton Park on 20th (MJCo) and Wallington Hall feeding station and one to five at a further 11 widespread localities.

38 at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 19th (DM), 32 at East Ord on 8th (MHu) and Silverlink Biodiversity Park (North Shields) on 28th (CGK), 31 at Bomarsund on 27th (MSH), 29 at an Ovington garden on 20th (SAS), 25 at Ellington Pond on 13th (IDR) and Druridge Pools on 17th (MSK/NEWT), 20+ at Seaton Delaval, and a Whitley Bay garden on 21st (MT/NT), 12 at Obelisk Plantation (Seaton Sluice) on 12th (SL) and 11 at West Hartford on 13th (DM/STH). One to eight were at a further 13 widespread localities.

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

A flock of 250 was at Langleeford (Harthope Valley) on 27th (TRD/JD), ca.80 in a tight flock crossing the River Tyne and Ovingham/Prudhoe on 14th (MH) and Newcastle United Academy (Little Benton) on 16th (MPF), 62 at Howdon on 26th (per PCF), over 50 almost daily at Choppington Woods (SLB/MSK) and Slaley Hall on 28th (RMH), 454 in the Grasslees tetrad on 20th (MJC), over 40 at Harwood Forest on 1st (MSH) and Hexham town centre on 11th (BNR), 30+ at North Seaton (Ashington) on 22nd (MSH), 26 at Haughton Strother GP on 9th (MR), 25 at Swallow Pond all month (JPD), Azure Garden Centre (Cramlington) on 25th (LJM) and Bellingham on 26th (PRM). One to 20 were at a further 37 widespread localities including gardens at Cramlington, Dinnington, Featherstone Park, Hexham, High Brunton, Monkseaton, Mount Pleasant, Old Hartley, South Gosforth and Walbottle. 51 were ringed at Slaley Hall all month (RMH).

Siskins at a garden feeder in Heddon
13th February by Ken Russell

**Linnet** *Carduelis cannabina*

Wintering flocks involved 200 in a stubble field at Swallow Pond between 10th-12th (JPD), over 80 at Obelisk Plantation (Seaton Sluice) on 12th (SL), 70 at Holywell Pond on 5th (BB), 32 at Ulgham Park on 3rd (NF) and 22 flew inland over Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 8th (AA/MH).

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*

The traditional flock at Bell's Farm (Hemscott Hill Links, Druridge) held 26 between 13th-26th (ASJ/PCF).

Redpoll Sp.

Possible Coues' Arctic Redpoll amongst mixed Redpoll species flock in the Darden area tetrad on 11th (MJC).

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis cabaret*

40 were amongst a mixed Redpoll species flock in the Darden area during an Atlas visit on 11th (MJC) and Q.E. II CP on 27th (SPP), 30 at North Seaton on 13th (DM/STH), 28 at Acomb on 18th (AJH), 15-20 at Swallow Pond on 11th (SPP), 16 in a Hexham garden on 9th (AJR), 14 at South Clarewood near Matfen on 10th (EC), ten at Crookham Eastfield on 5th (TRD/JD), nine at Bolam Lake CP on 17th (MSH) and six at a Walbottle garden on 27th (KR/LR). One to five were also at Cold Law, a Cramlington garden, Dentsmire Wood (Gosforth), Harwood Forest, Hauxley Caravan Site, Holystone Common, Langleeford (Harthope Valley), Linden Hall, Loan Edge, Newcastle United Academy (Little Benton), North Yardhope (Otterburn Ranges), Slaley Hall and Sweethope Lough.

A Lesser Redpoll at Big Waters on 24th February by John Clark



Common 'Mealy' Redpoll *Carduelis flammea*

Two were at Dentsmire Wood (Gosforth) on 19th January (MPF). Another good month for this winter visitor with four at Swallow Pond on 11th (SPP), three in the Darden area tetrad on 11th (MJC), Cochrane Park (Newcastle) on 13th (SPP) and Newcastle United Academy (Little Benton) on 16th (MPF), two at a Corbridge garden on 9th-10th (MR), Druridge Bay CP on 10th (CN), Harwood Forest (two separate groups of two) on 16th (AA/MH) and Acomb on 18th (ASH). Singles were observed in a Cramlington garden on 4th (PJA), South Clarewood near Matfen on 10th (EC) and Q.E.II CP on 27th (SPP).

Arctic Redpoll *Carduelis hornemani exilipas*

A Coues' Arctic Redpoll was observed in alders on the Waggonway at Swallow Pond on 9th (SPP). It was still present on 10th (JPD).

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

Birds were present at Harwood Forest all month with a peak of 60 (in about ten small groups) on 16th (STE) and Kielder Forest with a maximum of 33+ at Deadwater on 10th (MSH). Elsewhere, 13 (including two juveniles) were at Shepherd Shield (Wark Forest) on 12th (MSH), seven at Blindburn (Upper Coquetdale) on 26th (TRD/JD), six at Wanneys on 5th (IK) and Catcleugh Reservoir on 12th (PRM), five at Goldsleugh (Cheviot Hills) on 8th (IDR/JF) and near Bellingham on 20th (TRD/JD). One to three were also at Dipton Wood, North Yardhope (Otterburn Ranges), Q.E.II CP, Slaley Hall, Sweethope Lough and Thrunton Woods.



Crossbills on 15th February
by Brian Bullough

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Eight were at Humford Hill (Bedlington) on 12th (JR), seven at Netherwitton on 17th (MSH), six around feeders at Scotland Gate all month (SLB/MSK), Gosforth Park on 5th (SL), West Mickley between 17th-28th (SWA) and Brenkley Fishing Pond (Blagdon) on 21st (LJM), five at Swallow Pond on 10th (JPD), Attlee Park (Bedlington) on 12th (JR) and Arcot Pond on 21st (LJM), four at Beggar's Rigg (Rothbury) on 8th (JD), Bedlington Station on 8th (JR) and Valley Park (Cramlington) on 20th (DM). One to three were at a further 21 widespread localities.

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

The popular flock of six was present at Blyth South Harbour between 8th-16th (BB/PRM/STH/PCF). Two were on the north shore Holy Island on 13th (IK) and one at North Shields Fish Quay on 22nd (AAM).



Snow Bunting at Blyth South Harbour
15th February
Brian Bullough

Lapland Bunting *Calcarius lapponicus*

One in barley stubble at Chare Ends (Holy Island) on 26th was the only record (IK).

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

Wintering flocks involved 65 at Ulgham Park on 3rd (NF), 56 at Shoresdean on 4th (MHu), 45 at Fenham-le-Moor on 10th (ASJ), 41 at South Clarewood near Matfen on 10th (EC), 40+ at Bradford near Lucker on 5th (MSH), Sandhoe on 6th (RMH), Halton Red House on 11th (ALT) and Burdon near Bamburgh on 15th (MSH), 30 at Budle Bay on 21st (CB/OB/MB) 26 at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 26th (TB) and 24 round the goat enclosure at Prestwick Carr on 5th (MH). One to 20 were at a further 11 widespread localities.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

13 were at Sweethope Lough on 10th (MSH), 12 at Backworth on 26th (CGK), seven at Seaton Delaval Hall on 12th (SL), four at West Hartford on 27th (LJM/PJA), three at Gosforth Park on 5th (SL), Wansbeck General Hospital flash (Ashington) on 13th (ASJ) and Cresswell Pond on 13th (ASJ). One to two were also at Arcot Pond, Ellington Pond, a Mount Pleasant garden, Prestwick Carr and Sleekburn (Bedlington).

ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN**Escapes****Helmeted Guineafowl** *Numida meleagris*

Eight were found at Cocklaw Wells on 28th (AT) seemingly free to roam.

Harris's Hawk *Parabuteo unicinctus*

One was at Arcot Pond on 5th where it unhelpfully managed to chase off a Pintail (CMi) !

Hybrids

Wigeon x Teal *Anas penelope* x *Anas crecca*

A male hybrid was identified at Cresswell Pond on 24th (TB).

Glaucous Gull x Herring Gull *Larus hyperboreus* x *Larus argentatus*

A first-winter was photographed at the North Shields Fish Quay on 16th (MPF).

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Hauxley Ringing Station, Northeast Cetacean Project (NECP), Northern Experience Wildlife Tours, NTBC field trip (BCFT).

Those observers marked with an asterisk after their name(s) have submitted records online using the club spreadsheet. Copies are available by emailing Dick Myatt at dick@dickmyatt.co.uk

Apologies for any accidental omissions.

BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION

This bulletin was compiled by Eddie Crabtree (Mute Swan to Egyptian Goose, Red Grouse to Black-necked Grebe), Graeme Bowman (Ruddy Shelduck to Ruddy Duck), Trevor Blake (Honey Buzzard to Crane), Ian Forsyth (Oystercatcher to Skua), Tim Dean (Ivory Gull to Puffin, Escapes, Hybrids and Unknown Origin, List of Contributors, Highlights), Peter Fletcher (Feral Pigeon to Red-rumped Swallow), Mike Richardson (Cetti's Warbler to Pied Flycatcher), Dee McKeown (Dunnock to Corn Bunting), Julie Roper/Dan Turner (WeBS Coastal Counts) and Steve Holliday (WeBS Inland Counts). Thanks again to Ann McKeown for typing the section Dunnock to Corn Bunting. Thanks to Barbara Welch of NNBC for providing data. Proof reading was by Mike Smith.

Edited by Steve Barrett Sscmagpie@aol.com

Distributed by Alan Watson apusx@blueyonder.co.uk

RECORD SUBMISSION

Please send all record cards to Tim Dean, 2 Knocklaw Park, Rothbury NE65 7PW, to arrive on, or preferably before, the 8th of the month following that in which the records were collected. Please write cards legibly to ensure that your sightings are correctly recorded.

E-mail: Members are encouraged to e-mail their records on an Excel-style spreadsheet. Please e-mail Dick Myatt at dick@dickmyatt.co.uk for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and grid references: The use of standard location names and the inclusion of grid references greatly increases the value of records in subsequent analyses. A 1km square grid reference is the ideal e.g. NY8067 for Grindon Lough, but 2km square references (tetrads) are also acceptable e.g. NY86D in this case. A list of localities and their tetrad grid references (tetrad/Locality List) can be downloaded from the 'Resources & Downloads' section of the Club website at <http://www.ntbc.org.uk> – the use of these names, wherever possible, would be highly appreciated.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Please keep submitting your articles, photographs, sketches and illustrations for the bulletin. Thanks again to those who have supplied the excellent photographs. Please send to Steve Barrett at Sscmagpie@aol.com

ELECTRONIC BULLETIN

The NTBC bulletin can be received electronically or as hard copy. The electronic bulletin arrives earlier than the printed version, it is in colour and we save the cost of printing and stamps. Ask for an e-mailed bulletin from jo.bentley@waitrose.com

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS 2011

Annual subscription is a bargain £23. For membership enquiries please contact jo.bentley@waitrose.com.

NTBC WEB SITE

The Club website is an excellent resource for all interested in birds in the north-east. There are numerous interesting sections, including a photograph gallery, site information and trip reports together with extensive reference information for birding in our area. The site is at www.ntbc.org.uk

If you have any ideas or things you would like to see or hear about on the site then let Chris know on 0751 582 5024 or email christopher.knox@o2.co.uk

NTBC SIGHTINGS PAGE

The club sightings web page gives listings of birds seen locally. Adding a sighting is simple. A short e-mail is all that is needed. If anyone would like to be added as a contributor please contact Alan Tilmouth at ntbcorg@gmail.com The sightings page can be found at <http://ntbcsightings.posterous.com>

IINDOOR MEETINGS

The next meeting is, as usual, at Newcastle Falcons on Thursday 14th April at 7pm.

Members' Night including;

David Steel	Farne Islands Review 2010
Chrissie Nicholson	A Season in Speyside
Jo Bentley	Antarctica
Dan Turner	North East Beached Bird Survey

DESCRIPTION SPECIES

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker & Corn Bunting

Since I took over as County Recorder in 2006 there have been two species added to the 'Description Species' list where written notes are needed for the record to be included in the Annual Report. Lesser Spotted Woodpecker was added in 2007 and Corn Bunting in 2010. These changes were made as a result of both species declining to the extent where they are likely to become extinct as breeding residents. Hence the County Records Committee opted for all sightings to be backed up by descriptive notes. This ensures that all records can be followed up and verified. I am also hoping to review the whole list of 'Description Species' at the next CRC meeting to see whether any further changes are needed. There may be a case for some species to be removed if no confusion species are likely and the species is regularly seen in the county. For more information please see the County Records Committee page on the NTBC website or the CRC section in 'Birds in Northumbria'. If anyone has any views on the species deemed as needing notes I would always welcome any comments via email or post.

Tim Dean

HAUXLEY SAND MARTIN WALL

Work has started on a sand martin wall at NWT's Hauxley nature reserve following generous donations in lieu of an 80th birthday gift to Trust Founder, Tony Tynan. No surprise then that 80 nesting holes will be created!

Consultation with users of the reserve and other bird watchers was essential in helping with choice of locations for the structure. In addition, the Sand Martin Trust was contacted for advice and visits to existing martin walls were undertaken. Work should be complete by the end of March.

This small project is part of a larger partnership initiative NWT are looking to develop on martins, swallows and swifts following a number of reported nest issues last year.

COUNTY ATLAS

SPECIES SPONSORSHIP SCHEME

Northumberland & Tyneside Bird Club are pleased to announce a new scheme to allow individuals to sponsor a species in the forthcoming County Atlas.

The County Atlas project will probably represent the largest financial undertaking the club has ever engaged in and whilst publication may still be some way off, the committee believes it is prudent to begin raising funds towards the project. As a result a 'Species Sponsorship Scheme' was launched on 31st March at the first Fund Raising Event for the County Atlas.

Club Members now have an opportunity to sponsor a species and have a suitable personal inscription associated with that species. The cost of sponsoring a species is £25. There are no restrictions on the number of species an individual member can sponsor. First come, first served, for a species.

Each sponsor's 'inscription' will be limited to 45 characters in length and appear once in relation to that species. NTBC reserve the right to amend any inscription if necessary.

Attached is a form that offers the opportunity to list three choices of species along with the required inscription. Species will be allocated on a strict 'first come first served' basis on receipt of the attached form and an appropriate method of payment (cheque/postal order to NTBC). Please send the form to Steve Lowe at 13 Crawford Place, Monkseaton, Whitley Bay, NE25 8TD, pass it to any committee member or hand it in at an indoor meeting.

In the event of questions please email Steve at zappa99@live.co.uk.

COASTAL WEBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND

February	2011
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Site	Tweed Estuary		Tweed: A1 By-Pass to		Spirit - Cocklawburn		Lindisfarne NNR (including Budle Bay)		Budle Pt - Seahouses		Seahouses - Beadnell		Boulmer - Alnmouth		Aln Estuary		Alnmouth South		Coquet Estuary		Amble - Chevington		Cresswell - Newbiggin		Newbiggin - Cambois		Blyth Estuary		Blyth Estuary - Seaton Sluice		St Mary's Island		Whitley Bay - Tynemouth		Tyne North Pier - Fish Quay		Walsend, (north bank)		Redheugh - (north bank)		Scotswood - Newburn Bridge, (north bank)																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																											
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INLAND WeBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND

Version:

Year: 2011
Month: February

[illegible]

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

<http://www.ntbc.org.uk/>

Bulletin 2011 No 3

MONTHLY SUMMARY – MARCH

21st Mar 2011



HIGHLIGHTS

Taiga Bean Goose
Tundra Bean Goose
Greenland White-fronted Goose
Snow Goose
Ross's Goose
American Wigeon
Green-winged Teal
Rough-legged Buzzard
Yellow-legged Gull
Great Grey Shrike
Hooded Crow
Waxwing
Black Redstart
Mealy Redpoll
Summer visitors

One at Beal on 18th.
Two at Killingworth on 7th.
Five at Woodhorn all month.
Sightings at Holy Island and Ashington.
One with Pink feet at Doddington from 29th.
Popular male at Cresswell Pond from 26th.
Male at Cresswell Pond from 19th.
One on the NTBC field trip to Kielder on 19th.
Adult on Swallow Pond on 25th.
Singles still in Harwood Forest and near Holystone.
One in Cresswell / Druridge dunes from 12th to 14th.
Many flocks, especially in south east.
One at Rennington on 17th.
Four at Ashington on 16th.
First arrivals of 2011.

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Species sponsorship
Prestwick Parakeet
Beached Birds Surveys
Geoff MacFalane Memorial Trust
Butterfly Report



Lesser Black-backed Gull at Paddy Freeman's
18th March by Simon Elliott

WEATHER

March was very dry, with little rain except in the final two days. Most of the month was quiet and settled, with a large anticyclone giving a period of fine spring weather in the second half, when daytime temperatures were well above average but nights were still close to freezing in places.

1st to 8th A ridge of high pressure dominated the opening week of March, with light winds, frosts and morning fog. Towards the end of the period, a weak cold front moved southwards through eastern England, giving a colder feel here for a time. The 8th was the last of the calm and bright days across England, with rain arriving in the north-west later on a strengthening wind.

9th to 11th Low-pressure systems passing to the north of the UK during this period pushed the high pressure away into the continent, with westerly flow becoming dominant and fronts moving south-eastwards through England.

12th to 17th This was a transitional period with fronts reluctant to push through and frequently light and variable winds. The 14th saw mist and coastal fog creep into eastern areas, suppressing daytime temperatures to around 5 or 6 °C in some eastern parts in the light winds. Increased cloud and light spells of rain limited the temperatures in some areas on 17th.

18th to 21st High pressure developed over the near-continent and as it became drier and clearer, daytime maximum temperatures steadily rose reaching 17 °C in north-east England by the 21st.

22nd to 28th With high pressure dominant, this was a dry period of fine spring weather.

29th to 31st More unsettled, wetter and windier conditions began to push in from the west towards end the month, with fronts passing over the country and weakening as they moved eastwards.

CLASSIFIED LIST

The following account consists of unchecked reports. The species/subspecies marked * require descriptions.

A complete list of all sightings that need notes is included in the NTBC website www.ntbc.org.uk under the County Records Committee section and in Birds in Northumbria 2009 page 224.

The Inland and Coastal Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) tables are at the rear of the bulletin. These contain counts additional to those in the Classified List.

TARGET SPECIES

The target species for 2011 are Gadwall, Snipe and Stonechat.

Please report all records for these species.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

The largest gatherings were 72 at QE II Lake on 13th (CDH), 50 on the sea at Cullercoats on 7th (MN) 33 at Woodhorn Flashes on 5th/28th (STH), 24 in the Tweed Estuary on 10th (MHu), 23 at Gosforth Park NR on 25th (SRB), 22 feeding in a kale field at Cheswick on 7th (MHu) and 19 at Ladyburn Lake on 4th/9th (PRM/LJM). One to eight were noted at Arcot Pond, Big Waters, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Ellington Pond, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Grindon Lough, Hauxley, Leazes Park (Newcastle), Linton Pond, Newcastle Quayside, Paddy Freeman's Pond (Jesmond Dene), Rothley Lakes, Shield-on-the Wall and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.



A Mute Swan over Dinnington
4th March by Peter Fletcher

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Return passage was noted on several dates during the month with 64 NW at Wanney Crag on 20th (ADMc), 50 N at St Mary's Island on 7th (ASJ), 49 W over Wark on 12th (PRM), 42 N at Holy Island on 6th (RA), 35 NW at Kirkley Hall on 20th (IK), 34 N at St Mary's Island on 19th (CGK), 33 N at Yarrow Slake on 22nd (BWG), 27 N at Low Newton on 20th (GW), 20 NNW at Ray Fell on 2nd (MH), 18 N at Backworth on 19th (CGK), 13 N at Holywell Dene on 25th (KWY), and seven N at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 25th (STH). By far the largest gathering was 150 in fields E of Linton Ponds on 2nd (MRS). No more than 44 were recorded on other dates in this area with this number being present on 3rd/13th (ASJ/CDH). 76 were at Capheaton on 20th (CB), 41 were at Beal on 22nd (JMA), whilst counts of 40 came from Longhirst Flash on 19th (RA) and Kielder Water on 25th (GMi). In the Budle Bay area 37 were present on 11th (AA/MH). 35 were at Branton GP on 8th/10th (IBDa/KDa) and a maximum of 31 were at Haughton Strother GP on 7th (MR). Counts of 20 came from Cresswell Pond on 11th, East Chevington on 19th and Ross Back Sands on 20th, whilst 19 were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 7th and Druridge Bay dunes on 27th, 18 were at West Ord on 21st, 16 at Gosforth Park NR on 12th, 12 at Horncliffe Loanend on 5th and briefly at Holywell Pond on 25th and 11 on the sea at Alnmouth on 7th. One to nine were at Angerton Lake, Arcot Pond, Castle Island, Cocklawburn Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Harper's Haugh (Budle Bay), Greenlee Lough, Grindon Lough, Hauxley NR, Hedgeley GP, Killingworth Lake, Linton Pond, Newton Pool, Otterburn, QEII Lake, Swallow Pond, West Ord and Wooler.



A Whooper at Killingworth Lake by Peter Fletcher

***Tundra Bean Goose** *Anser fabalis rossicus*

Two were noted from the Killingworth-Holystone Waggonway on 7th (BMo).

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

At Warkworth Lane 500 flew S on 17th (JMA). Northerly movement was again noted during the month with 540 + over Low Newton on 23rd and 400+ there on 13th (GW), 310 at East Ord and Low Newton on 2nd (MHu/SB/EC), 300 at Holy Island on 6th (RA), 250 at Sleafy Hall on 1st (RMH), 220 at East Chevington on 7th (PRM) and 200 at Druridge Pools on 17th (JMA). Smaller N movements were 150 N at Alnmouth on 1st and Amble on 2nd, 140 at Warkworth on 1st, 120 at Spittal on 4th and Swallow Pond on 22nd, 100 at Marden Farm (Tynemouth) on 5th/8th 85 at Holy Island on 2nd, 75 at the Farne Islands on 22nd, 50 at Alnmouth on 7th, 45 at Boulmer on 23rd and 40 at Druridge Pools and 36 at Cocklawburn on 4th. Numbers in the Doddington area remained high with ca. 3,000 still present on 29th and 573 still present there on 31st (TRD/JD/PRM). 2,700 were in the fields S of Druridge hamlet on 12th (IDR) and 1,000 were still at Cresswell on 31st (ASJ). At Hauxley 253 were present on 7th (HRS) and 160 at Windmill Hill (Goswick) on 25th (MHu), 114 at Grindon Lough on 12th (MRS) 29-50 were noted in the Aln Estuary, Caistrion, Warkworth Lane and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, whilst one to 14 were seen at Big Waters, Black Middens (Tyne Estuary), Boulmer, Heighley Gate, West Ord and Woodhorn Flashes.

Eurasian White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*

Three were at Monk's House Pool on 18th (TRD/JD), two at Woodhorn Flashes on 31st (TB) and singles near Wansbeck Hospital (Ashington) on 6th (CB), at Low Newton scrape on 9th (GW) with 2,700 Pinkfeet near Druridge hamlet on 12th (IDR) and again at Woodhorn Flashes with Greenland Whitefronts on 25th/28th (STH/BB).

Greenland White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons flavirostris*

A group of five was in the Ashington Hospital/Woodhorn Flashes area all month (STH/TB *et al.*).

An adult was at Grindon Lough on 21st/30th (PRM).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

The highest counts were 317 at Derwent Reservoir on 22nd (IFo), 300 at Castron on 28th (TRD/JD), 283 at Hauxley NR on 14th (HRS), 181 at Whittle Dene reservoirs on 2nd (SR), 154 at Holywell Pond on 19th (CGK), 110 at Backworth on 5th (JPD), and 90 throughout the month at Monk's House Pool (JPL). Smaller gatherings were 54 at East Chevington on 4th, 50 at Woodhorn Flashes on 25th, 41 at *Beehive* Flash (Earsdon) on 11th and 34 at Plenmeller on 14th. One to 20 were noted at Big Waters, Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough, Hulne Park, Leazes Park (Newcastle), Prestwick Carr, Reaveley Pond, West Ord and Winter's Gibbet (Elsdon).

***Snow Goose** *Anser caerulescens*

On 13th one attempted to land at Holy Island Lough several times before being chased off by Mute Swans (IBDa/KDa/IK/JWP/RC).

*** Ross's Goose** *Anser rosii*

A bird was found at Doddington with a flock of Pink-footed Geese on 29th (TRD/JD). It was still present on 31st (PRM/ID/KD).

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

The highest counts were 115 at Castron on 15th (TRD/JD), 111 at Plenmeller on 17th (MH/AA), 102 at Grindon Lough on 12th (MRS), 45 at Hauxley on 14th (HRS) and 32 at Leazes Park Lake (Newcastle) on 1st (DM). One to 12 were noted from Angerton Lake, Backworth, Banks Pond (Dinnington), *Beehive* Flash (Earsdon), Big Waters, Catcleugh Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Ellington Ponds, Holywell Pond, Linton Ponds, North Shields Fish Quay, QEII Lake, Reaveley Pond, Rothley Lakes, West Ord, Whitfield Moor and Woolsington Ponds.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Two were at Derwent Reservoir on 22nd (IFo) and a single at Castron on 28th (TRD/JD).

Dark-bellied Brent Goose *Branta bernicla bernicla*

At the Rocket Field (Holy Island) 44 were still present on 2nd with 30 remaining the following day (AJR/JMA). A single was with Pink-feet at Cresswell Pond on 27th/28th. (AA/MH/IF/RJA/TRD/JD/BB).

Pale-bellied Brent Goose *Branta bernicla hrota*

On 18th ca. 200 were at Fenham-le-Moor (TRD/JD), 120 were at Holy Island North Shore on 2nd (AJR) and 96 were in Holy Island Harbour on 3rd (JMA). Counts of 20 came from Seahouses on 3rd/9th (JMA/TRD/JD) and Warkworth Beach on 20th (JMA). Numbers fell away on Holy Island but 37 still remained on 22nd (JMA). A single was at Stag Rocks on 9th (TRD/JD).

A gathering of 58 un-raced birds was at Boulmer Flash on 5th (RB/MB).

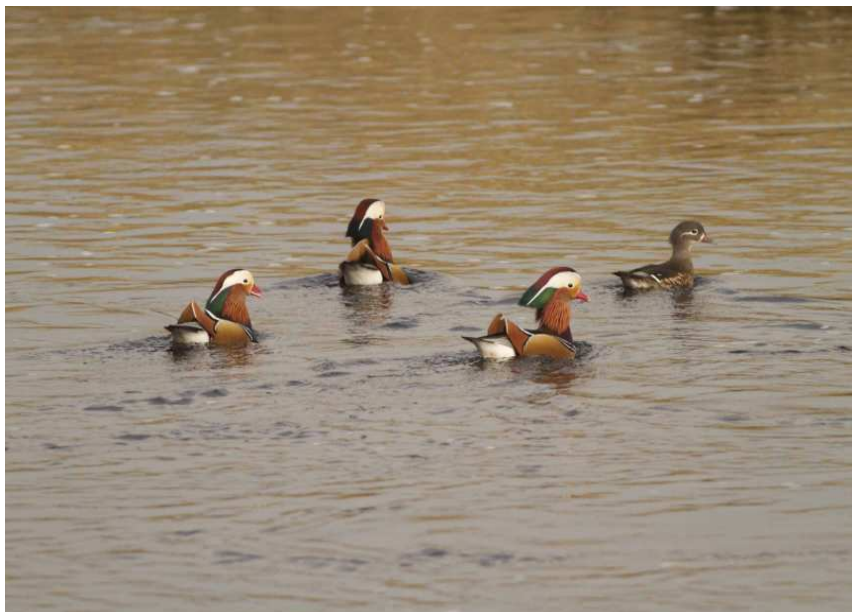
Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Peak counts were 49 at Kitty Brewster (Blyth Estuary) on 27th (GB), 14 at Hauxley NR on 14th (HRS), 14 at Cresswell Pond on 19th (MN), nine at Elswick on 30th (RMH), six at Holywell Pond, and fours at Amble, Backworth Pond, Druridge Pools, *Beehive* Flash (Earsdon) and West Hartford. Twos were also at Big Waters, Haughton Strother Grindon Lough, Holy Island, Warkworth Lane and Woodhorn Flashes.

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

Five drakes and nine ducks were at Ridley Stokoe on 8th (EC/JSB) and two pairs were noted there on 22nd (AA). A pair was at Tarsset on 19th (TB/BCFT).

Mandarins at Ridley Stokoe
by John Clark on 8th March



Wigeon *Anas penelope*

400 were at Doddington on 7th (JD), 260 were at Alnmouth on 10th (JMA), 250 at Cresswell Pond on 7th (JMA), 234 at Druridge Pools on 4th (PRM), 211 at Amble on 4th (PRM), 160 at Big Waters, 105 at Grindon Lough, 92-99 at Hauxley NR and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, 61-72 at Branton GP, Derwent Reservoir, East Chevington and Gosforth Park, and 20-40 at the *Beehive* Flash (Earsdon), Hoppen Kiln, Middle Ord Pond, Plenmeller, QEII Lake and Woodhorn Flashes. Nine to 17 were also at Linton Ponds and Rothley Lakes.

American Wigeon *Anas americana*

A drake found at Cresswell Pond on 27th (RSF *et al.*) remained until 31st (BB/JPD/PRM *et al.*).

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

28 at Woodhorn Flashes on 28th (STH) was the largest concentration, followed by 20 at East Chevington on 27th (TRD/JD), 19 at Caistron on 15th (TRD/JD), 19 at Linton Ponds on 13th (CDH), 11-12 at Big Waters and Bothal Pond, eight to nine at Druridge Pools and Ladyburn Lake, six to seven at Cresswell Pond and Hauxley Reserve, and four at Ellington and Holywell Ponds. One to two were also at Alnmouth golf course, Arcot, Bothal and West Allotment Ponds, Branton GP, Lynemouth and West Hartford.

Gadwall is a **target species** for 2011. Please report all records for the species.

Teal *Anas crecca*

257 were at Druridge Pools on 4th (PRM), 230 at the Rocket Field (Holy Island) on 2nd (AJR) declining to 135 by 23rd (IK), 170 at Grindon Lough on 30th (PRM), 96-106 at East Chevington and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, 60-78 at Doddington, Middle Ord and Swallow Ponds and West Hartford, and 30-51 at Amble, Arcot, Cresswell Ponds and Scotswood. Groups of 13-27 were also at the Aln Estuary, the Drift Inn Pools (Seaton Burn), Hartburn Reservoir, Haughton Strother, Hauxley Reserve, Lemington, Linton Ponds and Woodhorn Flashes.

Green-winged Teal *Anas carolinensis*

A drake was at Cresswell Pond on 19th (CN) and 30th (TRD/JD).

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

104 were at the Tweed Estuary on 10th (MHu), 90 at Ladyburn Lake on 6th (DM), 65 at Newcastle Leazes Park on 1st (DM), 45 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs, 22-25 at Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough, Newcastle Exhibition Park, 14-19 at Hauxley Reserve, QEII Lake and Tynemouth boating lake, and one to nine at 18 further sites.



Drake Mallard at Rothbury
7th March by Colin Bradshaw

Pintail *Anas acuta*

68 at Fenham Flats on 11th included 34 drakes (AA/MH), two pairs were at East Chevington on 23rd (SRB) and a pair there on 4th (PRM), four (one drake) at Druridge Pools on 27th (PJA) and two to three (one drake) regularly there between 4th-31st (PRM/AT *et al.*), and a pair at Cresswell Pond on 20th (AT).

Garganey *Anas querquedula*

A pair was at Gosforth Park NR between 25th-30th (AA/ *per* SRB/PT).

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Two pairs flew N at Newbiggin on 25th (AT). Druridge Pools held a peak of 29 (17 drakes) on 28th (SWA) and up to 17 throughout the month, 11 (ten drakes) were at Cresswell Pond on 14th (JMA), eight (six drakes) at Monk's House Pool on 3rd (JMA), five at East Chevington on 27th (TRD/JD), and two at Arcot and Swallow Ponds, Big Waters, Branton GP and Monk's House Pool.

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Swallow Pond held 22 on 4th and seven to nine regularly between 21st-30th (JPD), 18 were at Killingworth Lake on 10th (PCF), 17 were at Holywell Pond on 19th (CGK), 15 at Big Waters on 30th (GB), ten at West Allotment Pond on 4th (CGK), six to eight at Gosforth Park and Grindon Lough, and three to five at Arcot Pond, East Chevington and Woodhorn Flashes. One to two were also at Bothal Pond and Ladyburn Lake. The general decline in wintering numbers is illustrated by WeBS counts from QEII Lake, where the peak count in 2006-07 was 212 but just one in 2010-2011 (CDH).



A colourful Pochard at Killingworth Lake
7th March
by Peter Fletcher

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Peak counts were 71 at QEII Lake on 13th (CDH), 60 at Killingworth Lake on 28th (BB), 58 at Swallow Pond on 4th (JPD), 41-43 at East Chevington, Marden Quarry and Newcastle Leazes Park, 31-36 at West Allotment Pond and Woodhorn Flashes, 21-26 at Druridge Pools, Ladyburn Lake and Linton Ponds, and 11-16 at Arcot and Cresswell Ponds, Hartburn and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, Newcastle Exhibition Park and Rothley Lakes. Smaller numbers were at ten further sites, including two at the Tweed Estuary on 10th (Mhu).

Scaup *Aythya marila*

Two were at Holy Island on 6th (RA/SR/AH) and one on 13th (IBDa/KDa).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

A notable 500, many displaying, were at Holy Island harbour on 23rd (IK), 135 at Newbiggin on 17th (BB), 112 at Amble on 18th (BB), 55 at Stag Rocks (IDR), 38-44 at Berwick North Shore and Blyth South Harbour, 26-31 at Cheswick and Tynemouth, and 14-20 at Cullernose Point and Whitley Bay. Four to ten were off Boulmer, East Chevington and Seahouses. One was on the River Wansbeck at Castle Island on 17th (AT).

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

30 were at Stag Rocks on 6th (CB) and 12 still on 29th (RNa), 21, most displaying, at Holy Island on 12th (IK), 20 at Ross Back Sands on 20th (IBDa/KDa), six off Druridge Links on 11th (IDR), and four at Whitley Bay on 13th (DRW).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

Peak counts were 330 off Druridge Pools on 4th (PRM), 120 at Stag Rocks on 20th (IBDa/KDa), 74 at Cheswick on 25th (MHu), 30 at Holy Island, 20-25 at Cocklawburn and Seahouses Harbour, and nine to 14 at Birling Carrs and Ross Back Sands. Three to four were also at Beadnell and Berwick.

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

The Tweed Estuary held 306 on 10th (MHu) and 100 were at Tweedmouth on 26th (NNBC). Other peak concentrations were 71 at Holy Island on 6th (RA), 47 at East Chevington on 4th (PRM), 37 at QEII Lake on 5th (STH), 28 at Caistron (TRD/JD), 15-18 at Amble, Big Waters, Branton GP and West Ord, ten to 13 at Swallow Pond, Grindon Lough and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, five to nine at Alnmouth, Arcot and Cresswell Ponds, Greenlee Lough, Ladyburn Lake and Newton. Three to four were also at Bothal Pond, Bakethin and Hartburn Reservoirs, Monk's House Pool, Warkworth, and one to two at seven further sites.

Smew *Mergellus albellus*

Three 'redheads' were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 12th and 18th (SR), with one to two there on nine dates between 1st-29th (AA/RMHa/PN *et al.*). A pair was at Ladyburn Lake frequently between 1st-6th and again on 13th (MT/NT/TRD *et al.*). A drake was also at East Chevington on 13th (TRD).



The popular Smew pair at Ladyburn Lake
by Tim Dean on 13th March

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

A total of ten flew N at Newbiggin between 23rd-26th (AT) and two flew N off Druridge Links on 6th (IDR). Largest counts were 15 at Budle Bay on 9th (TRD/JD), 11 off Druridge Links on 21st and 27th (AA/MH/IDR), seven at Cresswell Pond on 29th (JPD) and two there on 14th (JMA), six at Holy Island and the Tweed Estuary, and three to four at Amble Braid, Berwick North Shore and Stag Rocks. One to two were also at Amble, Berwick Little Beach, the Blyth Estuary, East Chevington north pool, Ladyburn Lake, Stag Rocks and Warkworth. More unusual was a drake at Big Waters on 15th (ISD *per* GB).

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

Six flew N at Newbiggin on 5th (STH/JGS) and three S on 20th (AT). Largest counts were 11 at Wylam on 2nd (MH), ten at West Ord on 30th (MHu), nine at West Allotment Pond on 13th (CGK/MSH), seven at QEII Lake on 13th and 22nd (CDH/ADM), five to six at Branton GP, the Bywell area, Thropton-Rothbury (R. Coquet) and West Ord. Three to four were also at Airy Holm Reservoir, Caistron, Catcleugh Reservoir, Chatton, Elswick, QEII Lake, Swallow Pond, Thrum Mill, Wark and Warkworth, and one to two at 15 further localities.

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

Very few records were received with a peak count at Carey Burn of 16 on 5th where seven males were displaying on 23rd (MT/NT/MJC). Five were in the Blanchland Moor/Cowbyers Fell/Acton Mill area on 22nd (BNR) and singles were noted at Stang Moss (Harwood Forest) and Simonside.

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

On 19th nine males were in Allendale (MSK/NEWT) and six males were at Swinhope Shield on 8th and Coalcleugh on 10th (ADM/AT). Three males were in Allendale on 22nd, whilst a pair including a lekking male was at Plenmeller on 14th.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

The largest count was of 15 in Carey Burn (Harthope Valley) on 23rd (MJC) whilst seven were at Brierdene Farm (Whitley Bay) on 27th (MNC). Two were at Staward and one at Crow Hall Farm (Holywell Dene).

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Four pairs were in the Druridge Pools/Links area on 25th (IDR). Three pairs were at Lucker throughout the month (JHa). Two pairs were noted at Hemscott Hill Links (Cresswell) on 22nd (BB) and High Chibburn on 29th (JPD). Three were at Newbiggin on 17th and Bellasis Bridge on 27th. Two, many in pairs, were noted from Alnwick, Arcot Pond, Beacon Lane (Cramlington), Doddington, East Chevington, Embleton, Fenham-le-Moor, Holy Island, Holystone-Killingworth Waggonway, Ingoe, Newton (Corbridge), Swallow Pond, Tweedmouth, West Ord and Woodhorn. Singles were noted at Plenmeller, Ross and Scaffold Hill Farm (near Swallow Pond).

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

On 5th 17 were at Sleafy Hall (RMH) and nine including a very dark male, which was also present on 12th, were in the Druridge Pools area on 25th (IDR/PRF). Up to six frequented an Old Hartley garden during the month (RJP), whilst two were present throughout the month in a Walbottle garden and singles were noted at a Beatty Avenue (South Gosforth) garden, Ellington Pond and Newbiggin GC.



An unusual blue variant Pheasant
Druridge 27th March
Tim Dean

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

Nine flew N at Newbiggin on 25th (AT) and singles flew N at Stag Rocks on 22nd (IDR) and Newbiggin on 27th (AT). The peak count in Druridge Bay was 39 on 25th (MH/AA) with up to 27 reported on six further dates. 11 were offshore at Birling Carrs (Warkworth) on 1st (MJC). Offshore counts of one to three came from Cocklawburn, Holy Island, Newbiggin, Ross Back Sands, Seaton Sluice, Spittal Bay and Stag Rocks and a single was in the Tweed Estuary on 10th.

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*

Singles were off Stag Rocks on 6th/18th (CB/DGB) and off Seaton Sluice on 30th (BMo).

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

Two were off Birling Carrs (Warkworth) on 1st and Stag Rocks and Holy Island on 6th (MJC/CB/RA). Singles were off Ross Back Sands on 3rd and in Druridge Bay on 21st (MJC/IDR).

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

One flew N and one flew S off Druridge Pools on 6th (IDR). Birds were noted at several breeding sites. At Cullernose Point 40 birds were at 30 nests on 3rd (JMA), on Holy Island 25 were on the breeding cliffs at Coves Bay on 27th and nine pairs were on ledges at the north shore on 2nd (IK/AJR). At High Point (Whitley Bay) 18 were on the nesting cliffs on 18th (MN), whilst ten nests were on Whitley Bay cliffs on 25th (JMA). 13 birds were on Tynemouth cliffs on 23rd (DMT) and five were at Brown's Point (Whitley Bay) on 29th (MN). One to five were noted from Berwick North Shore, Hauxley and Newton Point.

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

The heaviest movement was 360/hour S at Cocklawburn on 11th (MHu). Elsewhere 30 flew N at Newton Point on 18th and Boulmer on 23rd (TRD/JD), 20 flew N at Newbiggin on 12th, 15 N off Druridge Pools on 21st, ten N off Cullernose Point on 23rd and singles S off Druridge Bay on 9th/30th. One to 12 were noted offshore at Cocklawburn, Druridge Pools and Stag Rocks.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

The peak roost counts were 81 at Blyth South Harbour on 18th (STH) and 61 at North Shields Fish Quay on 13th (DMT). Elsewhere 11 were at Big Waters on 6th (GB), ten at Derwent Reservoir on 17th (IFo) and eight at Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 11th (MHu). One to five were noted at Amble Braid, Arcot Pond, Bakethin Reservoir, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Links and Pools, Elswick Wharf, Ladyburn Lake Sweethope Lough and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.



A Cormorant
Tyne Millenium Bridge, just in our area
17th March by Peter Fletcher

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

The peak count at Blyth Harbour was 50 on 6th (STH), 43 immatures were here on 26th and at least nine colour-ringed individuals were noted during the month (DMT). At Low Newton 22 were on rocks offshore on 18th (TRD/JD) and 12 were at the Meadow Haven (Berwick) roost on 11th (MHu). One to five were noted at Berwick Little Beach, Cocklawburn, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Bay and Stag Rocks.

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

One was at Cresswell Pond on 5th (ADMc).

Great White Egret *Ardea alba*

For the third year in succession Cramlington hosted this species with two being present on the flash at West Hartford on 24th before flying off NW (JM *et al.*).

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

The peak counts were nine at Druridge Pools on 21st (IDR) and seven in the Tweed Estuary on 10th (MHu). Three were at Hauxley NR on 14th (HRS) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 29th (PRM). One to two were noted at Amble Weir, Angerton Lake, Arcot Pond, Backworth, Bell's Pond (Cresswell), St Mary's Wetland, Wark, Whittle Wood and flying S at Stag Rocks.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Numbers at Swallow Pond rose steadily to seven by 25th (JPD). Counts of four came from Capheaton on 2nd (AT), Castron on 15th (TRD/JD) and Linton Ponds on 24th (AT). Three were noted at Wansbeck Hospital Flash on 1st (ASJ), Bothal Pond on 21st (TRD/JD) Druridge Pools, where trilling was heard, on 21st/31st (IDR/PRM) and *Drift Inn* pools (Seaton Burn) on 25th (GB). One to two were reported from Alnmouth GC Pond, Angerton Lake, Arcot Pond, Bakethin Reservoir, Branton GP, Cresswell Pond, Ellington Pond, Hauxley NR, Holy Island Lough, Holywell Pond, Newton Pool, Rayburn Lake, Rothley Lakes, Seaton Sluice, Tweed Estuary, Woodhorn Flashes and Woosington Pond with trilling heard at many of these sites.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

One flew N at Newbiggin on 25th (AT). The peak count at Whittle Dene Reservoirs was ten on 21st (SR). At Killingworth Lake four (two displaying pairs) were present on 5th and one pair was at a nest on the small lake on 28th (LJM/BB). A displaying pair was at Big Waters on 4th and was seen again on 15th (MMC/GB). Displaying pairs were also seen at Branton GP on 19th (TRD/JD) and Airey Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield) on 25th (IFo). Singles were noted in Coves Bay (Holy Island) on 6th and East Chevington North Pool on 13th/18th.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

Three were off Ross Back Sands on 20th (IBDa/KDa). Singles were seen intermittently off Stag Rocks from 7th-27th (JPL *et al.*), off Holy Island on 6th (RA), at Newton Haven on 9th/13th, in Beadnell Bay on 20th (GW) and in Amble Harbour on 24th (JMA).

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

The peak count was 15 at Stag Rocks on 15th/27th (GRo) where up to six were seen on five further dates. At Ross Back Sands 11 were present on 3rd (MJC). Seven seen off The Heugh (Holy Island) on 12th was the maximum count for the month (IK). Two were off Cheswick on 28th and singles were noted in Druridge Bay on 6th/14th and offshore at Cocklawburn on 9th.

Slavonian Grebe
Stag Rocks
6th March
by Colin Bradshaw

**Black-necked Grebe** *Podiceps nigricollis*

Two were noted at a former breeding site on 18th/21st.

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Three birds were up in the air together near Wylam and another bird over Horsley Wood on 24th (BNR); two birds were seen near Bywell on 14th (BNR). Single birds were seen at Bywell, Heddon on the Wall, Horsley, Kielder, Low Waskerley, Ovingham, Ovington, Prudhoe, West Mickley and Wylam.

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Single birds were seen at Prestwick Carr on 24th (PCF) and at East Chevington on 31st (MSK/NEWT).

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

A ringtail was seen on Holy Island on 6th (RA), and other single female/ringtails were seen at other sites (GB/PCF/MRS).

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

Up to 5/6 birds were noted on the NTBC field trip to Kielder on 19th (BCFT) and up to three birds were noted at another site during the month (ASJ/MHS/STH *et al.*). Two birds were at another site on 23rd (MH) and singles were noted at five other sites. (TRD/JD *et al.*).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Two birds were seen at Choppington Woods (SLB/MSK) throughout the month. Three birds were at Whittle Wood on 21st (BNR), and a pair was at Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 6th (MNC). Single birds were noted at over 15 sites.

A Sparrowhawk in a Tranwell garden
by Peter Tapsell
19th March

**Common Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*

17 were up in the air together at Bywell on 2nd (MH), 11+ were at Ray Estate on 23rd and near Hexham on 15th (MH/BNR). Ten were at Harwood Forest on 6th (ASJ), seven birds were seen at Branton GPs on 1st (TRD/JD) and at Acomb on 18th (AJH). 74 records of one to six birds were received this month.

Rough-legged Buzzard *Buteo lagopus*

A juvenile was found on the NTBC field trip to Kielder from the viewpoint at East Kielder Farm on 19th (MPF/NTBC).

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Four birds were noted at Berwick Moor on 7th (MH); three birds were at Bardon Mill on 19th (BNR). Pairs were noted at Cramlington on 19th (DM), Letah Wood (Hexham) on 12th and at Staward on 25th (BNR). Single birds were at a further 15 sites during the month.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Single birds were at Holy Island on 5th (IK), Bamburgh on 9th (JHa), Fenwick on 13th (JPL) and at three possible breeding locations (ADM *et al.*).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

On the coast pairs were at Holy Island on 6th (SR/AH) and at the Long Nanny (Newton) on 13th (GW). Pairs were also at three inland locations (ASJ *et al.*). Singles were at Ashington, on the Blyth Estuary, Cramlington, Fenham Flats, Holy Island, and St Mary's Island and at West Hartford. At Cresswell Pond a bird killed a Wigeon *Anas penelope* and a Curlew *Numerius arquata* over two days from the 10th (ASJ). Other singles were at several inland locations.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

There were only two records this month, with a pair displaying at Druridge Pools on 25th (IDR) and a bird calling at Prestwick Carr on 26th (PCF).

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

The highest counts this month were 17 at Druridge Bay CP on 6th (DM), 16 birds at Woodhorn Flash on 20th (STH), followed by 13 birds at Backworth Pond on 12th (CGK). Up to nine birds were at a further 11 sites, including four males displaying for over ten minutes at Druridge Pools on 12th (IDR).

Coot *Fulica atra*

Big Waters had 29 birds on 25th (GB), Linton Pond had 25 on 13th (CDH) and 17 were at Woodhorn Flash on 20th (STH). 13 birds were at Druridge Pools on 21st (IDR), 12 birds were present at Arcot Pond on 27th (DM), ten birds were at QEII CP on 13th (CDH) and up to nine birds were present at a further ten sites.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

The highest coastal WeBS counts produced 329 at Lindisfarne NNR on 13th (AC) and 182 at Berwick North Shore on 14th (MHu) with 123 from Beadnell-Howick on 4th and 127 from Whitley Bay-Tynemouth on 13th. Inland Caistron had 130 on 15th (TRD/JD), 80 were at Branton GP on 1st, 75 at Doddington on 7th and 69 at Hauxley NR on 14th. At Druridge Pools 20 flew W on 12th and many more were found at or near breeding areas including 20 at Haughton Strother GP on 2nd, 18 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 14th and eight or less at another 14 locations. A strange grey and white leucistic individual was noted on the R. North Tyne at Wark on 20th (CB) and again on 27th (PRM).

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

The first was at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 24th (SR), just ahead of singles at Cresswell Pond on 25th (AA/IF/MH) and at Swallow Pond on 26th (JPD). Two were at Haughton Strother GP on 28th (MR).

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

At Berwick 38 were at Little Beach on 11th and 38 at North Shore on 14th (MHu) and 34+ roosted on the roof of the tall yellow building at Blyth South Harbour 5th (DMT). There were only low numbers on the coast and six at Caistron on 15th.

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

Around 800 were at Beacon Lane (Cramlington) on 26th (GMI), up from 300+ there on 13th (DM) at this traditional stopping-off site. About 250 were near Linden Hall on 25th (NFO). Several areas held 100-160 at times: Allendale, nr Big Waters, Earsdon, Old Hartley, St Mary's and Whitfield Moor. Smaller numbers were found at Cresswell Pond, Ford and Etal, Newcastle (Town Moor), Plenmeller Common and Shiremoor.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

A total of 49 was found on the coastal WeBS with the most being 23 at Lindisfarne NNR on 4th (AC).

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

Display was noted at Barmoor, Blanchland, Cheswick, Druridge Links & Pools, Grindon Lough, Hebron and Rayburn Lake as the return to breeding areas accelerated; 24 pairs were in Allendale on 24th, 20 pairs at Blanchland on 29th and reports came from at least another six potential breeding sites. Cresswell Pond had 350 on 1st (MN), 250 were in Holywell Dene on 5th and 184 at East Chevington on 4th.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

Holy Island held 350 on 2nd (AJR) and 318 were at Amble on 4th (PRM). On 19th 115 were at Seaton Sluice (CGK) and also 115 roosted at high tide at Newbiggin near the church on 25th (STH); 72 were at St Mary's on 18th, 18 at Stag rocks on 11th and seven at Cocklawburn on 11th. Inland one was at Caistron on 15th (TRD/JD).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

At Holy Island North Shore 60 flew S on 2nd (AJR). Cocklawburn had 112 on 21st (MHu) and Low Newton 90 on 18th (TRD/JD) with 64-84 at Berwick (Little Beach and North Shore), Cheswick, Newbiggin and St Mary's. Up to 16 were noted on Druridge Bay beach. A colour-ringed individual at Newbiggin on 25th (STH) had been ringed at Gardskagi, Iceland on 28th May 2010; earlier it was reported from East Chevington on 17th July 2010 and from St Mary's on 24th January and 20th February 2011.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

The peaks were 60 at Stag Rocks on 6th (CB) and 40 at Low Newton on 18th (TRD/JD), ahead of 27 at Tynemouth on 26th, 18 at Blyth Harbour on 6th and 15 at Newbiggin on 25th. Eight or fewer were noted at Cheswick, Seahouses, Seaton Sluice, St Mary's and Whitley Bay.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

The Lindisfarne WeBS shows 675 on 13th (AC); 226 were at Amble on 4th (PRM). Otherwise 11 or fewer were reported at Berwick, Boulmer, Caistron, Cresswell Pond, Haughton Strother GP, Low Newton and the Tweed Estuary.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

One was in the Rocket Field (Holy Island) on 6th (RA).

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

West Hartford was again the main place with peaks of 21 on 18th and 21st (PJA/JM). Elsewhere five were at Arcot Pond and four at Blanchland Moor, Carrshield, Druridge Pools, Hauxley and Prestwick Carr (the latter flushed by a Hen Harrier), with three or less at another ten localities. Singing and/or display was noted at Carrshield, East Kielder Farm, Halton Red House, Harthope Valley, Little Whittington and Prestwick Carr.

Snipe is a **target species** for 2011. Please report all records.

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Two were roding at dusk at Slaley Hall on 3rd (RMH) and two presumed migrants flushed in daytime at Blanchland Moor on 22nd (BNR). Singles appeared at Annitsford, Byker, Leazes Park, Silverlink and Woosington.

A Woodcock which was killed by a cat
 Photographed by Alan Janes
 A neighbour's garden, Benton
 26th March

**Black-tailed Godwit** *Limosa limosa*

Two were again present throughout at Rocket Field Pools (Holy Island) (IK *et al.*). Singles appeared at Cocklawburn on 11th, Cresswell Pond on 4th, 25th and 27th and on a flash between Doddington and Fenton on 29th.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

The Lindisfarne WeBS count revealed 377 on 13th (AC); 41 were seen at Amble on 4th and 14 or less at Berwick, Blyth, Boulmer, Hauxley and St Mary's.

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

The WeBS count at Lindisfarne produced 849 on 13th (AC). Other peaks included 148 at Hauxley on 18th, 143 at St Mary's on 6th, 120 at Alnmouth on 7th and 100 at Howick on 3rd; 59-80 were at Allendale, Amble, Branton GP, Earsdon, Haughton Strother GP, Prestwick Carr and the Tweed estuary and smaller numbers at a further 26 places. Display was witnessed at Rayburn Lake on 8th and at Grindon Lough on 30th.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

There were two exceptionally early reports: one by Bakethin Weir, Kielder Forest on 20th (MHS) and one on the river at Hepple Whitefield on 31st (JD).

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Whittle Dene Reservoirs were favoured for most of the month, often one or two, and three noted on 5th and 29th (SR/PRM). Singles were found on the River Coquet near Thropton on 2nd, at Castron on 15th and 28th, on the R Breamish on 19th and at Hedgeley GP on 25th.

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

One was in Budle Bay on 5th to 7th (RB/MB/RA/ADMc).

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

WeBS counts show 518 at Lindisfarne on 13th (AC) and 210 in the Tweed estuary on 10th (MHu); also 220 were at St Mary's all month (ASJ). Elsewhere 110 were at Cresswell Pond on 14th, 80 at Hauxley on 14th, 50 at Newbiggin on 25th and 50 on the Tyne at Scotswood Business Park on 30th with small numbers at another nine places. Display was noted at Blanchland Moor on 24th and at Grindon Lough on 30th.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

The WeBS count along the Beadnell-Seahouses stretch of coast was 151 on 22nd (MLC). Other notable counts were of 109 at St Mary's on 6th (DMT), 44 at Berwick North Shore on 14th, 37 at Berwick Little Beach on 11th, 36 in the Tweed Estuary on 27th (MHu) and 25 at Tynemouth on 26th. Ten or fewer were found at Amble, Blyth, Hauxley and Low Newton.

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

The breeding colonies were the main focus with at least 550 birds present at Cullernose Point on 23rd (TRD/JD) and 144 nests noted in Newcastle around the Tyne Bridge and Guildhall on 29th (JMA) with birds returning there from 3rd (DM). The gathering area in the Tyne Estuary up to North Shields Fish Quay saw 32 on 12th (DMT). The other main wintering site of Blyth South Harbour witnessed only a peak count of three on 26th (DMT). One to five were noted at Berwick Little Beach, Druridge and East Chevington. The most interesting report was a first-winter inland at Haughton Strother GP near Humshaugh on 12th (MR).



Left, the returning Kittiwakes on the Tyne Bridge on 13th March by Alan Janes
and right a Black-headed Gull at Amble on 29th March by Peter Fletcher

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

There were several large counts with the peaks being 600 at the breeding colony at Branton GP on 19th (TRD/JD), 600 in the St Mary's area on 6th (DMT), 550 at Elswick Wharf on 9th (DM) and 500 at the Aln Estuary on 7th (JMA). 420 were roosting at Grindon Lough on 30th (PRM) and 416 were counted on a WEBS visit to the Tweed Estuary on 10th (MHu). 500 were also counted at another inland breeding colony on 14th. The regularly watched sites saw good numbers with 279 at the Tyne Estuary up to North Shields Fish Quay on 6th and 200 at Blyth South Harbour on 5th (DMT). Smaller flocks of 100 to 200 were seen at Budle Bay, Druridge, Haughton Strother GP and Howick with up to 82 at many sites.

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

The peak count at Newbiggin this month was 12 on the 5th (STH/JGS) with smaller numbers on other dates. Cresswell Pond witnessed a multiple count unusually with two adults and two first-summers on 30th (BMo/TRC/TRD/JD) with the first-summer birds being joined by a second-summer there the next day (BB), the two adults mentioned having relocated to Druridge Pools on 31st (PRM). Inland a pair in full summer plumage were displaying from 18th to 23rd.

Common Gull *Larus canus*

The peak count was 600 at Haughton Strother GP on 17th (MR). Also a group of ca.300 were seen at Thrunton on 25th (TRD/JD) and 250 adults gathered at Airy Holm Reservoir on 25th (IFo). Groups of 120 to 162 were noted at Big Waters, Hyons Wood, Learchild and Nafferton Farm with up to 80 at a variety of sites. The regularly watched sites saw particularly low counts with only peaks of 11 at the Tyne Estuary up to North Shields Fish Quay on 5th and six at Blyth South Harbour also on 5th (DMT).

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

Very well reported this month with observations from around 40 localities. Favourite sites included Swallow Pond with a peak count of 24 adults on 22nd (JPD) and 25 were found at Elswick Wharf on 9th (DM). Other groups included 16 at the Long Nanny (Newton) on 13th (GW), 14 at Westerhope (Newcastle) on 24th (MH) and 13 at Budle Bay on 9th (TRD/JD). Up to nine were noted at a wide variety of sites. A colour-ringed individual (blue 372) provided an interesting example of movement as it was ringed at Gloucester landfill site in Nov 2005 (GW).



Colour ringer Lesser Black-back
Long Nanny on 13th March
Gary Woodburn

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus intermedius*

One was found at the Long Nanny (Newton) on 13th (GW). This Scandinavian race is probably more common than records suggest in the county as good light conditions are needed with ideally *graelsii* race birds nearby to compare.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

Seghill tip saw the peak count with 600 on 12th (CGK). Other big flocks included 314 at the Tweed Estuary on 10th (MHu), 250 at Smeafield on 26th and 250 at Boulmer on 7th (JMA). The regularly watched sites witnessed good numbers with peaks of 255 at the Tyne Estuary up to North Shields Fish Quay on 6th and 101 at Blyth South Harbour on 5th (DMT). 100 were noted in Budle Bay on 3rd (JMA). Otherwise up to 55 were found at a wide variety of sites, nearly all coastal.

'Northern' Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argentatus*

16 adults of this Northern race were noted at Seghill tip on 27th with smaller numbers on other dates (CGK). Single individuals were picked out at East Chevington on 25th and 27th (MH/AA).

Yellow-legged Gull *Larus michahellis michahellis*

A scarce sighting nowadays in the county involved an adult at Swallow Pond on 25th (JPD).

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

The regularly watched localities saw the peak counts with 122 at Blyth South Harbour on 5th and 34 at the Tyne Estuary up to North Shields Fish Quay on 18th (DMT). Other groups involved 46 at Seghill Tip on 20th (CGK) and 22 at the Tweed Estuary on 10th (MHu). The only other sightings reported were five at Elswick Wharf on 9th (DM), five at Berwick North Shore on 14th (MHu) and a single at Walbottle on 27th (KR/LR).

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

The first returning birds were found at Beadnell and Bamburgh with singles on 19th (JPL). One or two were noted thereafter with birds found at Cresswell Pond, Druridge, Newbiggin and Newton.

Guillemot *Uria aalge*

Four flew N at Newton Point on 18th (TRD/JD) with two at Spittal Bay on 4th (MHu), two on the sea at Cullernose Point on 23rd (TRD/JD) and a single offshore at Druridge on 4th (PRM).

Razorbill *Alca Torda*

One or two were noted at Bamburgh, Berwick, Cocklawburn, Cullernose Point, Druridge and Newbiggin.

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

A single flew south at Cocklawburn on 9th (JD) with singles north at Newbiggin on 20th, 25th and 26th (AT).

Rock Dove / Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

The peak counts were 148 at Blyth South Harbour on 12th and 50 at North Shields Fish Quay on 6th (DMT). 12 were at Southfield Green Cramlington on 6th (DM) and two at Beatty Avenue Gosforth on 10th (MJCo).

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Well reported with the only count in double figures being 23 at Ellington on 12th (TB). Seven were at Gosforth on 6th (MJC), six at Hagg Bank Wylam on 24th (BNR), fives at Northumberland Park North Shields on 8th (MNC) and Haughton Strother GP on 23rd (MR) with four at Big Waters on 6th (GB). Three were at Allen Banks, Druridge Links and Pools, Gilsland Spa, Jesmond Dene, Rothbury, Woodhorn Flashes and a Walbottle garden. One to two birds were at Jesmond Dene and Walbottle throughout the month and at a further six localities.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

400 were in a Walbottle field on 26th (JR), 200 at Airy Holm Res. Shotleyfield on 8th (IFo), 150 at Belford on 3rd and Hawkhill Alnwick on 10th with 100 at Beal on 3rd (JMA). One to 55 were at Druridge links and pools, Jesmond Dene, South Gosforth, Longhirst and Whittle Wood / Nafferton Farm.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

The peak count was six at Bywell Cottagebank on 14th (BNR), four at Harwood Village on 20th (DM/GB/PA/ML) with three in observers gardens at Walbottle and Whitley Bay (KR/LR, MT/NT) during the month. A pair on Holy Island hatched young at their second attempt around the 22nd (IK) with two birds also at Ellington Pond and Jesmond Dene.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

All reports were of single birds in the same general area at East Chevington on 1st and 13th (MT/NT, TRD), Hauxley on 6th and 14th (RB/MB, HRS) and Cresswell Pond on 3rd, 15th and 19th (ADM/C/TB/MN). The A1 claimed another victim with a bird dead on the roadside near Shilbottle on the 8th (TB/IDR).

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

A pair were at a traditional nest site at Backworth throughout the month (CGK *et al*) and at Swallow Pond on 22nd (JPD). Single birds were also at established sites at Druridge Lane on 6th (IDR), Chugdon Wood Ellington on 18th (TB), and near Capheaton on 27th (EC).

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Most reports were of calling birds with threes (one male, one female) at Scotland Gate (SLB/MSK) and High Brunton (JWP) throughout the month. Two males were heard at Ellington on 18th (TB) and pairs were calling at Valley Park Cramlington on 23rd and Bellingham Camping site on 24th. Two birds at Northumberland Park North Shields had been present since the beginning of December 2010 (MNC). Single calling birds were at Rothbury and Valley Park Cramlington all month, Ellington on 5th, Ordley on 13th, Bardon Mill on 19th, Tyne Green Hexham on 23rd/24th and Gilsland on 28th. Birds were also being harried by Jackdaws at Allendale Cemetery on 8th, in a nest box at Caistron on 15th, in a Walbottle garden on 27th and at Simonburn on 30th.

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Six birds including two pairs displaying were at Plenmeller Common on 28th (PH) with three or more there on the 17th (MH/AA). Single birds were at East Chevington on 2nd (SRB), River South Tyne valley on 19th (MSK/NEWT) and West Hartford on 23rd/24th (PJA/JM).

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

A pair was at North Lodge Jesmond Dene on 1st and at Jesmond Vale on the 20th with a single at the waterfall also on the 20th (MJCo). Only two other reports of singles at Stanners Morpeth on 1st (ADMc) and Branton Gravel Pits on 12th (IBDa/KDa).

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Two males were singing at East Kielder Farm on the 20th (MJC) all other reports being singles generally heard yaffling at Arcot Pond on five dates from 1st-27th (LJM/DM/GB/STH), Gosforth Park on six dates from 18th-30th (PT/SRB/MRS) Rothbury on 22nd/24th (JD), Bakethin on 18th/19th/25th (TB/BCFT/PT/GM), Woosington on 22nd (SRB), Hagg Bank Wylam on 24th, Bardon Mill on 27th (BNR) and Sweethope Lough on 28th (PRM).

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

The peak count was five at Northumberland Park North Shields on 28th with three there on 3rd (MNC) and at Chugdon Wood Ellington on 20th (TB). Pairs were at gardens in Scotland Gate, Stamfordham and Walbottle throughout the month (SLB/MSK/EC/KR/LR) with two birds seen at Bardon Mill, Big Waters, Denwick, Holywell Dene, Gilsland Spa, Jesmond Dene, Leazes Park Newcastle, Prestwick Carr, Spindlestone Woods, Thrunton and Whittle Wood/ Nafferton Farm. Single birds were reported from a further 23 widespread localities.

Great Grey Shrike *Lamius excubitor*

Single birds remained at Holystone Common reported on 1st/3rd and 6th (EC/AA/MH/NFO) and at Fallowlees Burn Harwood Forest on 2nd/20th (when it sang for 20 minutes from a perch near clearing) & 28th (ADMc/DM/GM/PJA/ML).

Magpie *Pica pica*

The peak count was an impressive 82 at Swallow Pond on the 18th (JPD) while at Armstrong Park Jesmond Dene 11 birds were in a single tree on 8th (MJCo) and 11 flew south over the Tyne at Tynemouth on 19th (DRW). Eight was the highest count for the month from a Walbottle garden on 6th (KR/LR) with eight squabbling at Druridge Links and Pools on 12th declining to three by the 25th (IDR).

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Four were found perched together at Gosforth Park N.R. on 29th and seen separately throughout the month (PT). Two were seen regularly flying over Choppington Woods and visited a garden in Scotland Gate (SLB/MSK) with two at Swallow Pond on 22nd/25th (JPD), Plessey Woods on 27th (STH). Singles were at Thrunton Woods on 24th (JD), Wylam on 26th (PCF) and Bywell on 30th (TRD/JD).

A Jay, alert as ever
by Peter Tapsell
22nd March
Tranwell



Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

A count of 160 at Hagg Bank Wylam on 24th included a flock of 130 flushed by a Goshawk. 125 were at Seaton Burn on 17th (PCF), 82 at Swallow Pond on 8th with 60 there on 17th (JPD), 70 at Spindlestone Woods on 11th (IDR), 55 at Throckley on 5th, 50 at Chapel Lands Alnwick on 10th and 25 at Harbottle on 21st (JMA). Three to 15 were at Druridge Links and Pools and Jesmond Dene during the month.

Two birds showing characteristics of the Nordic race ssp *monedula* were at Dinnington on 4th (PCF) with singles at Killingworth on 14th (BMo), Woodhorn Motors Ashington on 17th (MSK) and Brunton Park Gosforth on 28th (GB).



Jackdaw with Nordic race characteristics at Dinnington
by Peter Fletcher on 4th March

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

The peak count was 200 at Smeafield on 22nd with 150 at Felton on 3rd (JMA) and at QEII Park on 13th where there were 11 AON's. Counts of 100 came from Smeafield on 3rd, Blakemoor Farm on 7th and Cawledge Alnwick on the 23rd (JMA). Rookeries with apparently occupied nests were counted at Kirkley Hall with 36 (where there were 300 in the 1970-80's) (IK), Woodhorn Church 35, Cramlington Hall 26, South Charlton 25, Simonburn 25, Ellington 15, St Nicholas Church Cramlington Village 13, Linshiels 12 and Ponteland 11. Counts of one to 55 birds came from six widespread localities.

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

The Tyne Estuary up to North Shields Fish Quay had the highest counts with 47 there on 13th and 45 on 12th (DMT). A flock of 44 fed on spring barley at Chare Ends Holy Island on 27th with a count of 40 on the island on the same date (IK/SR/AH). 32 were at Beacon Hill Cramlington on 13th (DM), 17 at Gosforth on 6th (MJC), 15 at Bywell Cottagebank on 14th (BNR), 14 at Druridge Links and Pools on 25th (IDR) and 12 at Hyons Wood Prudhoe on 18th (BNR). Two to eight were at three further locations.

Hooded Crow at Cresswell on 13th March
by Tim Dean

Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix*

A single bird was at Hemscotthill links Cresswell and Bells Farm Dunes on 13th and 14th (ADM/ TRD) with possibly the same bird at Druridge Pools on 12th (PRF).



Raven *Corvus corax*

Well reported with two pairs at Coppath Burn on 17th (TRD/JD) and four at Bakethin on 19th (TB/BCFT). Two flew south at Winters Gibbet Harwood Forest on 6th (STH), Branton on 8th (IBDa/KDa), East Kielder on 20th (BMo) and Harthope Valley on 24th (ADMc). Singles were at Allendale, Bardon Mill, Branton, Fourstones, Gilsland, Grindon Lough, Carey Burn Harthope and Plenmeller.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

The peak count was eight singing males at Carey Burn Harthope Valley on 23rd (MJC), Six at Harwood Forest on 20th (DM), Whittle Wood/ Nafferton Farm on 21st (BNR) and Lewisburn Kielder Forest on 24th (MT/NT) and five at Bakethin on 20th (MHS). Three were at Bardon Mill West on 19th with two at Darras Hall, Jesmond Dene, Harwood Forest, Holy Island and Newbiggin. Singles were at two locations in Jesmond Dene on 20th and four locations on 29th (MJCo) with birds at a further five widespread localities.

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Holywell Dene provided the peak counts with 25 there on 25th (ASJ) and 21 on 27th (MT/NT). 18 were at Whittle Wood / Nafferton Farm on 21st and 14 at Bardon Mill W on 27th (BNR) with a flock of eight at Druridge Links and Pools on 6th and seven at Choppington on 24th (JR). One to four were at four further locations.

Great Tit *Parus major*

Similar to Blue Tit with 27 at Holywell Dene on the 20th (ASJ) and 18 on the 27th (MT/NT), 19 at Whittle Wood / Nafferton Farm on 21st, 13 at Bardon Mill W on 27th (BNR) and nine at Jesmond Dene on 29th (MJCo). One to three were at four further localities.

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

Counts of 11 from Blanchland Moor / Acton Mill on 22nd and ten at Staward N on 25th (BNR), five including displaying birds at Choppington on 24th (JR) and four at Woodhorn Church on 25th (STH). One or two were found at various locations in Jesmond Dene during the month, in an Old Hartley garden and at Druridge Links and Pools.

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

Two were calling at Reeth Pond Newburn Riverside CP on 23rd with singles at Prestwick Carr on 13th (PCF), Low Newton on 20th (GW) and near Bassington NR Cramlington on 27th (GMI).

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

Three were at Scotch Gill on 21st, two at Mitford Castle on 10th (ADMc), Haughton Strother GP on 2nd and 23rd (MR), New Mills on 20th (TBr) and Gilsland Spa / Village on 28th (BNR). Single birds were singing at Shilbottle on 22nd (MJC), Woodside Darras Hall on 25th (PCF) and at Linden Hall on 25th / 29th (NFO).

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

On 2nd 20 at Snab Point Cresswell included eight singing birds, ten at St Mary's, four singing (ASJ) and ten at Druridge Links and Pools, two singing (IDR). Seven males sang at Howick on 4th (MJC), seven at Freemans Hill Alnwick Moor on 7th (MH), five at Newbiggin on 12th (GB) and East Kielder Farm on 20th (MJC). One to three birds were seen or heard singing at a further seven widespread localities.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

The first returning birds were seen on the 13th with one at Woodhorn Flashes (JGS/AT) and several at Beadnell (JPL). Singles were seen on 18th at East Chevington and Newton Flash (TRD/JD/TB) while seven flew W in three groups at Bakethin Reservoir on 19th (TB/BCFT). Numbers increased toward the month end peaking around 50 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 26th/27th (SWA/SAS) and East Chevington on 31st (ASJ) with 20 at Branton Gravel Pits on 30th (IBDa/KDa) and 10 at Killingworth Lake on 28th (BMo). One to four birds were seen on various dates at these and a further 15 widespread localities.

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

A pair flew over Kielder Reservoir near Tower Knowe on 20th (MHS) with singles at nearby Bakethin on the 25th (GMI), Newton Pool on 26th (GW), Sweethope Lough on 27th (SLB) and Ryal on 28th (ALT).

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

One flew N with Sand Martins at Doddington on 29th (JD) and ten were reported at Gosforth Park N.R. on 30th (per SRB).

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

A maximum of 12 visited a Scotland Gate garden until mid-month (SLB/MSK), 11 were in Holywell Dene on 29th (RJP) and eight at Shilbottle on 7th (MJC). Perhaps more unusual was a flock of six flying high S over the Tyne at Tynemouth on 20th (DRW). The highest count from a Walbottle garden was five on 13th (KR/LR). Elsewhere birds were quick to disperse, forming breeding pairs by the beginning of the month and nest building at Silverlink CP by 15th (LJM) and Prestwick Carr on 19th (PCF). Pairs were reported from a further 20 sites and singles from an additional five localities.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Well reported. The first was at Shilbottle on 7th and singing on 9th (MJC). One to four were reported from Druridge Bay CP, Druridge Pools, Guide Post, Holywell Dene, Killingworth, Ordley, Prudhoe and Swallow Pond from 16th-19th and thereafter records were numerous and widespread, particularly during the final week. Highest counts were ten at Swallow Pond on 30th (JPD), eight at Choppington on 24th (JR) and in Holywell Dene on 26th (JPD), seven at Linden Hall on 25th (NFO), six at Plessey Woods on 27th (STH) and Arcot Pond on 27th (DM) and five at Silverlink Park LNR on 29th (CGK). In addition nine were heard during a three mile walk from Postern-Mitford Castle on 23rd and seven on a bike ride from Postern to Widdrington Inn on 25th (ADMc). One to three were reported from a further 60 localities.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Singles were reported from Bedlington, Berwick, Branton GP and Lemington.

Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus*

60 in a garden at Heddon-on-the-Wall on 15th was the largest gathering (AA) followed by 54 at nearby Wylam on the same day (RMHa/PMHa); both flocks had declined to 21-23 by 26th. The Ashington area was again popular with various reports of 24-45 from 13th-23rd. A Gosforth garden was visited by 22 on 15th (AJN) and 15 were at Longbenton on 3rd-4th and Newcastle Airport filling station on 9th. One to seven were reported from a further seven localities.

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Five were found in Plessey Woods CP on 6th (LJM) and in Jesmond Dene on 20th (MJCo) and three at Wallington Hall on 13th (DM). Elsewhere records involved singles and pairs from a total of 13 localities including gardens in Stamfordham and Walbottle. Two sites were occupied in the Rothbury area and perhaps more unusual was a bird at Catcleugh Reservoir on 24th.



A Nuthatch cleaning a nest hole
Holystone Common
23rd March by Peter Tapsell

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Six at Alnwick on 5th and Holywell Dene (three pairs) on 30th were the highest counts (IBDa/KDa/ASJ). Four were found in Jesmond Dene and three in the Mitford area and one to two at a further 14 localities.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

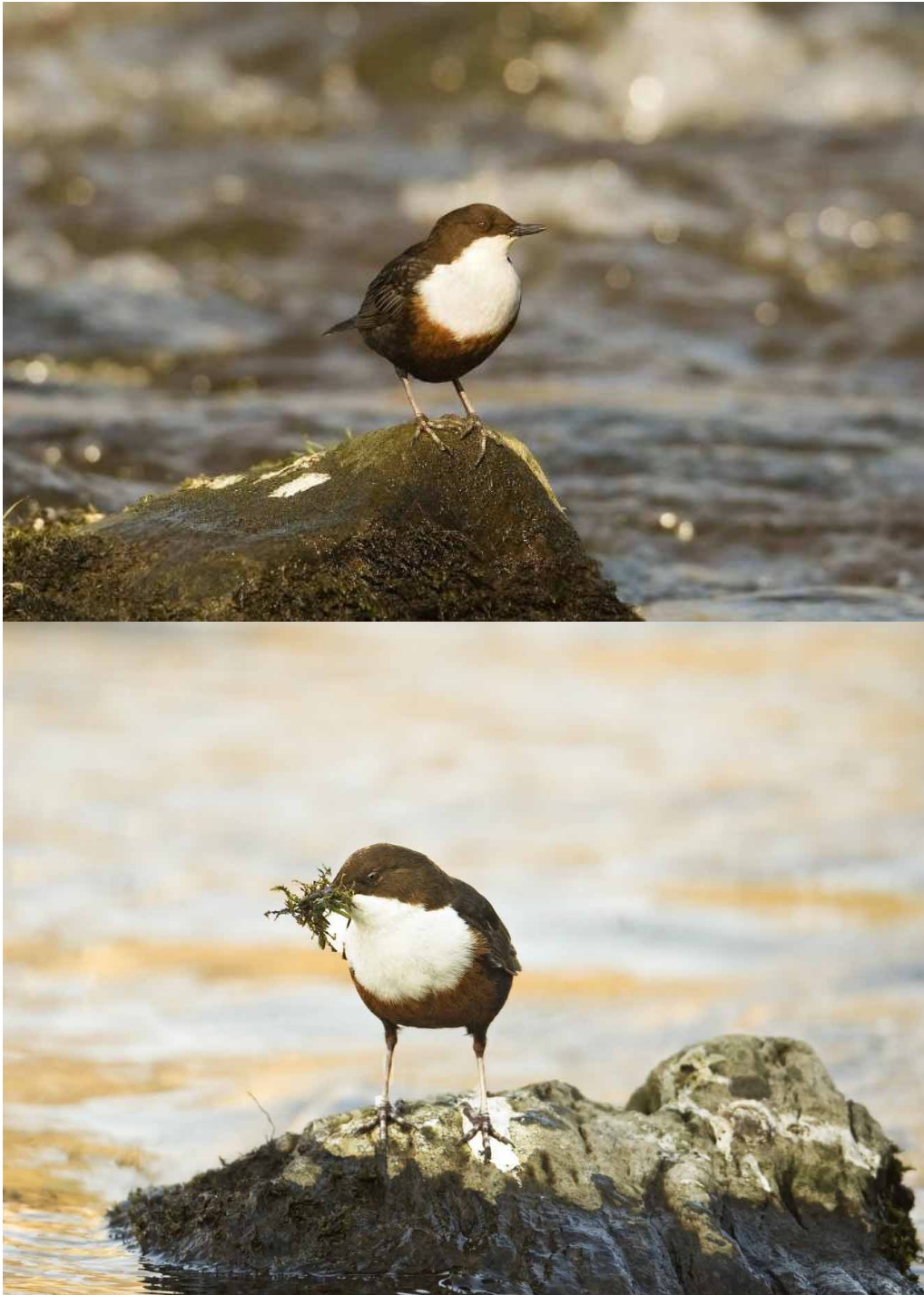
Remaining scarce with a definite decline detected in many areas, no doubt due to the severe winter weather. The highest count was five in the Whittle Wood-Nafferton Farm area on 21st (BNR). A return to some upland areas was apparent with records of four from the Blanchland area on 22nd (BNR) and Carey Burn (Cheviots) on 23rd (MJC); four were also noted at Choppington and Jesmond Dene. Three at Ordley was the first garden record of the year for this observer, and two to three survived the winter at High Brunton. Only two were found over 2km at Prestwick Carr on 26th and one to two were reported from only four other localities.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

Flocks were relatively small; the largest count a total of 790+ over three Allendale tetrads on 1st (SAS). There were 300+ at Seghill tip during the month (CGK *et al.*) and 200-250 at Airy Holm Reservoir, Boulmer and Prestwick Carr. Ten to 50 were reported from a further five localities. A bird was taken by a Sparrowhawk at Druridge Links on 26th and another harassed by a Peregrine on Plenneller Common on 14th.

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

In Upper Coquetdale a total of 11 pairs were found nest building or with eggs on 19th and a single bird noted at another site. Breeding was also confirmed at four localities on the North Tyne: Cottonshopefoot, Redmire, Simonburn and Smalesmouth (JR). Elsewhere nest building was reported from Elsdon, Hartford Bridge (River Blyth), and Thrum Mill (Rothbury). Two pairs were found on the mid-stretch of the River Coquet from Rothbury to Thropton (JD) and in Jesmond Dene (MJCo) and pairs at Allen Banks, Alnwick, Hedgeley GP and Ouseburn (Newcastle Great Park). Single birds were noted in a further seven potential breeding areas.



Two photographs by Colin Bradshaw of the ever popular Dipper
Rothbury on 7th March

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

The first of the year was a singing male at Carey Burn (Harthope Valley) on 23rd (MJC), followed by a pair at Hawsen Burn on 29th (ADMc).

Blackbird *Turdus merua*

Light coastal passage produced 40 on Holy Island on 24th, this by far the highest count of the month (IK). Nine at Choppington on 24th included four singing birds (JR) and a pair was nest building at Gosforth Garden Village by 4th (MJC). One to six were reported from a further six localities.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

200+ were at Black Heddon on 26th (PCF) and 150 at Haughton Strother (Humshaugh) on 28th (MR). Elsewhere 100-122 were reported from Acton (Allendale) on 24th, Pegswood on 13th, Swallow Pond 4th-18th and West Mickley on 22nd and 40-80 from Backworth, Corbridge, Dilston, Eglington, Grasslees Burn and Holystone-Killingworth Waggonway. Four to 32 were noted at a further 11 widespread localities. There were no coastal records.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Up to four were reported from Jesmond Dene on 20th (MJCo) and Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 28th (MNC). Two singing males were noted at Carey Burn, the only upland record of the month (MT/NT/MJC) and a pair returned to a Kenton garden on 31st (MRS). One to two were reported from a further seven localities.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

Very scarce this month with a small flock of 15, briefly, in a Stamfordham garden on 24th the highest count (EC). Elsewhere nine confiding birds fed in Gosforth (Central Park) on 11th and nine were also at Swallow Pond on 3rd (PT/JPD). One to four were reported from a further seven localities.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Five + (at least two pairs) were at Harbottle Crag on 28th (MH/AA) and four at Gilsland and Sweethope Lough on 28th (BRN/PRM) and Woodhorn Flashes on 5th (STH). Three singing birds were heard at Staward N on 25th and three at Prestwick Carr and Northumberland Park (North Shields). One to two were reported from a further nine localities.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Seven at Jesmond Dene on 14th was the highest count (MJCo) followed by six singing males at Carey Burn (Harthope Valley) on 23rd and Choppington on 24th (MJC/JR) and five at Holywell Dene on 27th (MT/NT). Single birds were also reported from Druridge Links-Pools and South Gosforth.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

A male at Rennington on 17th was the first record of the year (MSK).

Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*

It was an excellent month by recent standards with signs of an unexpected recovery and a return to several inland areas. On the coast Holy Island held at least five pairs throughout the month (IK) and two pairs were at Druridge Links-Pools on 25th (IDR). Further pairs were reported from Amble, Cresswell and East Chevington and singles from Bamburgh, Cocklawburn, Ellington and Warkworth. Inland records were very encouraging with pairs at Carey Burn, Harbottle Crag and Holystone Common and singles at Elsdon, Ottercops Moss and Plenneller Common.

Stonechat is a **target species** for 2011. Please report all records for the species.

Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

The first was at East Chevington on 19th (RB/MB). Eight passage birds were at Cheswick on 30th (MHu), three at Hemscotthill Links on 29th (JSB/EC) and singles at Cocklawburn, Holy Island and Newbiggin. Inland the first record was another passage bird at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 24th (SR) followed by three males at Hawsen Burn and a pair at Carey Burn on 29th and singles at Doddington, Gleadscough and Holystone, 27th-29th.

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

Nine visited a Walbottle garden on 20th (KR/LR). Eight were found along a 2km stretch of the Horton Burn (Cramlington) on 3rd (LJM) and Beacon Lane (Cramlington) on 27th (DM). Seven were singing along the Carey Burn (Harthope Valley) on 23rd (MJC), six at Chapel House (Newcastle) on 20th (MH) and five at Choppington on 24th (JR). One-three were also present at Druridge Links and Pools, Ellington Pond, High Chibburn Farm (Druridge) were the first back at Druridge Bay since the December 2010 snows, Jesmond Dene, a South Gosforth garden, Tulehill Moss (Harwood Forest) and a Whitley Bay garden.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

44 were at Kirkley Mill on 29th (PCF), 32 visited a Hipsburn garden all month (TAC/ LC), 30 were in bushes at Bywell Cottagebank on 14th (BNR) and St. Mary's Island on 25th (JMA), 20 by the farm and hamlet at Druridge Links and Pools on 25th (IDR), 16 at Harwood Village on 20th (DM/GB/PA/ML) and eight at Ellington Pond on 26th (IDR/JF).

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

15 were noted at Branton all month (IBDa/KDa) and Scaffold Hill Farm on 17th (JPD), 14 at Druridge Links and Pools on 25th (IDR), 13 at Haughton Strother GP near Humshaugh on 23rd including a bird carrying nest material (MR), up to ten at Linden Hall all month (NFO) and six at Creswell Pond on 21st (TRD/JD). One to four were at a further seven widespread localities including a Walbottle garden.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Two/pairs were noted at Alnwick on 5th (IBDa/KDa), Carey Burn (Harthope Valley) from 6th (MT/NT/MJC *et al*), Thrum Hill (Rothbury) on 8th (JD), Jesmond Dene between 14th-29th (MJCo), Branton and Hedgeley Gravel Pits on 25th (TRD/JD) and the Big Market (Newcastle) on 28th (DM). Singles were also at Berwick Little Beach, Browns Point (Whitley Bay), Church Point (Newbiggin), Holywell Dene, Lower Ouseburn (Byker), five sites in Newcastle city centre, Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth), Thropton to Rothbury along the River Coquet and Wallington Hall.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarallii*

The first significant spring arrival arrived on Holy Island took place on 25th with 15 present at the Rocket Field pools and two-three elsewhere (IK). Elsewhere, 14 were at Haughton Strother Gravel Pits on 12th (MR), 12 at Cheswick on 25th (MHu), eight at Druridge Pools and Links on 25th (IDR), seven at Swallow Pond on 23rd (JPD), six at Boulmer on 10th (JMA) and West Hartford on 24th (PJA) and one to three at a further 12 widespread localities.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

Birds of this subspecies involved an early bird at Cocklawburn on 9th (MHu), followed by singles at Cresswell on 14th (ASJ) Low Newton on 18th (JD), Lynemouth Flash on 18th (EC/JSB), Low Newton on 20th (GW) and two amongst Pied Wagtail flocks on 25th at Cheswick (MHu) and Druridge Links and Pools (IDR).

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

A noticeable influx occurred from 13th as birds poured back into the country after the snows of December 2010. Hundreds headed N over Holywell on 20th (ASJ). One at Swallow Pond on 1st, increased to 18 on 18th and a flock of 50 on 22nd (JPD). 21 flew N at Sweethope Lough on 21st with a further 50 N there on 22nd (RA). 48 went N in one flock at Ordley on 13th (BNR), 40 at Haughton Strother Gravel Pit on 12th (MR) and N at Holywell on 13th (ASJ). 35 moved N over Gilsland Spa/Village on 28th (BNR), 30 at Branton Gravel Pits on 25th (TRD/JD) and Druridge Pools and Links on 26th (IDR/JF), 28 at Cresswell on 24th (ASJ), 19 at Staward on 25th (BNR) and 18 at Prestwick Carr on 26th (PCF). One to 5 were observed at a further 14 widespread localities.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Three were noted at Low Newton on 18th (TRD/JD) and Boulmer on 23rd (TRD/JD), two at Berwick Little Beach on 9th (TRD/JD) and High Point (Whitley Bay) on 18th (MN) and one at Cullernose Point on 23rd (TRD/JD). Scandinavian ssp. *littoralis*, at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) four on 9th (AT) increased to five on 13th (STH/AT/JGS), six there on 17th (AT) and then declined to one between 20th-30th (AT/STH). Three were observed on the beach with Rock Pipit between 9th-13th with two there on 20th (GW). One was also at Holy Island on 6th (RA).



Rock Pipits.

Left at Cullernose on 23rd March and right a *littoralis* bird at Low Newton on 18th March.

Both photographs by Tim Dean

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

25 were at Hardwood Village on 20th (DM/GB/PJA/ML), 18 at Prestwick Carr on 26th (PCF), 15 at Druridge Links and Pools on 25th (IDR) and one-ten at a further seven widespread localities.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

250 including many males were on well grazed sheep fields at Freeman's Hill (Alnwick Moor) on 7th (MH), 30+ at West Mickley on 16th (SWA), eight regularly in a Scotland Gate garden until mid month (SLB/MSK), six at Ellington on 5th (TB), five at a Kenton (Newcastle) garden on 3rd (MRS), three at a Cramlington garden on 7th (STH) and a Linden Hall garden on 12th (NFO). One to two were also at County Hall (Morpeth), another Cramlington garden, Druridge Bay CP, Holywell Dene and Boulmer.

Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*

13 visited a Walbottle garden on 27th (KR/LR). One to six were at a further six widespread localities.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

45 were at Swallow Pond on 17th (JPD), 40 at the Great North Museum (Newcastle) on 4th (JMA), 36 came into garden feeders at East Ord on 2nd (MHu), 35 came into roost daily between 1st-18th (CGK), 26 along the Horton Burn (Cramlington) on 3rd (LJM), 22 at Druridge Links and Pools on 12th (IDR), 17 at Shiremoor on 4th (CGK) and 14 at Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 28th (MNC). One to ten were at a further 12 widespread localities.

In the February Bulletin the Goldfinch heading was absent and the first line should have read:-
About 120 were at Bedlington centre on 18th (RMH), 38 were at .



A Siskin at Battlesteads by Colin Bradshaw

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

Noted as common throughout Harwood Forest on 20th (DM/GB/PJA/ML). 200+ were at a Humshaugh garden on 15th with 170 ringed there on 17th (TWi). 70 were in a mixed finch flock at Hexham on 15th (AJR). Very common at Sleafy Hall between 1st-20th with up to 50 in the area. Maximum number of feeders at one time was 26, 52 were ringed here during month. After 20th very few birds present with a maximum of four between 20th-31st. 50+ were at West Mickley on 16th (SWA), 20-25 at High Brunton between 10th-15th with all gone by 23rd (JWP). 20+ males singing at Carey Burn (Harthope Valley) on 23rd (MJC), 15+ at Wark on 8th (PRM), 14 at Catcleugh Reservoir on 24th (PRM), 13 at Backworth on 12th (CGK), 12 at East Chevington on 1st (MT/NT), a Cramlington garden on 12th (STH), an East Ord garden on 14th (MHu), Silver Link CP (North Shields) on 15th (LJM) and Kylvie Woods on 20th (BWG). 11 were near Bakethin Weir (Kielder Forest) on 20th (MHS). One to ten were at a further 14 widespread localities including gardens at Cramlington, Ellington, Old Hartley, Scotland Gate, South Gosforth and Walbottle.

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

A flock of 150 at Swallow Pond on 1st declined to 70 by 26th (JPD). 20 were at Haughton Strother GP on 28th (MR), 16 at Cheswick on 30th (MHu), nine at Choppington on 24th (JR), four pairs breeding on sites at Holy Island on 27th (IK), seven at Dinnington on 29th (PCF), four at Druridge Pools and Links on 12th (IDR) and a singing male at Carey Burn (Harthope Valley) on 23rd (MJC).

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*

94 were at High Newton on 20th (GW). The Druridge Bay flock was again based at Hemscotthill Links all month with a peak of 35 on 12th and 27th (IDR/ADM). 15 were still present there on 31st (ASJ/PT/LM/IW). 23 flew north over the dunes at Druridge Pools on 4th (PRM). Ten were at Spittal Cliffs (Berwick) on 9th (MHu). An excellent inland record involved 62 on old farm buildings at Grey Yade of Coppeth (between Alnham and Ewartly Shank) on 17th (TRD/JD). Another inland record involved three at Whittle Dene Reservoir on 2nd (SR).



Part of the High Newton Twite flock by Tim Dean on 18th March

Redpoll Sp.

Four were at Harwood Forest on 20th ((GB) and singles at Big Waters on 6th (GB) and Haughton Strother GP on 12th (MR)

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis caberet*

20 (in groups of one to four) were at Harwood Forest on 20th (DM/GB/PJA/ML), 15 were at Tyne Green to Warden (Hexham) on 15th (AJR), six at Battlesteads Hotel (Wark) on 27th (CB), three at Swallow Pond on 2nd (JPD) and one-two at Big Waters feeding station, Coppath Burn, a Cramlington garden, Grindon Lough, Hartburn, Primrose Wood (Rothbury) and Sweethope Lough.

Mealy Redpoll *Carduelis flammea*

Four were present at Ashwood Business Park (Ashington) on 16th (AT).

A Lesser Redpoll at a Woosington garden feeder
13th March
Mervyn Anthony

**Common Crossbill** *Loxia curvirostra*

Found at Harwood Forest in small groups throughout month with peaks of ten at Winters Gibbet on 6th (STH) and 42 on the forest edge on 20th (MHS). Kielder Forest was also popular all month with a maximum of 40+ at Lewisburn on 24th (MT/NT). Elsewhere, 24 were at Kyloe Woods on 20th (BWG), four at Battlesteads Hotel (Wark) on 27th (CB) and Sweethope Lough on 28th (PRM), three at Holystone Common on 1st (EC/JSB) and Simonside on 14th (TRD/JD), two at Sleafy Forest on 13th (GB) and Blanchland Moor on 22nd (BNR) and singles at Thrunton Woods on 24th (JD) and Cartlington on 27th (JD/TRD).



A male Crossbill
by John Clark
Deadwater Kielder on 8th March

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Six were at West Mickley on 13th (SWA), four at feeders at a Scotland Gate garden all month (SLA/MSK), three at Crow Hall Farm (Holywell Dene) on 18th (MT/NT) and Choppington on 24th (JR) and one-two were at a further 12 widespread localities including gardens at Cramlington and Old Hartley.

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

The last wintering birds involved singles at Newbiggin on 13th (AG/AT), Blyth South Harbour on 26th (DMT) and Henscotthill Links (Cresswell) on 31st ((ASJ).

Lapland Bunting *Calcarius lapponicus*

Two were observed at Low Newton on 20th (GW).

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

20 were found at Prestwick Carr on 15th (EC), 11 at Choppington on 24th (JR), six at Big Waters on 6th (GB), five at Holywell on 26th (ASJ), four at Whitelea (Cramlington) on 13th (DM) and one to three at a further nine widespread localities.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

13 were at Haughton Strother GP on 12th

(MR), nine at Prestwick Carr on 19th (PCF) and Druridge Links and Pools on 25th (IDR), seven at Holuwell Pond on 11th (ASJ), six at Cocklawburn on 4th (MHu), four at Choppington on 24th (JR) and one to three at a further 13 widespread localities including gardens at Dinnington (PCF) and Old Hartley (RJP)

ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN**Escapes****Bar-headed Goose** *Anser indicus*

One was found at East Chevington on 4th (PRM).

Muscovy Duck *Cairina moschata*

A single was found on Arcot Pond on 19th and stayed until at least the 22nd (DM/PJA).

Hybrids**Canada Goose x Greylag Goose** *Branta canadensis x Anser anser*

One hybrid was paired with a Canada Goose at Killingworth Lake on 6th and was seen again on 22nd (LJM). Further single hybrids were seen at Hedgeley GP on 25th (TRD/JD) and Backworth Pond on 26th (MNC).

Birds of Unknown Origin**Rose-ringed Parakeet** *Psittacula krameri*

The regular locality of Ponteland again witnessed sightings with a single at Northumberland Police HQ on 3rd and presumably the same individual being mobbed there by Jackdaws over Sainsbury's on 21st before retreating to Bell's Villas (PCF).

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Berwick Wildlife Group, Hauxley Ringing Station, North Northumberland Bird Club, Northern Experience Wildlife Tours, NTBC field trip (BCFT).

Those observers marked with an asterisk after their name(s) have submitted records online using the club spreadsheet. Copies are available by emailing Dick Myatt at dick@dickmyatt.co.uk

Apologies for any accidental omissions**BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION**

This bulletin was compiled by Lyndsay McDougall (Mute Swan to Egyptian Goose, Red Grouse to Black-necked Grebe), Graeme Bowman (Ruddy Shelduck to Ruddy Duck), Trevor Blake (Honey Buzzard to Crane), Ian Forsyth (Oystercatcher to Skua), Tim Dean (Ivory Gull to Puffin, Escapes, Hybrids and Unknown Origin, List of Contributors, Highlights), Peter Fletcher (Feral Pigeon to Red-rumped Swallow), Mike Richardson (Cetti's Warbler to Pied Flycatcher), Dee McKeown (Duncock to Corn Bunting), Julie Roper/Dan Turner (WeBS Coastal Counts) and Steve Holliday (WeBS Inland Counts). Thanks again to Ann McKeown for typing the section Duncock to Corn Bunting. Thanks to Barbara Welch of NNBC for providing data. Proof reading was by Mike Smith.

Edited by Steve Barrett Sscmagpie@aol.com

Distributed by Alan Watson apusx@blueyonder.co.uk

BULLETIN SECTION WRITER

A long serving section writer wishes to give up writing a section after several years' sterling effort. Have we a volunteer out there willing to take over?

Please send an email to Steve Barrett Sscmagpie@aol.com to volunteer for more information.

RECORD SUBMISSION

Please send all record cards to Tim Dean, 2 Knocklaw Park, Rothbury NE65 7PW, to arrive on, or preferably before, the 8th of the month following that in which the records were collected. Please write cards legibly to ensure that your sightings are correctly recorded.

E-mail: Members are encouraged to e-mail their records on an Excel-style spreadsheet. Please e-mail Dick Myatt at dick@dickmyatt.co.uk for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and Grid references: The use of standard location names and the inclusion of grid references greatly increases the value of records in subsequent analyses. A 1km square grid reference is the ideal e.g. NY8067 for Grindon Lough, but 2km square references (tetrads) are also acceptable e.g. NY86D in this case. A list of localities and their tetrad grid references (tetrad/Locality List) can be downloaded from the 'Resources & Downloads' section of the Club website at <http://www.ntbc.org.uk> – the use of these names, wherever possible, would be highly appreciated.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Please keep submitting your articles, photographs, sketches and illustrations for the bulletin. Thanks again to those who have supplied the excellent photographs. Please send to Steve Barrett at Sscmagpie@aol.com

ELECTRONIC BULLETIN

The NTBC bulletin can be received electronically or as hard copy. The electronic bulletin arrives earlier than the printed version, it is in colour and we save the cost of printing and stamps. Ask for an e-mailed bulletin from;

jo.bentley@waitrose.com.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS 2011

Annual subscription is a bargain £23. For membership enquiries please contact jo.bentley@waitrose.com

NTBC WEB SITE

The Club website is an excellent resource for all interested in birds in the north-east. There are numerous interesting sections, including a photograph gallery, site information and trip reports together with extensive reference information for birding in our area.

The site goes from strength to strength and has now had over 22,000 visits. The site is at www.ntbc.org.uk

If you have any ideas or things you would like to see or hear about on the site please let Chris Knox know on 0751 582 5024 or email christopher.knox@o2.co.uk

NTBC SIGHTINGS PAGE

The club sightings web page gives listings of birds seen locally. Adding a sighting is simple. A short email is all that is needed. The site has now had well over 20,000 visits.

If anyone would like to be added as a contributor please contact Alan Tilmouth at ntbcorg@gmail.com The sightings page can be found at <http://ntbcsightings.posterous.com> and there is a link on the club website.

IINDOOR MEETINGS

The next meeting will be in the autumn. See you there, as usual, at Newcastle Falcons on Thursday 8th September at 7pm.

MEMBER QUESTIONNAIRE

It is hard to believe but it is ten years since the last members' survey. The club committee intend to issue another soon.

ATLAS NEWS

The fundraiser talk by Martin Garner in March raised over £400 for the Atlas.

Sponsorship of species in aid of the Atlas publication is also progressing well. So if you want to 'own' your favourite bird contact Steve Lowe at zappa99@live.co.uk

Could anyone willing to help with Atlas Fundraising please contact any committee member or email Steve at the above address. Suggestions for fundraising schemes would be especially appreciated.

PONTELAND PARAKEET

March has heralded the return of the feral Ring-necked Parakeet to the Ponteland / Prestwick area. It was spotted at the Police College on the 3rd and over Sainsbury's in Ponteland on the 21st March. The last week of March has seen it return to Prestwick.

First observed some five or six years ago in Prestwick the bird was adopted by the staff at *S Fix*, a small steel fabricator on the east of the village. They fed the bird and even put a box up for it to nest in but this was quickly usurped by Starlings. Since then it has survived at least three harsh winter events, that is assuming it is the same bird as I know of at least one escape of this species from a house in Darras Hall during that period.

Remarkably it has a routine and has returned to the property in Prestwick the very week the buds of a Horse Chestnut in the garden began to burst. It will feed on these twice daily according to the owner of the property and often sits on the window sills of his house to eat them. Last year as the picture shows, it also spent a lot of time on the eills of house opposite and made a huge mess in the process. My only assumption given the time of year is that it has been fooled by its reflection and was indulging in a bit of courtship feeding. Any other suggestions would be welcome.



A possible aid to its survival is that it is well fed. For last few weeks it has been visiting a garden in Bell Villas (opposite Sainsbury's) daily where it is fed grapes and more recently sultanas to which it has shown a preference, throwing the previous favourite grapes on the ground. I suggested the lady peel the grapes to see if this was the reason but this was felt to be an indulgence too far. It also visits another garden in Prestwick where it now turns its beak up at Bramley Apples which two years ago it devoured in earnest.

I've managed to catch the bird on my patch at Prestwick Carr once, and it clearly roams the whole Ponteland area, presumably being fed in many other gardens. Two years ago in early summer it preferred to roost in a round window of the Church Hall and to serenade drinkers at The Blackbird from atop trees in St Mary's Church yard but there was little sign of this behaviour last year. Where it goes in winter is a mystery as it is rarely sighted at its usual feeding stations at a time you would think it would rely on them more.



Anyway, if you're passing through Main Street Ponteland or up the bank into Prestwick, keep an eye out for the green flash and an ear alert for the squawk but take care driving as I've nearly come a cropper when the bird has grabbed my attention.

Peter Fletcher

Northeast England Beached Bird Surveys (NEBBS) Group

NEBBS would like to thank the NTBC very much for their recent kind grant of £250 towards their funds. This grant has been used to preserve some beach specimens, for educational purposes, including a ringed plover, dunlin, black-headed gull and kestrel. These birds have been preserved by taxidermist Ralph Robson from Red Grouse Gallery in Rothbury – he has made an excellent job. The grant has also enabled Ralph to preserve a range of beached bird wings for our group. On Thursday 14 April, at the NTBC members evening, these specimens made an appearance, along with some others preserved in 2008 with an award from British Airways. Co-ordinator Dan Turner gave a presentation about the beached bird and 'Save the North Sea' fulmar projects on members evening and hopes to make use of the specimens at future presentations (to schools and other groups) to generate further interest about birds, our environment and pollution at sea. For further background detail about NEBBS refer to the developing web page at:

<http://www.nhsn.ncl.ac.uk/news/cms/beached-bird-surveys/>

Dan Turner

GEOFF MACFARLANE MEMORIAL TRUST

The Trust was established after the tragic death of one of the regions most outstanding local naturalists in 1983. Its aims were to "provide financial aid by way of grants, donations, gifts or loans of sums of money for those causes that the Trustees deemed beneficial to the natural heritage of Northumbria and the Border counties". Geoff Macfarlane served as the county co-ordinator and organiser for many national BTO and local NTBC surveys in the 1970s and early 1980s, and was a leading participant in collecting data for both the Merlin and Goosander studies for which Northumberland gained a national reputation. He was a major contributor to the first county ornithological breeding atlas as well as being a corresponding member of the Mammal Society.

Whilst the Trust had a particular interest in the field of ornithology it supported a wide range of organisations and individuals in many aspects relating to the region's natural environment. Local groups who benefited financially from Trust donations included the Northumberland Bat Group, the Northumberland Nuthatch Survey, the Otter Conservation Trust, the Northumberland Wildlife Trust's Badger Group, North Tyneside Riverside Centre and the Bamburgh Ringing Station. Funding was also provided to help develop a small nature reserve at Spindleston, and to provide wardens for both the Northumbria Peregrine Watch and the tern colony at Low Newton.

Financial help for local individuals involved in wider environmental and educational programmes was given for one Operation Raleigh participant, and to send a local conservation manager to advise on a major forestry protection project in Ecuador. Of more local impact the Trustees organised natural history essay competitions, and held public lectures involving speakers of national repute.

Perhaps the most obvious involvement has been the Trust's provision of financial support for a range of publications. Two versions of the *Birds of Lindisfarne* received grants, as did the publication of *Northumbrian birds*. On a somewhat larger scale the Trust gave money for the *Atlas of breeding birds in Northumbria* - a volume dedicated to Geoff in memory of his extensive contribution to local survey work, and its companion volume the *Atlas of wintering birds in Northumbria*.

More recently the Trust made donations towards the building of the new Fair Isle Bird Observatory, the Northumbrian Wildlife Gallery at the Great North Museum : Hancock, and to the Northumberland Wildlife Trust for their Sand Martin project at Hauxley. This last donation, the final grant to be made by the Trust, is most appropriate, as Geoff spent a great deal of his time as a member of the Northumbria Ringing Group at Hauxley and had been a surveyor for the National Coal Board who carried out the extensive opencast coal workings at Hauxley that eventually formed the basis for the Hauxley Nature Reserve.

As all of the Trust's funds have now been disbursed the Trustees have agreed that it should cease to operate. All the Trusts documentation, correspondence and accounts will be added to the NTBC archives.

Trustees : John C. Day ; Bryan Galloway ; Margaret Macfarlane

4th May 2011

BUTTERFLY REPORT

Club members may be interested in the annual report for butterflies in North -East England 2010 which is now available to download from the website: www.northeast-butterflies.org.uk

Also available are recent reports, newsletters and a record form for reporting sightings.

Roger Norman

COASTAL WEBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND

MARCH 2011

Site	MHu	TB	AC	RP	TH	AC	RP	MLC	Seahouses - Beadnell	Beadnell - Howick	Boulmer - Alnmouth	Aln Estuary	Alnmouth South	Cresswell	Cresswell - Newbiggin	Blyth Estuary - Seaton	Whiter Bay - Tynewinch	Tyne North Pier - Fish Quay	Walsend (north bank) only	Redheugh - Scotswood Bridge (north bank)	Scotswood - Newburn Bridge (north bank)
Count	TH	TB	AC	RP	TH	AC	RP	MLC	Seahouses - Beadnell	Beadnell - Howick	Boulmer - Alnmouth	Aln Estuary	Alnmouth South	Cresswell	Cresswell - Newbiggin	Blyth Estuary - Seaton	Whiter Bay - Tynewinch	Tyne North Pier - Fish Quay	Walsend (north bank) only	Redheugh - Scotswood Bridge (north bank)	Scotswood - Newburn Bridge (north bank)
DATE	TH	TB	AC	RP	TH	AC	RP	MLC	Seahouses - Beadnell	Beadnell - Howick	Boulmer - Alnmouth	Aln Estuary	Alnmouth South	Cresswell	Cresswell - Newbiggin	Blyth Estuary - Seaton	Whiter Bay - Tynewinch	Tyne North Pier - Fish Quay	Walsend (north bank) only	Redheugh - Scotswood Bridge (north bank)	Scotswood - Newburn Bridge (north bank)
Red-throated Diver	16	1																			
Great Northern Diver	1																				
Little Grebe	2																				
Great Crested Grebe	1																				
Red-necked Grebe	1																				
Shoveler	6																				
Shoveler	171	2	5	6	21			4	4	4	4	1	2								
Shoveler	49																				
Grey Heron	20	7	1	1	3			1	1	1	3										
Mute Swan	77	24	6	3	33			7	7	7	2										
Whooper Swan	29	2																			
Pink-footed Goose	4																				
Greylag Goose	71	1	2																		
Canada Goose	2																				
Dark-bellied Brent Goose	7																				
Light-bellied Brent Goose	787																				
Shelduck	658							2	6	23											
Wigeon	204							8	40	65											
Gadwall	8																				
Teal	549							12	8	36											
Mallard	387	104	34	4	179	61	6	6	8	4	14										
Pintail	88																				
Shoveler	4																				
Tufted Duck	12	2																			
Eider	1,042	4						133	111	93	208	27	54								
Long-tailed Duck	25																				
Common Scoter	424																				
Goldeneye	479	306	32					22	24	10	4										
Red-breasted Merganser	83	6						4	1	2											
Goosander	7																				
Moorhen	17																				
Coot	12	3																			
Oystercatcher	1,172	13	22	83	329	75	57	69	123	56	30	31	27	59	93	1	127	51			1
Ringed Plover	29							8	12	4											
Golden Plover	153																				
Grey Plover	49							18	2	6											
Lapwing	21																				
Knot	362							40													
Sanderling	156							3	55	35											
Purple Sandpiper	205							68	88	38											
Dunlin	762	11						4		49											
Bar-tailed Godwit	435							14	8	36											
Culwren	1,154	65						33	8	40	6	24									
Redshank	1,282	210	20					51	51	36	34	2									
Turnstone	374	9	3	39				151	34	15											
Black-headed Gull	1,526	416	40	3	298	260	nc	22	66	148	nc										
Common Gull	507	66	33					84		10											
Lesser Black-backed Gull	23	3						nc													
Herring Gull	1,098	314	6	40	55			nc	151	62		10									
Great Black-backed Gull	125	22						nc	1	22											
Kittiwake	371							200	135												
ADDITIONAL SPECIES																					
Fulmar	2	2																			
TOTALS - WILDOFOWL	5,243	462	101	146	2,558	286	389	149	161	391	161	38	64	1	216	25	42	74	38	170	57
- WADERS	6,154	308	42	132	3,137	135	196	454	366	243	95	33	27	383	27	336	2	306	70	76	5
- GULLS & TERNS	3,650	821	79	44	654	260	0	374	371	0	168	0	0	0	191	0	68	344	163	301	72

INLAND WeBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND

Version: Interim

Year: 2011
Month: March

[illegible]

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

<http://www.ntbc.org.uk/>

Bulletin 2011 No 4

MONTHLY SUMMARY – APRIL

31st May 2011



HIGHLIGHTS

Ross's Goose -	One still at Doddington up to 2nd.
American Wigeon -	Last month's bird still at Cresswell Pond up to 9th.
Black Scoter -	First County record. Male off Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) from 14th to 27th.
Smew –	Long-stayer through to 19th at Whittle Dene Reservoirs.
Night-heron -	Adult at Lesbury on 27th. First County record since 1999.
Great White Egret -	One at East Chevington on 29th & 30th.
White Stork -	One at Cresswell & Druridge on 25th.
Honey-buzzard -	One flew through Beal on 24th.
White-tailed Eagle -	Immature at various sites on 14th.
Montagu's Harrier -	One through East Chevington on 25th.
Avocet -	Up to eight at Cresswell Pond.
Pomarine Skua -	One at sea off Cullercoats on 18th.
Iceland Gull -	Single at St Mary's on 18th.
Glaucous Gull –	Single at Cresswell on 12th.
Wryneck –	An unusual spring migrant inland at West Hartford on 24th.
Great Grey Shrike -	A migrant at Shilbottle on 13th.
Shore Lark -	One at Druridge from 5th to 7th.
Western Subalpine Warbler -	An early migrant on Holy Island from 10th to 11th.

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A reeling Grasshopper Warbler at Arcot Pond
by Colin Bradshaw

WEATHER

High pressure influenced the weather for most of the month; it was much warmer, drier and sunnier than normal. It was the second successive very dry month in these areas. Many places in the eastern half of England recorded less than 1 mm of rain. Sunshine amounts were generally around 150% of normal, making it the sunniest April since 1929.

1st to 5th A mild southerly flow was replaced by a cooler westerly one on 2nd as a cold front moved eastwards.

6th to 11th After heavy rain overnight into 6th, high pressure brought a period of dry, sunny weather with light winds and above-normal temperatures. There were some mild nights, with a minimum of 13.4 °C at Boulmer (Northumberland) early on 6th. Another weak front produced some patchy rain in northern areas on 11th.

12th to 16th It became less settled with some outbreaks of showery rain, chiefly in the north and west. A cold night into 12th saw an air frost in parts of the Midlands. Some showers spread into eastern coasts.

17th to 24th Pressure built again, with a warm, south-easterly air flow. It was dry with sunshine on 17th after early mist and fog cleared and it became warm again. Some sea fog affected North Sea coasts on 20th and 21st. Some fog and frost in the north-east early on 22nd with -0.4 °C at Redesdale Camp (Northumberland).

25th to 26th A cold front across northern areas weakened as it moved southwards, bringing some cloud and rain. The 25th was another very warm day; sea fog affected the coast of East Anglia. Outbreaks of rain moved southwards on 26th into southern England with everywhere becoming cooler.

27th to 30th Another generally dry spell with an easterly flow becoming established. A few showers developed along eastern coasts.

CLASSIFIED LIST

The following account consists of unchecked reports. The species/subspecies marked * require descriptions.

A complete list of all sightings that need notes is included in the NTBC website www.ntbc.org.uk under the County Records Committee section and in Birds in Northumbria 2009 page 224.

The Inland and Coastal Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) tables are at the rear of the bulletin. These contain counts additional to those in the Classified List.

TARGET SPECIES

The target species for 2011 are Gadwall, Snipe and Stonechat.

Please report all records for these species.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

The largest gatherings were 118 at Killingworth Lake on 6th (LJM), 103 in the Tweed Estuary on 18th (MHu), 80 at Tweedmouth Dock on 4th (MHu), 40 at Capheaton Lake on 6th (STE), 35 at Woodhorn Flashes on 2nd (STH) and 23 at Bolam Lake on 14th (PRM). Smaller gatherings were 14 at Cocklawburn Pond on 4th, 13 at Grindon Lough on 30th and ten at Greenlee Lough on 17th. Nesting pairs were noted at Belsay Hall, Broomlee Lough, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Lesbury (River Aln) and Shield-on-the-Wall. Elsewhere one to eight were noted at Arcot Pond, Bebside Pond, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Ellington Pond, Hauxley, Holywell Pond, Leazes Park (Newcastle), Linton Ponds, Newcastle Quayside, Warkworth Gut/Dunes and in flight near Linden Hall and Southfield Green (Cramlington).



Mute Swan at the nest
Lesbury on 27th April by Tim Dean

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

In early April ten were in fields west of Bell's Farm (Cresswell) on 3rd and nine in fields west of Longhirst Flash on 1st (ADMc). Four were present at West Ord until 17th (MHu) with an adult and second-winter bird present at Woodhorn Flashes until at least 9th (STH). Singles were at Killingworth Lake on 1st, Cocklawburn Pond on 4th (found dead on 6th), Bothal Pond on 9th, Hedgeley GP on 16th/29th and at QEII Lake on 22nd.



An injured Whooper Swan
Hedgeley GP
16th April
Tim Dean

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Return passage was noted with 176 NW over Houghton Strother GP on 18th (MR) and 24 flying N at Catcleugh Reservoir and Carter Bar on 24th (PRM/EAW). A flock of 3,000 remained at Doddington on the late date of 2nd (TRD/JD). At Cresswell Pond the peak count was 120 on 2nd/9th with 84 still present on 27th (JPD) and 83 on 29th (MN/SL/MH/AA *et al.*). At Hauxley NR 74 were present on 19th (HRS) and at Whittle Dene Reservoirs the peak count was 32 on 1st-4th with 29 still present on 7th (RA/SR *et al.*). 15 were at Grindon Lough on 1st (AJH) and 13 at Woodhorn Flashes on 7th and Wansbeck Hospital Flash (Ashington) on 9th (STH/GB). Two were noted at Bothal Pond, Druridge Pools, Monk's House Pool and West Ord.

Eurasian White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*

Singles were at Woodhorn Flashes on 1st and Wansbeck Hospital Flash (Ashington) on 9th (TRD/JD/MSH/GB).

Greenland White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons flavirostris*

Six were at Hauxley on 15th/19th (RB/MB/HRS). Five were still present at Woodhorn Flashes on 1st (MSH/TRD/JD), four remained at Wansbeck Hospital Flash on 9th (GB) and three noted at Woodhorn Flashes on 7th (STH).

An unraced bird was at Grindon Lough on 1st (AJH).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

On 13th 12 flew N at Druridge Pools (IDR) and two flew E at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 23rd (DM). The highest counts were 135 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 2nd (SR), 95 at Hauxley NR on 19th (HRS), 86 at Beehive Flash (Earsdon) on 7th (MSH), 36 at Derwent Reservoir on 15th (BNR), 28 at East Chevington Pools on 17th (DM/STH/LAR) and 23 at Woodhorn Flashes on 2nd/26th (STH). At Grindon Lough 16 were present on 30th (PRM) and 14 at Hedgeley GP on 29th (DM/STH/PJA). A pair with eight young was at Marden Quarry on 24th (KWY). One to six were noted at Backworth Pond, Bakethin Reservoir, Breamish Valley, Cocklawburn Pond, Druridge Pools and Yarrow Slake (Tweed Estuary).

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

The highest counts were 42 at Grindon Lough on 11th (JMA), 29 at Hedgeley GP on 29th (DM/STH/PJA), 23 at Hauxley NR on 19th (HRS), 17 at Bolam Lake on 14th (PRM), 15 at Linton Ponds on 19th (nest) (CDH) and 14 at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 6th (DM). One to nine were noted at Arcot Pond, Backworth, Bakethin Reservoir, Beehive Flash (Earsdon), Belsay Hall, Catcleugh Reservoir, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Dykerow Fell (Whitfield Moor), East Chevington, Ellington Pond, Farne Islands, Elswick, Holywell Pond, Lord's Rigg (Whitfield Moor), Prestwick Carr, Wallington Hall Boathouse Pond and Garden Pond (nest), West Ord, West Allotment Pond, Woolsington Pond (nest) and flying over Netherton Park (Stannington).

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Singles were at Woodhorn Flashes on 7th (STH) and Grindon Lough on 30th (PRM).

Pale-bellied Brent Goose *Branta bernicla hrota*

At Holy Island Harbour 12 were still present on 23rd (IK).

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Peak counts were 55 at Cresswell Pond on 17th (DM/STH/LAR), 44 at Budle Bay on 17th (DM/STH/LAR), 21 at Kitty Brewster (the Blyth Estuary) on 24th (GB), 14-15 at Castle Island and Druridge Pools, and 12 at Hauxley Reserve. Five to six were at East Chevington, Elswick and Grindon Lough, and three to four at Big Waters, Scotswood, the Tweed Estuary, West Hartford and Woodside. One to two were also at the Beehive Flash (Earsdon), Cocklawburn, Haughton Strother GP, Holywell, Lemington, Lilburn Hill, Old Hartley and Two Mile Cottages (Hexham). An early brood of eight young was at Druridge Pools on 3rd (IDR).

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

Four (one drake) were at Ridley Stokoe on 8th (AT/ADMc) and two there on 2nd and 14th (TRD/JD/AJH). A drake was at Haughton Strother GP on 27th (MR) but more unusual was a drake flushed from Beacon Point, Newbiggin during foggy conditions on 21st (STH).

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

Cresswell Pond held 70 on 1st and 9th (MSH/SL), 42 were at Druridge Pools on 2nd falling to five by 28th (IDR), 39 at Grindon Lough on 17th (MRS) falling to 11 by 30th (PRM), and 13 at Big Waters. Six to seven were at Alnmouth, Branton GP, Derwent Reservoir, East Chevington and Hauxley Reserve, and two to four at four further sites, including one likely breeding area.

American Wigeon *Anas americana*

A drake was at Cresswell Pond on 1st (RD/JD) and 9th (GB/LAR/ASH/SL).

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Peak gatherings were 25 at East Chevington on 15th (SRB), 23 at Hauxley Reserve on 19th (HRS), 22 (mostly pairs) at Castle Island on 18th (GB), 19 at Druridge Pools on 16th (IDR), 18 at Woodhorn Flashes on 21st (GB), seven to eight at Big Waters and Cresswell and Holywell Ponds, and four to five at Bell's and Linton Ponds, St Mary's Wetland, Summerhouse Lane Pond (Newbiggin). One to two were also at Alnmouth, Ashington, Backworth, Bothal and Ellington Ponds, Capheaton Lake, the Drift Inn pools (Seaton Burn) and Hedgeley GP. More unusual were a pair on a small wetland at Low Barton on 19th (TRD/JD). Gadwall is a **target species** for 2011. Please report all records.

Teal *Anas crecca*

Largest counts were 94 at Druridge Pools on 2nd falling to eight by 26th (IDR), 77 at Grindon Lough on 15th (PRM), 50 at Holy Island on 8th dropping to 15 by the end of the month (IK), 27-28 at Arcot and Middle Ord Ponds, 19-25 at Big Waters, Capheaton Lake and, and six to nine at Hauxley Reserve, Holywell Pond, Hoppen Kiln Pool, St Mary's and Woodhorn Flashes. One to five were at ten further localities including at least one potential breeding site. A drake was watched reaching up to pull the heads from Reedmace *Typha latifolia* at Linton Ponds on 1st (TRD/JD).

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Newcastle Leazes Park held a peak of 53 on 1st (DM), 43 were at the Tweed Estuary on 18th (MHu), 31 at Druridge Pools on 16th (IDR), 20-26 at Derwent Reservoir and Grindon Lough, and 14-16 at Arcot and Cresswell Ponds, and Hauxley Reserve. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Gosforth Park	3	26 (11, 10 & 5)	Per SRB. On 22nd
Arcot Pond	2	20 (13 & 7)	STH/LJM. Broods of 7 on 20th and 13 on 30th
Jesmond Dene	2	8 (5 & 3)	MJCo. On 27th
Killingworth Lake	1	12	LJM. On 23rd
Lesbury	1	10	TRD/JD. On 27th
Newcastle Leazes Park	1	9	DM. On 26th
Blayney Row	1	8	SRB. On 21st
Woodhorn Flashes	1	min. 5	GB. On 24th on south flash
Warden	1	3	BNR. On 27th
Lower Ouseburn, Byker	1	2	DM. On 27th

Pintail *Anas acuta*

Three (one drake) were at Druridge Pools until 12th and one to two until 28th (IDR *et al.*). In addition to two on the pools a further four were offshore at Druridge Links on 16th (IDR). A pair was at Cresswell Pond on 9th (GB/LAR/ASH/SL) and single drakes were at Holywell Pond on 8th-9th (GB/EG) and the Long Nanny Estuary from 12th-17th (CB).

A drake Pintail
Holywell Pond
Colin Bradshaw

**Garganey** *Anas querquedula*

Single pairs were at Gosforth Park between 1st-5th (CB/IF/per SRB), Druridge Pools on 10th-12th and 25th-29th (TB/BKo/ADM/IDR *et al.*), and Newton Flash on 15th (CB).

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

14 (ten drakes) were at Druridge Pools on 12th and smaller numbers regularly during the month (IDR *et al.*). Elsewhere, peak counts were six drakes at East Chevington on 18th (TRD/JD) and two ducks on 10th (IFo), five (three drakes) at Monk's House Pool on 15th (GB), three at Swallow Pond on 19th (JPD), three at West Allotment Pond on 18th (CGK), and one to two at Capheaton Lake, Grindon Lough, Plenmeller and Woodhorn Flashes.

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

20 were at Holywell Pond on 3rd (JPD), 19 (14 drakes) at Killingworth Lake on 29th (GB), 19 at Swallow Pond on 20th (JPD), 11 (seven drakes) at Big Waters on 3rd (GB), four at Arcot Pond (GMi/STH/PJA), two at Duke's Pond, and singles at Bothal and Holywell Ponds, Broomlee Lough and Druridge Pools.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Killingworth Lake attracted a peak of 81 on 8th (CGK), 54 were at Druridge Pools on 25th (IDR), 52 at Ladyburn Lake on 10th (IFo/STH), 26-28 at Hedgeley GP, Newcastle Leazes Park and West Allotment Pond, 20-22 at Capheaton Lake, Holy Island Lough, Swallow Pond and Woodhorn Flashes, and ten to 17 at Bolam Lake CP, Castle Island, Cresswell and Holywell Ponds, the Drift Inn pools (Seaton Burn), Haughton Strother GP, Newcastle Exhibition Park. One to nine were at eight further sites including a drake at Tweedmouth Dock on 18th (MHu).

Scaup *Aythya marila*

A drake at Bothal Pond on 7th (TB) was the sole report.

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

About 200 were off Stag Rocks on 7th (IDR), 130 at Hadston Carrs on 14th (JPD), 35 at Blyth South Harbour on 2nd (DMT), 20-29 at Berwick North Shore and Cheswick, 13-19 at Newbiggin and the Tyne Estuary to North Shields Fish Quay, and one off Druridge Links.

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

The majority of reports came from Stag Rocks, where five were noted on 1st (MJC), eight on 7th (IDR), and two to four between 14th-17th (JPD/ADM/LJM *et al.*). A drake was at Holy Island harbour on 10th (IK).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

21 flew N at Newbiggin on 25th (AT). About 300 were off Stag Rocks on 17th (ADM) and 150-200 between 14th-16th (TRD/JD *et al.*), 166 at Cocklawburn on 19th (MHu), 110 at Cheswick Black Rocks on 25th (MHu), and eight off Druridge Links.

*** Black Scoter** *Melanitta americana*

A drake found at Stag Rocks on 14th (GBr) was reported regularly until 25th. It was noted displaying to a female Common Scoter on 15th. If accepted this will be the first confirmed record of the species (recently elevated to full status) in the county.

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

One was at Stag Rocks on 17th (ADM).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

22 were at West Ord on 3rd (MHu), 14 at Whittle Dene reservoirs on 16th (SR), 12 at Cresswell Pond on 3rd and 9th (STH/SL), and three to four at Big Waters, Bolam Lake and the Tweed Estuary. One to two were also at Alnmouth, Arcot Pond, Bakethin Reservoir, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Farnley, Kitty Brewster (Blyth Estuary) and Ladyburn Lake. Four were at the breeding site used in 2010 on 16th.

Smew *Mergellus albellus*

A 'redhead' was regularly reported from Whittle Dene Reservoirs between 1st-19th (SR *et al.*).

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Five flew N at Druridge Links on 8th and one on 2nd (IDR),

A group of 18 were fishing off Budle Point on 18th (IK), eight were at Spittal Bay on 1st (MHu), eight off Druridge Links on 17th (IDR), seven at East Chevington on 10th (IFo/STH), six at Cresswell Pond on 10th (IF) and four to five there on 2nd and 9th and one to two on 17th-18th, five at Cheswick on 4th (MHu), and three at Foxton Bends, Holy Island and Ross Back Sands. One to two were also at Castle Island, East Chevington north pool, Holy Island, Kitty Brewster (Blyth Estuary), Ladyburn Lake and Stag Rocks. Display between three drakes and one duck was noted at Cresswell Pond on 9th (AJN). More unusual was a drake at Haughton Strother GP on 25th and 27th (MR).

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

Peak concentrations were 94 on the Rive Tweed at New Water Haugh on 17th (MHu), 85 at Heugh Shiel on 13th (TBr), 34 at Warkworth on 21st (JMA), 28 at West Ord on 29th (MHu), 20 at Wylam on 1st (MH), ten at Castle Island, and five to seven at Farnley, Holy Island harbour and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Three to four were also at Doddington, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Harthope Valley, Kielder village and Warton, and one to two at 20 further widespread localities. Display was noted at North Wood (Haltwhistle) and Wylam (MH/BNR).

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

At least 40 were in the Harthope Valley on 29th (DM/STH/PJA), where 20-22 were seen on 1st/9th (MT/NT) and up to eight on two further dates. On 9th in the Whitfield Moor area 26 were at Lord's Rigg, 19 at Dykerow Fell and 12 at Agarhill Fell respectively (BNR). 25 were at Coalcleugh on 2nd (BNR). One to four were noted at Alnwick Moor, Simonside and Whitefield Hill.

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

On 22nd seven birds, including two lekking males, were in Allendale (MSK/NEWT). Three males were at Dryburn Moor and a pair at Carrshield on 5th (EC). Single males were seen at Coalcleugh, Rowley Burn and Sipton Burn.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

The largest count was 20 during a two hour TTV at Woodside on 10th (MJCo). One to three were noted at Allendale Town, Bywell Bridge, Carey Burn, Cockle Park Farm, Crow Hall Farm (Holywell Dene), Hemscotthill Links (Cresswell), Lesbury, Old Hartley and Skirl Naked (Harthope Valley).

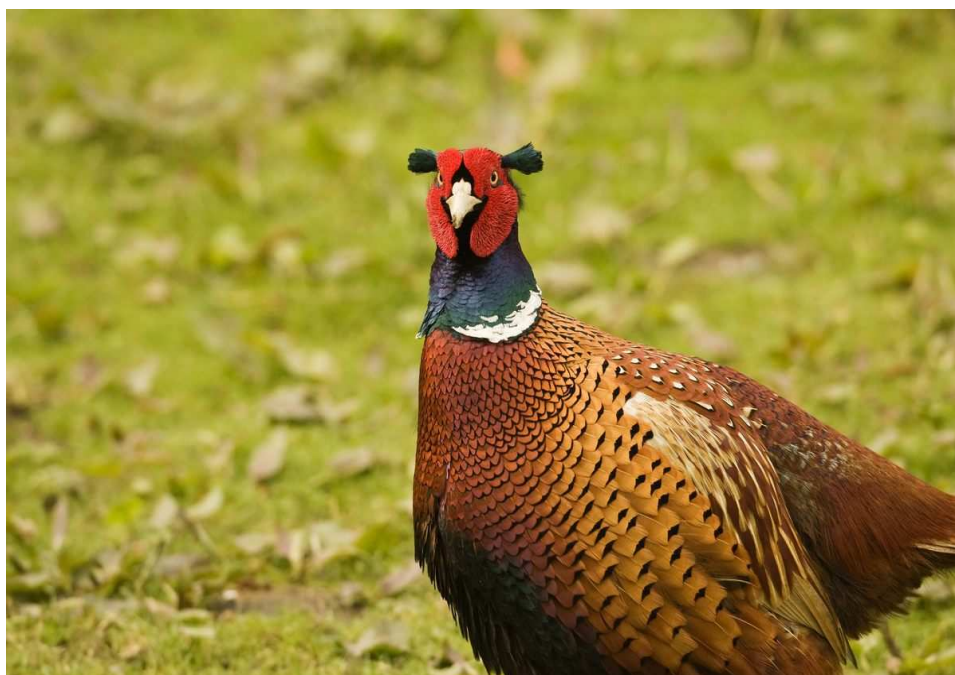
Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Five pairs were in the Druridge Pools/Links area on 3rd (IDR). Three pairs were at Old Hartley on 26th (MNC), two pairs at Woodhorn Flashes on 9th/17th (STH/AT) and in the Blanchland-Baybridge area on 25th (RMH) and at least four were at West Hartford on 18th (PJA). Two, mainly pairs, were noted at Arcot Pond, Bellasis Bridge, Bell's Farm Pond (Cresswell), Brierdene Farm (Whitley Bay), Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Edlingham, Fenham-le-Moor, Harthope Valley, Hemscott Hill (Cresswell), Horton Churchyard (Blyth), Linden Hall, Middle Ord, Newbiggin GC, Newton Links, Prestwick Carr, Slaley Hall, Swallow Pond and West Ord. Singles were seen at Backworth, Holywell Dene and St Mary's.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

On 29th at least 50 were in the Harthope Valley (DM/STH/PJA) and nearby on 26th during a two-hour TTV to Happy Valley (Wooler) 36 were noted (MJC). In the south-west 26 were at Lord's Rigg (Whitfield Moor) on 9th, 14 at Staward on 24th and 13 at Dykerow Fell (Whitfield Moor) on 9th (BNR). The peak count in the Druridge Pool/Links area was ten on 8th/16th (IDR). One to eight were noted at Alwinton, Cockle Park Farm, Cresswell Pond, Holy Island, an Old Hartley garden, a Walbottle garden, Woodside and Wooler.

A striking cock pheasant
Big Waters
Colin Bradshaw

**Red-throated Diver** *Gavia stellata*

Three flew N at Stag Rocks on 15th (AA). A large gathering of 43 was offshore at Druridge Pools on 8th with one to 19 seen here on six further dates. Offshore counts of one to three came from Cheswick, Cresswell, Spittal Bay (Berwick) and Stag Rocks.

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

One flew S at Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) on 25th (IK).

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

Eight flew N at Newbiggin in 50 minutes on 26th (STH), two flew N at Druridge Pools on 8th (IDR) and one flew N at East Chevington South Pool on 25th (MH). Birds were noted at several breeding colonies with 54 nesting pairs at Marshall Meadows (Berwick) on 27th being the highest count (MHu). At Hartley Cliffs 21 were present on 19th (MT/NT), 20 were at Holy Island on 29th (MJC/ADM), 12 at Tynemouth Cliffs on 24th (DMT) and eight at Union Bridge (Berwick) on 18th (MHu). One to three were noted offshore at Cresswell, Druridge Pools and Stag Rocks. An unusual record was of one circling Swallow Pond before flying off N on 29th (JPD).

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

Ten flew N at Newbiggin between 17:20-18:10 on 26th (STH). A single was noted at sea two miles east of Coquet Island on 18th (MSK/NECP).

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

On 26th at Newbiggin 23 flew N between 17:20-18:10 (STH). On 1st 14 fed close inshore at Spittal Bay, Berwick (MHu). At Druridge Links 12+ were offshore on 2nd and at least six on 8th (IDR). A single was off Cresswell on 12th.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

The peak roost counts were 38 at Blyth South Harbour on 9th and 13 at North Shields Fish Quay on 10th (DMT). Elsewhere eight were seen at Meadow Haven (Berwick), seven at Cresswell Pond and six at Druridge Pools/Links. One to two were noted at Derwent Reservoir, East Chevington North Pool, Farnley, Hauxley and West Allotment Pond.

"Continental" Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis*

Two were photographed at Big Waters on 6th and one on 7th, both published on *BirdGuides* (TC per IF) and a single was at Cresswell Pond on 1st (MSH/TRD/JD).

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

The peak count at Blyth Harbour was 42 including 35 juveniles on 9th (DMT). Ten were at Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 24th (MHu), six were offshore at Stag Rocks on 7th and one flew N at Druridge Links on 8th.

***Night-heron**

One was found on the River Aln at Lesbury on 25th (H Barker) where it remained until dusk on 27th (TRD/JD/PJA).

Three views of the Lesbury Night-heron

27th April

Tim Dean



Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

One visited Holywell Pond on 11th (AA/SL/MT/NT).

***Great White Egret** *Ardea alba*

One was found at East Chevington on 29th and remained until the following day (SL/TB).

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

The peak counts were 12+ at Druridge Pools on 25th (JF/IDR/PHa) and seven at Alnmouth on 4th (MJC). One to four were noted at Arcot Pond, Chollerford, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Elswick Wharf, Farnley, Grindon Lough, Guyzance, Haltwhistle North Wood, Holywell, Holywell Dene, Lesbury, Walkerville (Newcastle), Wark Forest and Woodside. Breeding activity noted during the month is tabulated below.

Site	Activity	Observer/Date
Alnmouth	3 nests being built	MJC on 4th
Arcot Pond	1 carrying nesting material	LJM on 10th
Druridge Links & Pools	8 nests (3 failed) 5 with juveniles, 1 juvenile ringed	JF/IDR/PHa on 25th
Hauxley	8 nests with minimum of 18 young	IF on 22nd
Riding Mill	ca.9 nests in Scots Pine 2 young bill-snapping	BNR on 21st
Tweed Estuary	6 nests, 2 with young	MHu on 18th

***White Stork** *Ciconia ciconia*

On the afternoon of 25th one was tracked flying in from NW at Cresswell and then going N over Bell's Farm before flying over the Budge fields at Druridge Pools and then disappearing NW towards Red Row (GMI/IDR).

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Surprisingly the highest count was only three at Druridge Pools on 2nd (IDR), Holywell Pond on 29th (GB) and Hauxley NR on 30th (PCF). Counts of two, mainly pairs, were noted at Arcot Pond, Capheaton Lake, Drift Inn pools (Seaton Burn), Ellington Pond, Farnley, Gosforth Park, Holy Island Lough, Shield-on-the-Wall, West Allotment Pond, Woodbridge Lake and Woodhorn Flashes. Trilling was heard at many of these sites. Singles were noted at Belsay Hall, Bothal Pond, East Chevington North Pool, Hagg Bank (Wylam) and Linton Ponds.



Little Grebe at Gosforth NR
Colin Bradshaw

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

The peak count at Whittle Dene Reservoirs was six on 4th/6th/13th/21st (SR). Two pairs were nesting at Killingworth Lake on 23rd (LJM), where one pair was seen with three small chicks on 29th (GB). Three were at Derwent Reservoir on 25th (IFo), single pairs at Airey Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield) on 1st (IFo), Branton GP on 16th (TRD/JD), Colt Crag Reservoir on 8th (AT/ADMc) and East Chevington North Pool on 15th/30th (LJM/PJA/TB). Singles were noted at Big Waters and Heugh Shiel.

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

The peak count was 17, with many coming into summer plumage, at Stag Rocks on 1st (MJC). Two were in Spittal Bay on 1st (MHu), off Stag Rocks on 7th, offshore at Druridge Links on 8th (IDR) with singles seen off Cocklawburn on 22nd and North Shore and Snipe Point (Holy Island) on 29th.

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

Birds were seen throughout the month at a regular breeding site with a peak count of nine on 27th. A single was at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 6th (SR).

Honey-buzzard *Pernis apivorus*

A single bird flew N at Beal Farm on 24th (IK).

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Two birds were seen near Prudhoe on 11th, near Stocksfield on 17th (BNR) and at Wylam on 30th (BMo). Single birds were also noted at Blaney Row, Haughton Strother (Humshaugh), North Acomb, the Simonside Hills and at Walbottle.

*** White-tailed Eagle** *Haliaeetus albicilla*

An immature was seen at East Chevington flying off N (ASJ), and then it was seen over the A1 near Fenrother (PJA) then S of Morpeth over the A1 (NFO).

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Two females were seen at one site on 3rd (ADMc), with a pair seen there throughout the month. Single birds were at Cresswell Pond on 3rd (ASH), Druridge Pools on 13th (MSH), Gosforth Park NR on 3rd (per SRB), and Hazelrigg on 23rd (MN), near Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 16th (NFO) and at Prestwick Carr on 26th (per PCF).

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

A female was seen at an inland location on 5th (SL) and another at High Newton on 8th (MSK/NEWT).

Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygargus*

A female migrated N at East Chevington at 09:20h on 25th (MH).

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

Single birds were seen near Prudhoe on 11th (BNR), in the Harthope Valley on 16th (MSK/NEWT), near Riding Mill on 23rd (BNR) and at Staward on 24th (BNR).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Three birds were in the Harthope Valley on 29th (DM/STH/PJA). Pairs were at Swallow Pond and at Wallsend all month (JPDF), and other pairs were noted at Druridge Links (IDR), Gosforth Park NR (MSH), Marden Quarry (MN), Newbiggin (GB), North Shields (MN) and at West Hartford (LJM). Single birds were noted at 28 sites during the month.

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

14 were seen in the Harthope Valley on 16th (MSK/NEWT), 13 were in the Happy Valley (Wooler) tetrad on 26th (MJC) during a two-hour TTV. 11 birds were in the air together at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 10th (ASJ), eight birds were in the Harthope Valley on 29th (DM/STH/PJA). Six birds were noted soaring over Morpeth town centre on 14th (ADMc), and six birds were also seen at Blagdon on 16th (GB) and at Gosforth Park NR (per SRB). 77 records of one to five birds were received this month.

Common Buzzard at Lesbury by Tim Dean on 27th April

Osprey *Pandion haliaetuss*

The pair were back at the breeding site at Kielder on 8th (ADMc/AT) and singles seen at Prestwick Carr on 1st (per PCF), Ridsdale on 2nd (JMA), Tynemouth on 5th (DRW), Sharperton on 7th (ASJ), Mitford on 8th (ADMc/MNC), Earsdon on 12th (MNC), East Ord and at West Ord on 24th (MHu), Wallsend on 25th (JPD) and at Ross on 28th (LM).



Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Pairs were noted from the following sites: Harthope Valley, Haughton Strother (Humshaugh), Holy Island, West Hartford and Woodside, with singles birds at 18 sites

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Two birds were near Cheswick on 4th (MHu) and singles were on or near the coast at the Farne Islands on 15th & 16th (GB/AT) and at Scremerston on 17th (BWG). Single birds were on territory at three inland locations.

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

A male was observed mobbing another raptor near Farnley on 21st (BNR).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Two birds were at Whitefield Hill on 8th (TRD/JD), single birds were at the Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond, The Farne Islands and Holy Island on various dates (CGK *et al.*) with other singles at two inland localities.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

At Gosforth Park NR on 1st two birds were present (IF), single birds were seen or heard at Alnmouth (TRD), Backworth (CGK), Druridge Pools (IDR), and Holywell Pond (GB) and at Swallow Pond (JPD).

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

14 birds at Druridge Pools on 2nd was the highest count this month (IDR), five were at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 1st (DM), and four were at Farnley (Corbridge) on 21st (BNR). One to two birds were at 14 further locations.

Coot *Fulica atra*

Killingworth Lake had 25 birds including 5 young on 29th (GB), Big waters peaked at 23 birds on 3rd (IF), 15 birds were at Druridge Pools on 2nd & 16th (IDR), 12 birds were at Arcot Pond on 14th (DM) and at Holywell Pond on 15th (GB). One to ten birds were at 15 other locations.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Locations with pairs in breeding habitat included Alwinton, Farnham Moor, Greenlee Lough, Grindon Lough, Harthope Valley, Hedgeley GP, Redmire, Shilford, Shillmoor, Wooler and a nest was found in the Thropton area. Display was noted at Chapel House (Newcastle), Druridge Links & Pools, Hexham and Whitfield Hall. The highest coastal gatherings of mainly non-breeders were of 90 at Hauxley NR on 19th (HRS), 50 at Cresswell Pond on 16th (MN), 33 at Berwick on 21st, 33 in Budle Bay on 24th, yet another 33 at North Blyth on 30th (was there a roving flock of 33?) and 29 at Newbiggin on 7th. Smaller numbers were reported from another 17 sites, both at the coast and inland.

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

An interesting series of records at Cresswell Pond began with three on 5th/6th (AT *et al.*); one of them was colour-ringed and had been marked as a nestling on 10th June 2008 at Noirmoutier-en-L'ile, France (per MSH). The number increased to eight from 7th to 9th, up to five were present to 16th and then a pair to the end of the month (also three on 27th). The pair displayed during this period, was noted mating and fashioning a nest scrape on 27th (JPD *et al.*). History in the making?

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

Five were seen at Haughton Strother GP on 2nd and 13th (MR) with display noted, down to two there on 22nd. Two were at Airy Holm Reservoir on 26th (IFo) and two at Castle Island on 30th (GB); singles occurred at East Chevington on 3rd, Midgeholme on 21st and at Cresswell Pond on 25th. There were reports from three confidential sites: four noted at one of them on 10th and singles later at the other two.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

The maximum roosting at Blyth South Harbour was ten on 2nd (DMT). A pair was displaying at Ross Back Sands on 1st and one or two were seen at Cheswick Black Rocks, Cresswell Pond and Elswick Wharf. Three were at Weetslade Colliery CP on 30th and two at West Hartford on 29th.

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

In potential breeding areas eight were found at six sites on Whitfield Moor on 9th and two at Coalcleugh on 2nd (BNR). Around 700 'Northern' birds were at Green Pits (Allenheads) on 5th (EC) and 180 'Northern' at Longwitton on 12th (MJC). Elsewhere 300 were at Prestwick Carr on 17th (PCF), 250+ at Killingworth on 16th (BMo) and 42-90 at Big Waters, Old Hartley, Rowley Burn and St Mary's.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

The only record involved one at Spittal Bay (Berwick) on 19th (MHu).

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

At Acton Moor (Allendale) 40 pairs produced much display and several of these had young on 24th (ASJ); 31 pairs were counted on Blanchland Moor also on 24th (ASJ). Young were noted at Harthope Valley, Hauxley NR, Swallow Pond and Woodhorn Flashes, one was sitting on eggs at Druridge Links & Pools on 25th and display was witnessed at Alwinton, Druridge, Farnham Moor, Grindon Lough and Linton Ponds. One vigorously chased a Fulmar which overflew its nesting field on Holy Island on 22nd (IK).

Knot *Calidris canutus*

The only report received was of 90 at Beacon Point, Newbiggin on 7th (STH).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

South Beach (Berwick) held 100 on 9th (DMT), 60 were at Berwick North Shore on 21st (MHu), 24 at Cheswick on 6th, 14 at Druridge on 11th and four at Whitley Bay on 22nd.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

The peak at Stag Rocks was 38 on 15th (AA) with 20 at Cullercoats Bay the same day (MN). The only others reported were 12 at Tynemouth on 9th, four at Newbiggin on 7th and one at Cheswick on 25th.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

At Grindon Lough two were present on 15th increasing to eight on 30th when display was noted (PRM). Singles were at Cresswell Pond on 18th and Haughton Strother GP on 18th and 22nd.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

Two were at Druridge Pools from 25th to 27th (IDR *et al.*) and one at East Chevington on 27th and 30th (JPD/TB).

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Singing and/or display was noted at Allenheads, Breamish Valley, Carrshield, Dryburn Moor, at two sites in the Harthope Valley, Harwood Forest, two sites in Kielder, Prestwick Carr and at three sites on Whitfield Moor. Big Waters had 14 on 2nd (GB), eight were at Backworth on 3rd and one to three at a further 13 localities: Arcot Lane, Arcot Pond, Bell's Farm pond (Cresswell), East Chevington, Greenhead, Grindon Lough, Hauxley NR, Holy Island, Newbiggin, Seaton Burn, Swallow Pond, West Hartford, Woodhorn Flashes. Snipe is a **target species** for 2011. Please report all records.

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Just three reports of singles: at Ellington on 5th, Sinderhope on 13th and roding at Slaley Hall on 22nd.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Four were at the Rocket Field pools, Holy Island from 6th to 8th with two remaining until mid-month (IK *et al.*). Three were at Cresswell Pond on 16th (MN/MSH) then two next day, two at Hauxley NR on 19th (HRS) and one at Grindon Lough on 17th (MRS).

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Six were at Kitty Brewster (R Blyth) on 30th (GB), one flew N at Druridge Links & Pools on 8th and one was at St Mary's on 2nd.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

The first one flew N at Holy Island on 10th (MJC) with the next one at East Chevington on 18th and one at Holy Island on 19th. Northerly passage was slight: two at Tynemouth on 29th and singles at Newbiggin on 21st, Holy Island on 23rd and Woodhorn Flashes on 30th. East Chevington held the largest flocks with 17 on 28th (MSK/NEWT) rising to at least 35 on 29th (JSB/EC); four were in a roadside field near Beacon Hill on 29th.

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

A total of 16 pairs was noted at Acton Moor (Allendale) on 24th (ASJ) and 45 individuals in two areas of Whitfield Moor on 9th (BNR); display was noted at Wall Fell on 13th and at Grindon Lough on 15th. Larger concentrations included 300 in fields at high tide on Holy Island on 9th (IK), 55 at Cresswell Pond on 9th (SL) and also 55 at Hauxley NR on 14th (JPD); 24 were at Kitty Brewster on 30th and up to 21 were at Woodhorn Flashes. Small numbers appeared at another ten places.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

One visited Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 2nd (SR) and one was again (the early March individual?) at Bakethin, Kielder on 8th (ADMc). The main arrival commenced from 15th and by the last week it was well distributed in breeding areas, notably 19 in Upper Coquetdale and 12 in the Hepple area on 25th (ASJ). From 16th one to three were reported at Allendale, Big Waters, Breamish Valley, Castle Island, Catcleugh Reservoir, Cocklawburn, Corbridge, Derwent Reservoir, East Chevington, Grindon Lough, Harthope Valley, Haughton Strother GP, Ingram Valley, Lesbury, Newbiggin, Warden, Wark, Warkworth, Whittle Dene Reservoirs, Wooler and Wylam.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

One was at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 4th with two present on 14th (SR/MR). Singles were at West Hartford on 9th, 24th and 25th, on R Blyth at Whinney Hill on 14th, Wooler on 16th and Woodhorn Flashes on 30th.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

One was at Long Nanny on 13th/14th (CB), mobbing a Peregrine on the former date.

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Singles appeared at Holy Island on 1st, Budle Bay on 15th, Wark (North Tyne) on 18th, Long Nanny on 22nd, East Chevington on 27th and 30th and River Blyth on 30th.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

One visited Druridge Pools on 24th (JR), quite early by normal standards.

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

In the latter half of the month display was noted at Grindon Lough, Shield on the Wall and Midgeholme. The larger concentrations at the coast were 210 at St Mary's on 8th (ASJ), 158 in the Tweed Estuary on 18th (MHu), 70 at Cresswell Pond on 16th and 18-36 in Budle Bay, at Elswick Wharf, Hauxley NR, Kitty Brewster and Newbiggin. Small numbers were noted at another eight places.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

At Berwick North Shore 52 were counted on the WeBS on 21st (MHu), 22-24 were at Blyth South Harbour for much of the month (DMT), 20 at Cullercoats Bay on 15th (MN) and ten at Newbiggin on 21st. Eight or fewer were noted at Hauxley NR, North Shields Fish Quay, R Blyth and Cheswick.

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

A dark phase was at sea two miles east of Cullercoats on 18th (MSK/NECP) during a NECP transecting survey.

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

A marked northerly passage was noted towards the end of the month with 177 past Newbiggin on 26th (STH) and 50 N at Emmanuel Head on Holy Island on 25th (IK). The only other counts of note were 30 offshore at Druridge on 8th (IDR) and 20 at the Tyne Estuary up to North Shields Fish Quay also on 8th (DMT). Twelve first-summers were also noted at the Tyne Estuary on 29th (CGK). Unusually six birds were heading inland at Scotswood on 20th, away from the main colony in the town centre but obviously sense prevailed and they turned back at the bridge (MH)! The only other sightings reported were three at Spittal Bay on 1st (MHu) and an interesting inland record of a solitary first-winter at the Kielder Dam with Common Gulls on 2nd (PRM).

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

The peak count was of 570 at Druridge on 2nd mostly on the coastal fields (IDR). The breeding colony at Plenmeller was also in full swing with at least 500 present on 9th (MH). Smaller counts were noted at East Chevington with at least 100 on 29th (SL) and 99 at Hauxley on 19th (HRS). Otherwise up to 28 found at a variety of sites.

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

Noticeably lacking in spring sightings this year with the only bird noted this month being a splendid adult in full plumage at Cresswell Pond on 28th (PT/LMo/IW) which stayed for only ten minutes.

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

The wintering birds departed early with the only sightings being in the first week with two adults, three second-summers and three first-winters only present at Newbiggin up to 3rd (STH/ADMc). The only other sighting was a first-winter at Cresswell Pond on 1st (MSH/ADMc).

Common Gull *Larus canus*

With birds settling early to breed the only count of note was of at least 410 at Kielder Water on 2nd (PRM). Smaller counts of around 100 at Heddon on the Wall on 11th (JMA) and 77 at Farnham Moor on 6th (JR) were the only other flocks noted. Otherwise up to 25 at several sites.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

A summering flock of 110 was seen bathing in Kimmer Lough on 19th (TRD/JD). Budle Bay peaked with 67 adults on 23rd (CGK/AT). Swallow Pond always proves to be a popular gathering site with a peak of 34 there on 26th (JPD). Also the breeding pairs in Newcastle were evident with 34 noted at Scotswood on 20th with much display around the UAE & the bridge (MH). Many smaller groups of up to 22 were noted at a wide variety of sites.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

Still large numbers to be seen with around 1,000 at the Tyne Estuary up to North Shields Fish Quay on 17th (DMT). There were also 161 on the sea at Tynemouth on 24th and 87 at Blyth South Harbour on 9th (DMT). Numbers were also high in the north of the county with 235 on the Tweed Estuary on 18th (MHu). 76 breeding pairs were present at Marshall Meadows on 27th, a high number for the area. Otherwise up to 21 noted at a variety of sites.

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoideus*

One on the 18th at St Mary's Island was thought possibly to be a Kumlien's Gull (Gmi).

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

One distantly on rocks offshore from Cresswell Ices on 12th (TRD/JD/ADMc) was thought to be probably a second-summer as the black bill tip had largely vanished. Together with the completely washed out white plumage this ageing seemed to be the only possibility. At first even the possibility of a leucistic Herring Gull came to mind but prolonged views at distance eventually showed the characteristic heavy shape of a Glaucous.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

The regularly watched sites showed wintering numbers to be still present with 55 at Blyth South Harbour on 24th and 20 at the Tyne Estuary up to North Shields Fish Quay on 17th (DMT). Other notable counts were 52 at Budle Bay on 23rd (CGK) which were mainly first-summer birds and 20 on the Tweed Estuary on 18th (MHu). Otherwise up to seven at a variety of sites.

Little Tern *Sternula albifrons*

A late arrival as always with the first singles at St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) on 24th (ADM) and another at Seahouses on 25th (RA).

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

The only significant passage reported was of 28 N in 50 minutes on 26th (STH). Large gatherings were already present early in the month with peaks of at least 70 on Coquet Island on 12th, 40 at Tynemouth on 9th (CB), 38 at East Chevington on 14th (ASJ) and 38 at Budle Point on 23rd (CGK). Well reported with up to 12 noted elsewhere at a variety of coastal sites.

Arctic Tern / Common Tern *Sterna paraisaea* / *Sterna hirundo*

A flock of nine heading E over Gilsland on 30th were thought to be probably Arctic Terns though views were distant (SW): an interesting sign that flocks pass through inland. There were also three indeterminate birds at the Tyne Estuary up to North Shields Fish Quay on 28th (DMT).

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

There were no large flocks with sightings at Arcot Pond, Big Waters, East Chevington, Gosforth Park, Holy Island Harbour, Inner Farne, Killingworth Lake, North Shields, Swallow Pond and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Most sites had only one or two present but six were displaying at North Shields on 27th (CB) and at Big Waters on 28th (GB). The earliest arrival was at Inner Farne on 8th (MSK/NEWT) with all other sites seeing arrivals from the 17th onwards.

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

The only definite sighting was of one at sea 1.5 miles E of St Mary's island which was perched on flotsam and seen on a NECP coastal survey (MSK/NECP).

Guillemot *Uria aalge*

Coastal passage N involved 20 at Cresswell on 18th (TRD/JD) plus eight at Druridge on 2nd (IDR) and six there on 18th (TRD/JD). The only other report was of two at Spittal Bay on 19th (MHu).

Razorbill *Alca Torda*

Few noted with one N at Druridge on 2nd and two offshore there on 8th (IDR). The only other report was of one at Cocklawburn on 19th (MHu).

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

Again few noted with six N at Druridge on 18th (TRD/JD) plus two off Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 16th and one N at Druridge on 17th (IDR).

Rock Dove / Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

The maximum monthly counts were 113 at Blyth South Harbour on 24th and 59 at North Shields Fish Quay on 15th (DMT). 58 were at Newburn West on 18th (BNR) and 23 atop Hexham Abbey roof on 29th (PCF) with four at Druridge Links and Pools on 13th (IDR).

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

As last month well reported but in low numbers the peak counts being six at Druridge Links and Pools on the 16th (IDR), five at Gosforth Park NR on 2nd (*per* SRB) and four at Rothbury on 12th (TRD/JD) and Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 7th (MN). Three were at Newburn West on 18th (BNR), Shoe Tree (Jesmond Dene) on 20th (MJCo) and Shawdon Hall on 27th. Two birds were at Arcot Pond, Hulne Park (Alnwick), Catcleugh Reservoir, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Links and Pools, Exhibition Park, Holywell Dene, Lesbury Viaduct, Rothley, West Hartford and Eslington Park (Whittingham) with single birds at many of the preceding and a further seven locations.



Stock Dove in a Rothbury garden
4th April by Tim Dean

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

The peak count was 600 including a flock of 500 flushed by a raptor at Chillingham Park on 14th (BNR). Other returns were lower as birds paired with 57 found in the Happy Valley tetrad (Wooler) on 26th (MJC), 24 nest building in Wooler on 26th along with nest counts of 19 at Alwinton on 30th, 17 at Free Wood (Bedlington) on 29th and 14 at Cockle Park Farm on 10th (JR). Nine were at Stannington all month (RWM/MIM) with numbers at Druridge Links and Pools varying from five to 14 during the month where three nests with eggs found (IDR/JF). Breeding was also confirmed at Garden Village (Gosforth) (MJC) with one to 13 birds found at four further locations.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

BBS work found seven birds at Cockle Park Farm on 10th (JR) where display was noted. Two pairs of birds had three juveniles at Dinnington by 30th (PCF) whilst five were found on a TTV at Woodside on 10th (MJCo) and four at Wooler on 16th (JR). Pairs were also reported from High Chibburn Farm (Druridge), Housesteads and Netherton Park (Stannington) with a single bird at Heaton Park.

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

Two were at Holystone on 25th (ASJ), Harthope on 29th (DM/STH/PJA) and Beacon Hill on 30th (ADMc). Singles were seen or heard, the earliest being at Cartington on 12th and 19th (HL/JMA), Tyne Green (Hexham) and Allen Banks on 20th (BNR/RWM/MIM), Harthope on 21st (TRD/JD), two locations at Longhorsley on 22nd (ASJ/RWM/MIM), Harwood Forest on 23rd (GB), West Wood (Harbottle) on 27th (JMA) and South Snods (Allensford) on 29th (Tbr).



A Cuckoo in flight
Beacon Hill
22nd April
by Alan Gilbertson

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Pairs were reported from Spindlestone and Lucker (per CGK) with two birds hunting at Chevington South Pool area on 3rd (ADMc). Single birds were seen at Cresswell Pond on 5th (TB), The Snook (Holy Island) on 6th (MJC), Holywell Dene on 9th (RJP) and A1 near Eshott on 17th (MSK) with one road casualty at The Eals (North Tyne) on 8th (IRD).

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

All reports of single birds at Swallow Pond and Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on several dates throughout the month (JPD/TB), Backworth on 11th (GMi), Warton on 25th (JD), Fulbeck (Morpeth) and Rising Sun CP on 27th (ADMc/BMo).

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Three or more were calling at Scotland Gate throughout the month (SLB/MSK) and at Spindleston a pair was reported with young on 24th (*per* CGK). Two birds were at Big Waters and Northumberland Park on 2nd (GB/MNC), Ordley on 7th (BNR), Valley Park (Cramlington) on 8th (DM) and Ellington on 30th (TB). Single birds were seen or heard at Allen Banks, Holburn Woods near Belford, Ellington, Grindon Lough, Haughton Strother, Tyne Green and Loughbrow (Hexham), Holywell Dene, Lesbury, Netheron Park (Stannington), Prestwick Carr, Shawdon Hall, Shilford and Walbottle Hall. Two road casualties both on the A69 at Corbridge and Hexham.

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

A single report in the south of the county on 30th (STH).

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Two were at The Snook (Holy Island) on 1st (MJC) and Plenkeller on 9th (MH) with single birds seen nearby on Whitfield and Stublick Moor on three dates, Straight Lonnen (Holy Island) on 23rd and Druridge Links and Pools on 24th.

Swift *Apus apus*

There was an early sighting at Shilford of a single bird N at 16.50h on 28th (BNR).

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

There were only five reports of single birds at Farnley (Corbridge) on 5th (RB/MB), Branton GP on 16th (TRD/JD), Jesmond Dene on 17th (BMb), Warden on 27th (BNR) and Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth) on 30th (TB).

Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*

An excellent find was on waste ground at West Hartford on 24th (PJA/LJM).

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Four reports of two calling birds at Fontburn Reservoir on 7th (TRD/JD), Chillingham Park on 14th (BNR), Bolam Village on 21st (BMi) and Pundershaw (Wark Forest) on 24th (MJC). There were 32 reports of single birds, generally yaffling, at 23 widespread localities.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

The peak count was six at Letah Wood (Hexham) on 9th (AJH) with two birds at Bolam Lake CP and Chillingham Park on 14th (PRM/BNR), Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 19th (MN), Farnley (Corbridge) on 21st, Riding Mill on 23rd, Warden on 27th (BNR) and Hartford Woods on 22nd (LJM). There were 30 reports of single birds from 25 widespread localities.

Great Grey Shrike *Lamius excubitor*

A single migrant found at South Moor Farm (Shilbottle) on the 13th (TRD/JD).

Magpie *Pica pica*

The gathering continued at Swallow Pond recording a peak count of 91 on the 1st (JPD) with seven the highest count for the month from a Walbottle garden on 24th (KR/LR). Six were at The Snook (Holy Island) on 1st (MJC) and at Druridge Links and Pools on 13th and 15th (IDR) with two to four birds there on eight other dates during the month. Two birds were at Jesmond Dene (Newcastle) on 11th and a single at Woodside on 10th (MJCo).

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Four were at Weldon Bridge on 7th (MJC), Letah Wood (Hexham) on 9th (AJH) and Dipton Mill area on 25th (BNR). Two birds were at Swallow Pond all month (JPD) and at Linton Ponds on 1st (TRD/JD), Harwood Forest on 9th (MSH), Cockle Park Farm on 10th (JR), Tranwell Woods on 20th (PCF) and Allen Banks on 27th (RB/MB). Single birds were reported from Branton GP, Chillingham Park, Gosforth Park, Linton Ponds, The Trench (Netherwitton), Wark and Woodside.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

The peak count was 120 at Swallow Pond on the 24th with 60 there on the 4th (JPD). 63 were found over one mile at Tyne Riverside (Newburn) on 22nd (KR/LR), 50 at Dukeshagg Wood (Prudhoe) on 11th, 41 at Warden on 27th (BNR), 39 at Cockle Park Farm on 10th, 26 at Wooler on 16th, and there were 23 occupied nests at Alwinton on 23rd (JR). One to 19 were at a further ten widespread locations.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

The peak count was 62 at Warden on 27th (BNR) with 60 at Wooler on 16th, 28 at Cockle Park Farm and 16 at Simonburn on 9th (JR). The latter location had 25 AONs whilst 29 were found at Greenhaugh on 30th, 16 in a Walbottle garden on 5th (KR/LR) and 38 at Halton Shields on 25th (DM).

Corvus sp.

During a visit to Harthope Valley on the 24th three observers expressed concern that not a single corvid was noted throughout valley during a six hour visit, very strange and worrying (DM/STH/PJA).

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

The Tyne Estuary up to the Fish Quay had the largest count of 56 on the 17th (DMT) with numbers at Swallow Pond peaking at 32 on 26th and 26 at Druridge Pools on 8th (JPD) where numbers fluctuated during the month. One to 15 were found at a further 11 widespread localities.

Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix*

One flew S at Choppington Woods on 17th (SLB/MSK) and one was at Holy Island on the 24th (SR/AH).

Raven *Corvus corax*

A pair flew together over Branton Middle Steads Farm on 17th (PT) and one was calling at Ridleeshope on 9th (TRD/JD) with another at Wark (North Tyne) on 30th (MJC).

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Two-hour TTVs provided the peak counts with 23 and 16 in two tetrads at Pundershaw (Wark Forest) on 24th and 13 in the Happy Valley tetrad (Wooler) on 25th (MJC). Elsewhere two were at Chillingham Park on 14th and Riding Mill on 23rd (BNR) with pairs at Harwood Forest on 23rd (GB), Wallington Hall on 24th, Bakethin Kielder on 25th (DM) and Alwinton on 30th (JR). Single birds were at Big Waters, Bolam Lake, Dam Dyke and Valley Park (Cramlington), Guyzance, High Brunton, Jesmond Dene at three locations and Windyhaugh (Upper Coquetdale).

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

The peak counts were 26 at Riding Mill on 23rd (BNR) with 23 found on a two-hour TTV in the Happy Valley tetrad (Wooler) on 26th (MJC) and 20 at Holywell Dene on 4th (MT/NT). Four to eleven were found at Bedlington Free Wood, Cockle Park Farm, Farnley (Corbridge), Druridge Links and Pools, Ellington Pond, Woodside and Wooler. One to three were found at a further six locations.

Great Tit *Parus major*

Seventeen were at Holywell Pond on 4th (MT/NT), nine at Jesmond Dene on 3rd (MJCo) and three at Bedlington Free Wood and Wooler. Three were caught and ringed at Ellington Pond on 17th and 23rd (JF/IDR/TAC/NA) with one to two at five further locations.

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

A two-hour TTV found 23 in the Pundershaw tetrad (Wark) on 24th (MJC) and 16 in the Happy Valley tetrad (Wooler) on 26th with 22 at Chillingham Park on 14th (BNR). Six were at Belsay Hall on 8th (KR/LR) with one to three birds at Cockle Park Farm, Guyzance, Holywell Dene, Jesmond Dene, Northumberland Park (North Shields), South Gosforth and Wooler.

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

Three birds were singing simultaneously within 250 yards at Sleafy Hall on the 12th (RMH) with single birds at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on the same date (MJC), Dunstan Heughs on 22nd (NFO) and Swallow Pond on 26th.

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

The peak counts were three at Linden Hall on 2nd with singles there for the rest of the month (NFO) and Borough Woods (Morpeth) on 5th where courtship feeding was observed on 28th (ADMc). Two were at Happy Valley on 26th and Mitford on 4th and 30th with singles at two further locations in Morpeth, Acomb, Hartburn, Letah Wood (Hexham), Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) and Weldon Bridge.



Marsh Tit in a Tranwell garden by Peter Tapsell

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

The Shitlington Common tetrad held 32 during a 2-hour TTV on 24th (MJC) with 30 singing on the Otterburn Ranges on 25th (ASJ), 20 at Doddington Bridge on 6th (JMA), Longhirst Flash on 17th, Harthope Valley on 29th (DM/STH/LAR/PJA) and 15 in the Baybridge tetrad (Blanchland) on the 25th (RMH). The peak for the month at Druridge Links and Pools was 12 on 3rd including eight singing males (IDR) with 10 on the River Coquet between Rothbury and Thropton on 3rd (JMA) and eight at Arcot Pond on 7th (DM). One to five birds were found at a further eight widespread localities.

Skylark
18th April by Tim Dean
East Chevington

**Shore Lark** *Eremophila alpestris*

A well watched bird found by W Banks was at Druridge from 5th - 7th (IDR/TB/TRD/JD).

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

Over 90 reports with the peak count being at West Ord on 13th where over 1,000 birds were feeding over the Tweed at 18:30 having increased from 400 earlier in the day (TBr). The next six highest counts were all from Whittle Dene with 500 on 4th the largest (SR). Around 150 were feeding at East Chevington North Pool on 13th (MH/AA), 90 at Hagg Bank (Wylam) on 7th (BNR), 80 at Haughton Strother on 18th (MR) and 60 at Warden on 27th (BNR). 20-50 birds were reported from Arcot Pond, Backworth, Stag Rocks (Bamburgh), R Blyth (Blagdon), Bolam Lake, Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond, Farnley (Corbridge), Druridge Links and Pools, Beehive Flash (Earsdon), Kilham, Killingworth Lake, Haughton, Lesbury, Lynemouth Flash, Newton Links, Ogle, QEII CP, Seahouses, St Mary's Wetland, Wark, Whiteadder Water, and Wooler. One to 16 were many of these and a further 20 widespread localities.

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Again over 90 reports but relatively low numbers even late in the month the peak being around 30 passing over the Snook (Holy Island) on 17th (ADM). Twenty six were at Belsay on 27th (MRS), 24 at Tyne Riverside (Newburn) on 22nd (KR/LR), 19 on a two-hour TTV in the Happy Valley tetrad (Wooler) on 26th (MJC), 12 at Warden on 27th and at Wark on 29th (BNR/MNC). Six to ten were at Alwinton, Hotbank Farm (Crag Lough), Druridge links and Pools, North Wood (Haltwhistle), Killingworth Waggonways, Swallow Pond, Wallington Hall, Weetslade and Briardene Farm W (Whitley Bay). One to ten were at a further 43 widespread localities.

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

Twenty was the peak at Gosforth Park NR on 25th (MJC) and Swallow Pond on 26th (JPD) with 12 at Holy Island on 24th (ADM) the only other count in double figures. Four were at Backworth on 22nd (CGK), Ellington on 25th (TB) and Netherton on 26th (TRD/JD) with three at Longhorsley on 30th (MT/NT) and West Hartford on 29th (DM/STH/PJA). One to two birds were at 16 further locations.

*** Cetti's Warbler** *Cettia cetti*

A possible was heard in suitable habitat at Hadston Carrs on 7th (MIM).

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

The highest count was seven during a two-hour TTV in the Harthope Valley on 26th (MJC). Pairs were reported from a further 32 widespread localities. Breeding activity was noted at Cramlington (Southfield Green), Gosforth Park NR, Harthope Valley, Walbottle and Whitton (Rothbury).

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

Singing males were at Allen Banks on 22nd and 27th (JSB/RB/MB) and Dipton Burn on 23rd.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Well reported this month, and apparently very numerous in many locations. By far the highest total was a count of 45 singing males along a seven-mile stretch of roadside from Beacon Hill (Longhorsley)-Garleigh on 7th (ASJ). Another 14-mile stretch from High House (Morpeth)-Netherwitton, taking in Pigdon, Benridge and Mitford produced a further 29 on 4th

(ADMc), while in the Harthope Valley 26 were recorded during a two-hour TTV on 26th (MJC). Elsewhere 11-14 were reported from Arcot Pond, the Breamish Valley (Brandon-Ingram), Farnley (Corbridge), Holywell Dene, Swallow Pond, Wallington Hall, Wallsend and Wooler, and seven to nine from Bedlington (Free Wood), Chillingham Park, Ogle, Riding Mill and Woodside. One to six were reported from numerous other widespread localities.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

The first were noted at Dinnington, Marden Quarry and Swallow Pond on 3rd (PCF/CB/JPD), becoming much more numerous mid-month and again very well reported. *BTO Atlas* work accounted for some of the larger counts including a total of 171 during two, two-hour TTVs in Wark Forest on 24th (MJC). Numbers at Swallow Pond increased to 45 by 19th (JPD) and 43 were recorded during another TTV in the Happy Valley area on 26th (MJC). Elsewhere 30-34 were reported from Beacon Hill (Longhorsley), Blanchland, the Breamish Valley (Brandon-Ingram), Embley (Hexhamshire), the Harthope Valley and Prestwick Carr and 19-26 from Arcot Pond, Burntshieldhaugh (Hexhamshire), Hallington, Kielder Village-Bakethin, Ogle and Spindleston. On Holy Island passage birds were present from 17th- 24th with a peak of 20 on the latter date (ADM). Further reports were both numerous and widespread.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

23 were found in the Happy Valley tetrad (Wooler) on 26th during a two-hour TTV (MJC), up to 18 were reported from Swallow Pond by 19th (JPD) and 16 in Holywell Dene on 15th (ASJ). Ten were singing at Wooler on 16th (JR) and nine were found at Farnley (Corbridge) on 21st (BNR) and Wallington Hall on 24th (DM). Elsewhere five to six were noted at Allen Banks, Gilsland, Jesmond Dene, Linton Ponds, Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay), Milbourne, Northumberland Park (North Shields), Riding Mill, Shilford, Wallsend (over 7.5 km) and Wylam. Light coastal passage was noted on the coast from 10th-29th with one to four at Bamburgh, Druridge Links, Holy Island, Marshall Meadows, Newbiggin, Tynemouth and Warkworth Gut / dunes. One to four were reported from at least 52 other widespread localities

Male Blackcap
a Tranwell garden
Peter Tapsel



Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

The first was heard in full song at Gosforth on 11th (MRS). There were no further reports until 20th with single at Farnley Haughs (Corbridge) and Ordley. One to two were reported from a further nine localities from 22nd-28th. The highest count was four at Gilsland on 30th (SW).

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

The first was an early arrival at East Chevington on 16th (DE *et al.*). The next birds were at Royal Quays (North Shields) on 19th and Beacon Hill (Cramlington) on 22nd. The highest count was five at Swallow Pond on 26th (JPD). Up to three singing birds were at Arcot Pond by 30th (CB/OBr/MBR *et al.*). During the final week of the month two were reported from Holywell, Newbiggin and Warren Mill Caravan Park and singles from Bolton, Brierdene Farm (Whitley Bay), Cresswell, Cramlington (Brockwell), Dinnington, Earsdon, Hebron, Holy Island and West Hartford.

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

Three at Holywell Pond on 15th were the first of the year (MT/NT) becoming more numerous from around 23rd. The highest counts were 18 singing birds along the waggonway from Holywell-Whitley Bay on 24th (ASJ), 16 at Swallow Pond on 24th (JPD), 15 singing over 2km at Prestwick Carr on 23rd (PCF) and ten singing at Newbiggin GC on 30th (STH). Eight were singing over 1.5 km from West Chirton-Percy Main on 25th and seven at Woodhorn Flashes on 20th. Four to five were reported from Arcot Pond, Druridge Links / Pools, Kirkley, Netherton, Silverlink CP and Woosington ponds and one to three from a further 27 localities.

*** Subalpine Warbler** *Sylvia cantillans*

A very bright male bird was found at Chare Ends (Holy Island) on 10th-11th (IK/TRD/JD/MJC/MSH).

Subalpine Warbler
Chare Ends
Holy Island
11th April
by Tim Dean



Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

The first of the year was at Prestwick Carr on 9th, numbers here increasing to nine by 24th (PCF). Further early arrivals were noted at Druridge Links / Pools on 11th, Brierdene Farm (Whitley Bay) on 13th, Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 15th and Arcot Pond on 16th. Notable counts included up to eight at Druridge Links / Pools by 22nd (IDR) and at Ellington on 25th (TB) and five at Arcot Pond on 30th (STH). One to three were reported from a further 35 localities.



Grasshopper Warbler
Arcot Ponds
by Colin Bradshaw

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

The first was at East Chevington North Pool on 13th, the observer's earliest record by a full week in 30 years. The next appeared at Bamburgh on 14th (BRS) followed by one at Swallow Pond on 15th (JPD) and two at Arcot Pond on 16th (STH/PJA). Highest counts were ten singing at Gosforth Park NR on 29th (CB), and eight at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 24th (MR). Eight territories were identified at East Chevington on 29th (SL) when six were heard at Arcot Pond (CB). Four to five were reported from Budle Point, Holy Island and Yetlington fen and one to three from a further 17 localities.

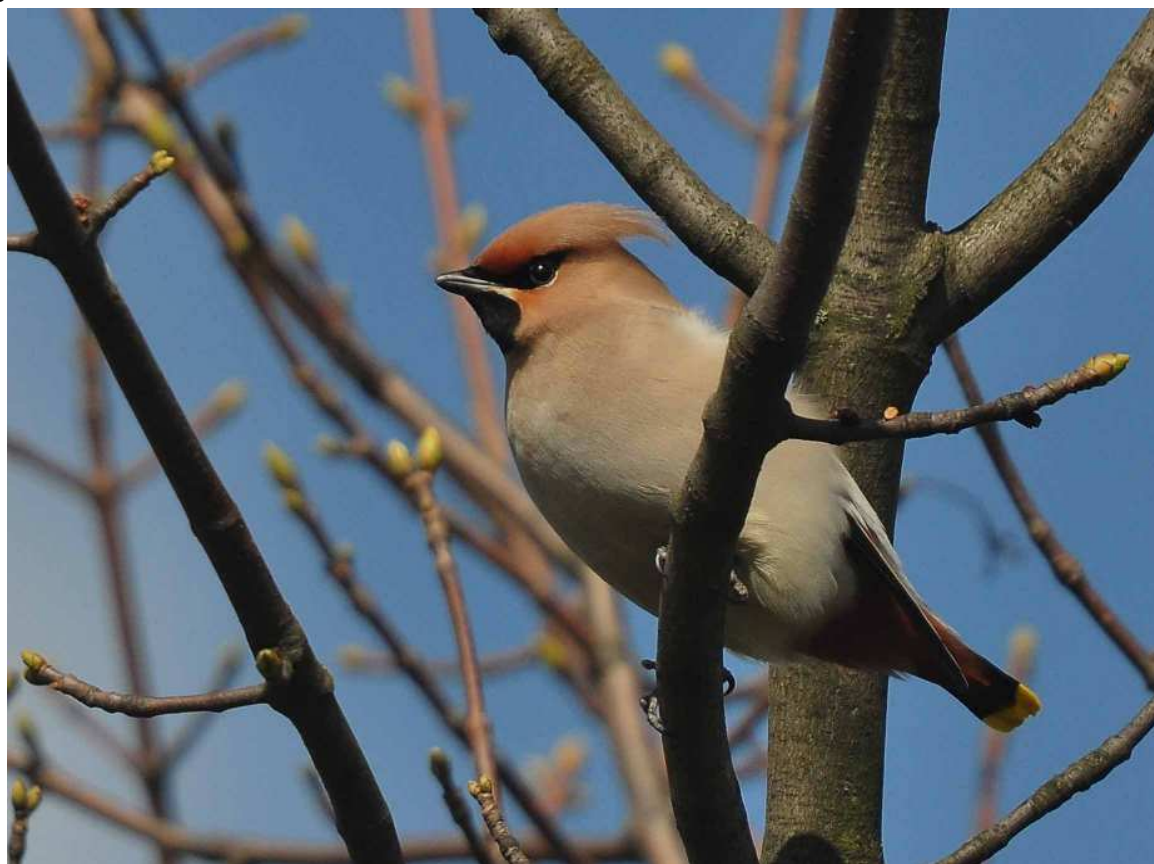
Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

The first incredibly early individual was reported from Gosforth Park NR on 6th (*per* SRB), numbers increasing here to six by 25th (MJC/CB). At the other principal county site, East Chevington, the first bird was heard on 15th (SRB/PJA). Other singles were reported from Big Waters on 28th, Hazlerigg on 27th and Holywell Pond on 29th.

Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus*

32 were still at Wansbeck Business Park (Ashington) on 12th (TRD/JD) and 26 at Cramlington on 1st (PJA). 11-12 were in the Heaton - Longbenton area on 1st and 26th (ADM/TW) and six flew E at Ponteland on 6th. A single returning migrant was at Holy Island on 3rd and the final record was three E over Gosforth Garden Village on 28th.

Waxwing
12th April
Ashington
Tim Dean

**Nuthatch** *Sitta europaea*

Five in Jesmond Dene on 3rd (MJCo) and at Wallington Hall on 5th (JMA) were the highest counts, followed by three at Allendale, Chillingham Park, Riding Mill and Whittingham. One to two were reported from a further 24 localities. Nest building was noted at Humshaugh on 8th (TWi).

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Six were found during a TTV at Happy Valley (Wooler) on 26th, and four in Wark Forest on 24th (MJC). Two were reported from Bellasis Bridge, Gosforth Park NR, Morralee Wood (Allen Banks) and Whittingham and singles from a further ten localities.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

15 singing birds were heard at Wooler on 16th (JR). In the Happy Valley area 14 were recorded during a TTV on 26th (MJC) and ten were singing in Free Wood (Bedlington) on 29th (JR). Elsewhere numbers were low with seven in a Wark Forest tetrad and only three in another on 24th (MJC). Three to four were reported from five areas and one to two from a further 11 localities.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

Very few records were received and no doubt under-recorded this month. The highest count was 17 at Druridge Pools on 9th (SL). Elsewhere one to four were noted at a further seven localities including birds carrying food at Alwinton on 30th.

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

In the Upper Coquetdale area a total of 18 pairs were located, 12 pairs with young, four pairs with eggs in the nest, one bird nest-building and a failed pair; a further two birds were found in suitable breeding habitat (JR). In addition to sites reported last month breeding was also confirmed at Holywell Dene, Hulne Park (Alnwick), Ponteland, Riding Mill and Wooler. Elsewhere one to four were reported from Allendale, Allensford, Bywell Bridge (Stocksfield), Farnley (Corbridge), Gilsland, Guyzance, Happy Valley, Harthope Valley, Hedgeley, Jesmond Dene, Lesbury viaduct (R Aln), Mitford, Pauperhaugh, Rothbury Thirlwell Castle, Thropton, West Woodburn and Wylam.

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

In the Harthope Valley up to 11 were reported on 16th-17th, including three singing males (AJS/MJC). Four were reported from the Sipton Burn (Allendale) on 19th (EC/JSB) and a single at Makendon (Upper Coquetdale) on 9th (TRD/JD). Of particular interest were a pair at Grasslees and a male at Darden on 16th, both areas in which the species has been absent since at least 2006 (IK). Passage birds were on the coast at Druridge Pools on 7th (TB) and Holy Island on 24th, and inland at Hazlerigg on 23rd (RA).

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

20-23 were reported from Bedlington (Free Wood), Cockle Park Farm and Riding Mill, 16 at Newburn, ten at Farnley (Corbridge) and Wooler and one to four from a further 12 localities. Several were feeding young from 8th onwards.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

There was conspicuous movement early in the month including 1,000+ at Netherwitton on 4th (SL), 400+ at Colt Crag Reservoir on 5th (SL), 250 at Ogle on 14th (MJC) and 150 at Blagdon and at Earsdon on 2nd (MSK/JPD). 58-80 were also reported from Allendale, Greenhead, Prestwick Carr and West Ord from 2nd-11th and eight to 15 from Backworth, Doddington, Gosforth Park NR and Linden Hall on 2nd-3rd. The last record was one at Swallow Pond on 26th (JPD).

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Remaining scarce, the highest counts were seven in Jesmond Dene on 11th (MJCo) and six at Cockle Park Farm on 10th (JR). Four were noted at Cramlington (Valley Park), Leazes Park and Wooler and three at Staward. One to two were reported from a further five localities.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

Seven were at Gosforth Park NR on 2nd (MJC) and a single flew N with Fieldfares at Linden Hall on 3rd (NFO).

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

The highest count was seven in the Harthope Valley on 30th (MT/NT). Four at Lesbury on 27th and Windyhaugh (Upper Coquetdale) on 30th included birds feeding young (PJA/JR) and a nest was robbed by Magpies at Northumberland Park (North Shields) (MNC). Three were reported from Jesmond Dene on 20th and one to two from a further seven localities.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

A very early individual was in the Harthope Valley on 29th (MSK/NEWT).

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Another species whose numbers remain very low after the severe winter. 17 at Riding Mill on 23rd was a relatively good count (BNR). 13, including a bird carrying food, were noted at Free Wood (Bedlington) on 29th (JR) and 11 were in the Happy Valley tetrad on 26th (MJC). A WBBS count at Wooler produced nine singing birds on 16th while a total of only six could be found in two Wark Forest tetrads on 24th (MJC) and five in Jesmond Dene on 27th (MJCo). Elsewhere one to four were reported from a further six localities.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

A female was found in the Druridge Links / Pools area on 12th (PT/LM/IW *et al.*) and another at Chare Ends (Holy Island) on 18th (STH). It or another was also in the Vicarage garden on the same day.

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

The first was at Prestwick Carr on 9th (PCF). Seven singing males were found at Hallington during a TTV on 21st (EC), six at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 14th and at Burntshieldhaugh (Hexhamshire) on 17th (ASJ/RMH) and five at Dipton Burn, Holystone and Letah Wood (Hexham) from 19th-23rd. Three to four were reported from Bolton, Embley (Hexhamshire), Haughton Strother (Humshaugh), Milbourne, Morralee Wood (Hexhamshire), Netherton, Newham, Ogle, Wallington Hall and Whittingham and one to two from a further 29 mainly inland breeding localities. The only obvious migrant was a single at Holy Island on 22nd (IK/SR).

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

The first birds were three in the Harthope Valley and a single at Longframlington on 17th (ASJ/JMA). Five males were noted in the Harthope Valley by 29th (DM/STH/PA) and a pair at Longframlington on 19th (JMA). Two were in Upper Coquetdale on 24th and 30th (JR/ASJ) and a single at Harwood Forest on 23rd (GB).

Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*

It was another reasonable month, although the majority of records were from coastal localities. Five were found between Amble-Low Hauxley on 14th (JPD) and up to three adults in the Druridge Links / Pools area throughout the month (IDR *et al.*). Elsewhere on the coast pairs were noted at Budle Point, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Holy Island (Chare Ends) and Monks' House Pool and a male at Warkworth. Inland, pairs were at Carey Burn (Harthope Valley) from 8th, Darden on 3rd, and Harwood Forest (Winter's Gibbet) on 28th. Breeding was confirmed at Budle Point, Carey Burn (food for young) and Druridge Links (three young ringed in nest). Stonechat is **target species** for 2011. Please report all records.

Wheatear *Oenanthe Oenanthe*

It was a very interesting month for this common summer visitor. There were some notable 'falls' of migrant birds throughout the month, not only on the coast, but also in good numbers at several inland areas. There were numerous reports from Holy Island where numbers increased from five on 10th to 21 by 17th and peaked at 50 on 23rd (IK *et al.*). An extraordinary gathering of 36 was found well inland at Hallington on 20th (EC) when a further six were in an adjacent tetrad at Grindstonelaw (JSB). Further coastal passage included maximum counts of 16 at Laverock Hall Farm (Blyth) on 19th (LJM), 15 at Druridge Links / Pools on 22nd (IDR), 14+ at Newbiggin on 18th (GB/LAR), 12 at Old Hartley on 9th and Castle Island on 18th, 11 at St Mary's Island on 8th and Newton Links on 12th and ten between Amble-Hauxley on 14th. Inland 11 at Prestwick Carr on 30th, nine at West Hartford on 19th, eight at Swallow Pond on 19th and six at Haughton Strother GP (Humshaugh) on 18th were all considered to be passage birds. In breeding areas the highest 'day count' was 22 in Upper Coquetdale on 25th, where the species was regarded as "commoner than in recent years" (ASJ). Elsewhere 18 were found on the edge of Harwood Forest on 23rd (GB), 17 on Doddington Moor on 6th (JMA), 14 at Crag Lough on 22nd, and 11 in the Ship Crag area (Rothbury) on 19th and eight to ten on Blanchland Moor, Harthope and the Simonside Hills. One to seven were reported from a further 43 localities.

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

The first was singing by a nest box at March Burn on 10th (RMH). Six were at Dipton Burn by 23rd (ASH), three at Morralee Wood (Bardon Mill) on 19th (EC/JSB) and two at Allen Banks on 27th (RB/MB) and Letah Wood (Hexham) on 23rd (RMH). A single was also found at Happy Valley (Wooler) on 26th (MJC).

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

13 were noted at Cockle Park Farm on 10th (JR), six visited a Walbottle garden on 3rd (KR/LR) and Holywell Dene on 4th (MT/NT). Four were involved in territorial disputes in a Kenton garden (Newcastle) apparently nesting from 27th (MRS). Four were also at Woodside on 10th (AJCo) and Holywell Pond on 10th (MT/NT). One to two were at a further ten widespread localities. One was ringed at Ellington Pond on 17th (JF/IDR).

Dunnock
Big Waters
Colin Bradshaw

**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*

34 were at Newburn West on 18th (BNR), 30 at a Stannington garden on 2nd (JMA), 27 at Cockle Park Farm on 10th (JR), 22 at Druridge Pools and Links on 3rd (IDR) and three to ten at four widespread localities including a Rothbury garden where the species is still a rare visitor.



A handsome cock House Sparrow at Newton by Colin Bradshaw

Tree Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

15 were observed at Haughton Strother GP on 27th (MR), ten at Scaffold Hill Farm on 4th (JPD) and Callerton Pond on 14th (RB), eight at Druridge Pools and Links on 22nd (IDR), six at Wark on 3rd (PRM), Woodside on 10th (MJCo), Netherton Park (Stannington) on 18th (RWM/MIM) and Waren Mill Caravan Park on 24th (CGK). Five came to feeders at Battlesteads Hotel (Wark) on 10th (CB). Four were occupying nest boxes at Riding Mill on 21st (BNR) and Marshall Meadows on 27th (MHu). One to three were at a further 17 widespread localities.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

Singles at Whittle Dene on 3rd (SAS) and Cresswell Pond on 5th (AT/TB) were the first arrivals. Birds were then noted at these favoured sites all month with peaks of 12 at Whittle Dene on 16th (SR) and six at Cresswell Pond on 13th (MH/AA). Elsewhere, three were at Bell's Farm Pond (Cresswell) on 18th (TRD/JD) and Annstead Point (Seahouses) on 25th (RA), two at Warkworth Gut on 17th (NFO), Embleton Links on 22nd (AT), Corbridge on 24th (AJH) and Haughton Strother GP on 27th (MR). Singles were also observed at Druridge Pools and Links, Holywell Pond, Monk's House Pool, Nafferton Farm, Newbiggin Golf Course and Whinney Hill (Blagdon).

A single Blue-headed Wagtail *Ssp flava* was at Chare Ends, Holy Island on 10th (MJC).

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

A pair was observed feeding young at lower Carey Burn (Harthope Valley) on 26th (MJC). Six were along the Carey Burn (Harthope Valley) on 8th (MT/NT), two pairs at Hulne Park on 25th (IDR), three at Alwinton (Upper Coquetdale) on 30th (JR), two at Holywell Dene between 2nd-5th (JPD/RJP), Hareshaw Lynn (Bellingham) on 5th (SL), Harthope Valley on 8th (MT/NT), Whittle Dene on 14th Pundershaw (Wark Forest) on 24th (MJC) and Jesmond Dene on 27th (MJCo). Singles were also found at Bedlington, Cottonshopeburnfoot (Redesdale), Guyzance, Hexham town centre, Kielder Burn at Kielder Village, Lesbury, two areas of Newcastle City centre, three areas of Upper Coquetdale (Blindburn, Bygate and Rowhope) and Willington Gut (Wallsend).

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrellii*

40 came into roost at Newcastle Airport on 15th (IF), ten were at Holy Island between 17th-29th (ADM/MJC), six at Happy Valley (Wooler) on 26th (MJC) and Alwinton (Upper Coquetdale) on 30th (JR), two pairs at Shillmoor (Upper Coquetdale) on 2nd (JR), Carey Burn (Harthope Valley) on 16th (MJC) and Bygate (Upper Coquetdale) on 30th (JR). Three were at Carshope Bridge (Upper Coquetdale) on 6th (JR) and Simonside Hills on 18th (MT/NT). Breeding had commenced at Bygate, Carshope (Upper Coquetdale) and Lower Carey Burn (Harthope Valley) by month's end (JR/MLC). One-two were at a further 15 widespread localities.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba alba*

Ten were found between Sandon Bay-Snipe Point (Holy Island) on 7th (SR) with six there on 24th (SR/AH). Ten were also at Holy Island east shore on 18th (STH), six at Rocket Field Pools (Holy Island) on 25th (IK), five at Druridge Links and Pools on 22nd (IDR), four at Newton Links between 12th-17th (CB/JGS), three at Cresswell Pond on 5th (AT) and singles at Hareshaw Common (Bellingham), Holy Island, Seahouses and Whittle Dene.

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

The first arrival was one at Beacon Hill near Longhorsley on 7th (ASJ). Passage was indicated by three at Crooked Lonnen (Holy Island) on 29th (MJC/ADM) and singles at Arcot Pond on 29th (CB) and Cresswell on 30th (CB/OBr/MBr). At breeding sites nine were singing in the Pundershaw area of Wark Forest on 24th (MJC), eight at Wingates on 14th (ASJ), six at Milbourne on 21st (MRS), three in clear fell areas at Harwood Forest on 23rd (GB), two at Coronation Wood (Harthope Valley) on 21st (TRD/JD) and singles at Holystone on 19th (TRD/JD), Langleeford (Harthope Valley) on 21st (TRD/JD), Longhorsley Common on 23rd (GMi), Bayridge (Blanchland) on 25th (RMH), Langleeford Hope (Harthope Valley) on 29th (DM/STH/PJA) and Longframlington Common on 30th (MT/NT).

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Passage was very evident between 1st-14th. On 2nd, hundreds flew N over Cresswell Pond and Dunes (ADMc), 86 W in an hour over Gosforth Park NR (MJC), 26 at Big Waters (including 12 N) (GB), 11 N over Southfield Green (Cramlington) (DM) and small parties constantly passing overhead at Seaton Sluice between 09:30-10:30 hours (DMT). 50 flew N/W at Whinney Hill (Blagdon) on 14th (MJC), 45 at Wingates on 12th (MJC), 34 N/W over Gosforth Garden Village (Newcastle) on 8th (MJC), five N/W at Crawford Hill near Ogle on 14th (MJC) and four W over the North Sea three miles E of Lynemouth (MSK/NECP). Breeding was confirmed at Druridge Links and Pools on 28th with two nesting pairs with small young and four eggs noted (IDR) and a nest with eggs found at Shillmoor (Upper Coquetdale) on 23rd (JR). A flock of 150 was found at a field edge at Doddington on 2nd (TRD/JD), 49 at Burntshieldhaugh (Hexhamshire) on 17th (RMH), 48 at Shitlington Common on 24th (MJC), 45 at Woodhorn Flash on 2nd (STH), 40 displaying at Harthope Valley on 17th (ASJ), 30 at Baybridge (Blanchland) on 25th (RMH), 38 at the Snook (Holy Island) on 1st (MJC), 37 at Darden Pike on 28th (IK) and one-30 at a further 19 widespread localities.



Meadow Pipit
Newton
by Colin Bradshaw

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

One was singing/displaying at South Cliff (Cullercoats) on 10th (MN) and another at Newbiggin on 21st (GB).

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

A total of 218 were found in two tetrads in the Punderdshaw area of Wark Forest on 24th (MJC), 131 at Happy Valley (Wooler) during an Atlas visit on 26th (MJC), 23 at Alwinton (Upper Coquetdale) on 30th (JR), 22 at Wooler on 16th (JR), 204 at Wallington Hall feeding station on 24th (DM), 19 at Druridge Links and Pools on 22nd (IDR), 17 at Cockle Park Farm on 10th (JR), 14 at Prestwick Carr on 9th (PCF) and 11 at Bywell Cottage Bank on 17th (BNR). One-ten were at a further ten widespread localities. Three were ringed at Druridge Links and Pools on 24th (JF/IDR).

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

12 were at Longframlington on 11th (JMA). Four were present at a Kenton (Newcastle) garden up to 10th (MRS), three in a Rothbury garden until 3rd (TRD/JD), two at Lemmington Hall on 2nd (JMA), and singles in gardens at Cramlington on 3rd (STH), Whitton (Rothbury) on 3rd (TRD/JD), High Brunton on 1st (JWP) and Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 4th (MNC). One at Linden Hall on 22nd was the last of the winter (NFO).

Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*

Seven were at Newburn West on 18th (BNR), six at a Walbottle garden on 10th (KR/LR), four at Wooler on 16th (JR) and three at Cockle Park Farm on 10th (JR). One-two were at a further ten widespread localities. Three were ringed at Ellington Pond between 17th-23rd (JF/IDR/TAC/NA).

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

100 were at Lemmington Hall on 4th (JMA), 30 visited a Stannington garden on 2nd (JMA), 12 at Druridge Links and Pools on 13th (IDR), nine at Cockle Park Farm on 10th (JR) and Newburn West on 18th (BNR), seven at Wooler on 16th (JR) and six at Holywell Dene on 3rd (RJP). One-five were at a further nine widespread localities. Two were ringed at Ellington Pond on 17th (JF/IDR).

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

Many pairs and singing males were recorded at Harwood Forest on 9th (MSH) and Kielder Village/Bakethin Conservation area and Tower Knowe (Kielder) on 25th (DM). A total of 129 were observed in two tetrads in the Punderdshaw area, Wark Forest on 24th (MJC). 100 were at Lemmington Hall on 7th (JMA), 40 at Kielder Water on 2nd (PRM), 20 at Shildon near Blanchland on 19th (JMA), 12+ at High Brunton on 1st (JWP) and one-four at a further ten widespread localities including one at garden feeders at Holy Island Village on 23rd (IK).

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

70 were at Whittle Dene on 19th (SR), 60 at Swallow Pond between 1st-14th (JPD), 50 at Hemscotthill Lane (Cresswell) on 2nd (IDR), 40 at Molesden on 13th (MJC), 30+ at Druridge Links and Pools on 13th (IDR), 25 at Woodhorn Flashes on 26th (STH), 20 at Old Hartley on 11th (MNC), Crawford Hill near Ogle on 14th (MJC) and the Pundershaw area of Wark Forest on 24th (MJC). 15 were at Alwinton (Upper Coquetdale) on 30th (JR) and 12 at Warkworth Gut/Dunes on 20th (IDR). One-ten were at a further 16 widespread localities ranging from the Snook on Holy Island to Shillmoor in Upper Coquetdale and Newcastle Quayside.

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*

The Druridge Bay flock seems to have broken up into two gatherings with up to 40 at Druridge Links and Pools on 8th (JPD /IDR) declining to eight by 15th (TB). At adjacent Hemscotthill Links (Cresswell) 27+ on 1st (ADM) declined to 20 on 2nd (IDR) and 15 on 9th (PCF) as birds dispersed to breeding grounds. Inland, one called as it flew over Lord's Rigg (Whitfield Moor) on 9th (BNR).

Redpoll *Acanthis flammea*

Three flew N at Fenwick Tip (Backworth) on 17th (CGH) and one at Big Waters on 2nd (GB).



Lesser Redpoll at Big Waters by Colin Bradshaw

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis cabaret*

27 were found in the Pundershaw area of Wark Forest during an Atlas visit on 24th (MJC). 24 were singing/displaying on the edge of Harwood Forest at Darden Pike on 28th (IK), 12 at Simonside on 7th (ASJ), ten+ at Harthope Valley between Carey Burn-Langleefordhope on 29th (DM/STH/PJA), five at Longbyre (Greenhead) on 2nd (SW) and Slaley Hall on 24th (RMH), four at Sweethope Lough on 14th (TRD/JD), two at Big Waters on 1st (IF/CB), Addycombe (Rothbury) on 9th (JD), Callerton Pond on 14th (SRB), a Rothbury garden on 15th (TRD/JD), Branton GP on 16th (TRD/JD), Kilham on 17th (TRD/JD), Grindon Lough on 23rd (PRM), High Trewhitt on 25th (TRD/JD) and Tower Knowe (Kielder) on 25th (DM) and Netherton on 26th (TRD/JD). Singles were also singing at Beacon Hill near Longhorsley on 12th (MJC) and Crawford Hill near Ogle on 14th (MJC).

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

13 were at Catcleugh Reservoir on 26th (PRM), 12 at Kellas Plantation (Slaley) on 29th (RMH), ten at Simonside Hills on 18th (MT/NT), six at Pundershaw (Wark Forest) on 24th where most have moved away after breeding (MJC), five at Harwood Forest on 23rd (GB), four at Bakethin (Kielder) on 14th (TRD/JD), Baybridge (Blanchland) on 25th (RMH) and Kielder (including two juveniles) on 27th (MSK/NEWT). Three flew N over Fenwick Tip (Backworth) on 17th (CGK). Two were at Sweethope Lough on 14th (TRD/JD), Chillingham Park on 14th (BNR), Holystone Common on 19th (TRD/JD), Linden Hall on 25th (NFO) and Happy Valley (Wooler) on 26th (MJC). One was at Carshope (Upper Coquetdale) on 9th (TRD/JD).

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Pairs were noted at Scotland Gate all month (SLB/MSK), Town Moor/Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 1st (GB), an Old Hartley garden on 3rd (RJP), Jesmond Dene on 3rd (MJCo), Arcot Pond on 7th (DM), Craggside on 8th (MJC), Dam Dykes Farm (Cramlington) on 9th (DM), Forth Banks (Newcastle) on 19th (DM) and Dipton Mill on 25th (BNR). Singles were also at Bedlington, Cramlington, Dinnington, Doddington, Holywell Dene, Lordenshaw, Swan Hunter's (Wallsend) and Thrunton Woods.

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Singles were at Hemscotthill Links on 1st-2nd (TRD/JD/ADM/IDR). Another was found in a field with Meadow Pipits at Cheswick on 6th (BWG). A male in summer plumage on the beach at Low Steads near Longhoughton on 12th was the last (JRo).

Lapland Bunting *Calcarius lapponicus*

Three were at Boulmer on 2nd (MSH). A summer-plumage male on Holy Island on 11th (MSH) was joined by another at Chare Ends on 17th (ADM).



Lapland bunting
3rd April
Newton
by Gary Woodburn

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

14 were at Prestwick Carr on 1st (PCF), seven singing at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 10th (ASJ), five at St. Mary's Island area on 4th (ASJ), Cockle Park Farm on 10th (JR) and Woodside on 10th (MJCo). One to three were at a further 11 widespread localities including a male visiting a Heddon-on-the-Wall garden between 14th-21st (JSB).



A Yellowhammer in the gorse
Spindleston
11th April
Chris Knox

Reed Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

16 were present on Holy Island (including eight on the Snook and five at the Lough) on 17th (ADM), nine at Druridge Links and Pools on 13th (IDR), six singing at Arcot Pond between 3rd-14th (DM), four at Cresswell Pond on 9th (SL) and Holywell Pond on 11th (SL), three males at East Chevington on 29th (SL) and Shillmoor (Upper Coquetdale) on 30th (JR). One-two were at a further nine widespread localities. One ringed at Ellington Pond on 17th (JF/IDR).

ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN**Hybrids****Glaucous Gull / Herring Gull** *Larus hyperboreus* / *Larus argentatus*

A possible first-summer was noted on 17th at North Shields Fish Quay (DMT).

Birds of Unknown Origin**Rose-ringed Parakeet** *Psittacula krameri*

The Ponteland individual seemingly relocated to Prestwick Village this month with sightings from 24th to 27th (PCF).

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

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Bamburgh Ringing Station, Berwick Wildlife Group, Hauxley Ringing Station, Northeast Cetacean Project, Northern Experience Wildlife Tours.

Those observers marked with an asterisk after their name(s) have submitted records online using the club spreadsheet. Copies are available by emailing Dick Myatt at dick@dickmyatt.co.uk

Apologies for any accidental omissions

BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION

Edited by Steve Barrett Sscmagpie@aol.com
Distributed by Alan Watson apusx@blueyonder.co.uk

BULLETIN SECTION WRITER

We are always on the look-out for bulletin writers. Have we any volunteers out there willing to help? Several evenings at the middle/end of each month are needed. Please send an email to Steve Barrett Sscmagpie@aol.com to volunteer or for more information.

RECORD SUBMISSION

Please send all record cards to Tim Dean, 2 Knocklaw Park, Rothbury NE65 7PW, to arrive on, or preferably before, the 8th of the month following that in which the records were collected. Please write cards legibly to ensure that your sightings are correctly recorded.

E-mail: Members are encouraged to e-mail their records on an Excel-style spreadsheet. Please e-mail Dick Myatt at dick@dickmyatt.co.uk for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and Grid references: The use of standard location names and the inclusion of grid references greatly increases the value of records in subsequent analyses. A 1km square grid reference is the ideal e.g. NY8067 for Grindon Lough, but 2km square references (tetrads) are also acceptable e.g. NY86D in this case. A list of localities and their tetrad grid references (tetrad/Locality List) can be downloaded from the 'Resources & Downloads' section of the Club website at <http://www.ntbc.org.uk> – the use of these names, wherever possible, would be highly appreciated.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Please keep submitting your articles, photographs, sketches and illustrations for the bulletin. Thanks again to those who have supplied the excellent photographs. Please send to Steve Barrett at Sscmagpie@aol.com

ELECTRONIC BULLETIN

The NTBC bulletin can be received electronically or as hard copy. The electronic bulletin arrives earlier than the printed version, it is in colour and we save the cost of printing and stamps. Ask for an e-mailed bulletin from; jo.bentley@waitrose.com

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS 2011

Annual subscription is a bargain £23. For membership enquiries please contact jo.bentley@waitrose.com

NTBC WEB SITE

The Club website is an excellent resource for all interested in birds in the north east. There are numerous interesting sections, including a photograph gallery, site information and trip reports together with extensive reference information for birding in our area. The site is at www.ntbc.org.uk

If you have any ideas or things you would like to see or hear about on the site please let Chris know on 0751 582 5024 or email christopher.knox@o2.co.uk

NTBC SIGHTINGS PAGE

The club sightings web page gives listings of birds seen locally. Adding a sighting is simple. A short email is all that is needed. If anyone would like to be added as a contributor please contact Alan Tilmouth at ntbcorg@gmail.com The sightings page can be found at <http://ntbc sightings.posterous.com>

NTBC COMMITTEE NEWS

At our meeting 5th May the NTBC committee discussed communication with club members. One of the ideas to improve communication regarding club business was to include a short section each month in the bulletin to offer an insight into some of the issues, discussions and actions the club committee is working on.

Arcot Ponds SSSI

Management of part of Arcot Ponds SSSI has been taken over by The Grasslands Trust. NTBC have been invited to advise on the management to ensure that it is carried out in a way sensitive to birdlife as well as the grassland habitats. Club Conservation Officer Lindsey McDougall will be liaising with The Grasslands Trust.

Seaton Sluice Watchtower

The external structure has been repaired recently but the internal structure is still in a poor state. Quotes are being sought to upgrade the internal structure to make the hide more amenable for members.

General Members Survey

It is a number of years since a general survey of members was conducted and a new one is currently being finalized for issue in the coming months.

Pale-bellied Brent Geese

An enquiry regarding data for a research project on Pale-bellied Brent Geese was received from Aarhus University and the committee is in communication with the research team to provide data from our records.

INDOOR MEETINGS

The next meeting will be in the autumn. See you there, as usual, at Newcastle Falcons on Thursday 8th September at 7pm.

ATLAS NEWS

Sponsorship of species in aid of the Atlas publication is progressing well. So if you want 'own' your favourite bird contact Steve Lowe at zappa99@live.co.uk

An additional photograph from April.



A Whooper Swan in profile
Killingworth
19th April
by Peter Fletcher

COASTAL WEBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND

APRIL 2011

Site	Tweed Estuary	Tweed: At By-Pass to Horncliffe	Spital - Cocklawburn	Lindisfarne NMR (including Budle Bay)	Budle Pt - Seahouses	Seahouses - Beadnell	Howick - Boulmer	Boulmer - Alnmouth	Aln Estuary	Alnmouth South	Coquet Estuary	Amble - Chevington	Cresswell - Newbiggin	Newbiggin - Cambois	White Bay - Tynemouth	Tyne North Pier - Fish Quay	Wallsend, (north bank only)	Rednagh - Scotswood Bridge, (north bank)	Scotswood - Newburn Bridge, (north bank)
Counter	MHu	TB	MHu	AC	RP	MLC	JAR	AB	TAC	RP	EC	TW	MGA	RC	LJM	MK	DMT	PF	PF
Date	18	13	19	17	17	19	7	20	18	17	12	17	20	17	17	17	19	17	17
Red-throated Diver	8		6	2															
Great Crested Grebe	108	1				7	12	4	1		1	8		4	9	4	1	3	3
Shag	20		4	2	7			5							2				
Grey Heron	40	9	4	6	1	3	2		1		2	5					8		
Mute Swan	158	103	7	2	2				23		14				3		1	3	
Whooper Swan	4	4																	
Greylag Goose	31	4	1	4	2				2			4			2				
Canada Goose	4																		
Dark-bellied Brent Goose	4																		
Light-bellied Brent Goose	13																		
Shelduck	344	4	1	230	48	4	22	6	20		10			2	33		2	8	2
Wigeon	4			2			2												
Scaup	2								2										
Teal	73	2	8	48	30				14									1	
Mallard	168	43	26	3	36	12	4	2	21		5	2	2	3	3		3	9	6
Shoveler	2								2										
Tufted Duck	8	1	1		4				2										
Eider	1,386		72	240	195	90	8	284		76	99	270		40	1	5	6		
Long-tailed Duck	3				3														
Common Scoter	609		166		152			161		130									
Velvet Scoter	2				2														
Goldeneye	9	4		5															
Red-breasted Merganser	63		6	55	5					2								1	
Goosander	90	3	84											2					
Moorhen	13				6				6		1								
Coot	2				2														
Oystercatcher	851	3	10	13	488	52	23	65	26	29	26	11	10	47	16	7	15	60	2
Ringed Plover	74		2	34		19		16					1		2				
Golden Plover	25					25													
Grey Plover	107		1	58		18		22		8									
Lapwing	29			15					12		2								
Knot	61			21									40						
Sanderling	214					68		85					3	16				42	
Purple Sandpiper	114				13	79							4					17	1
Dunlin	459			404	14	1	7	24			4		5						
Shipe	4			4															
Bar-tailed Godwit	607			579	8			20											
Cullew	1,137	24	3	918	65	3	157		12		1	1			11			7	
Redshank	666	158	2	198	14	13	63	8	6	50	66	6	11	46	7	85	18		3
Turnstone	314			31		109	87												
Black-headed Gull	422	8	4	3	76	60	nc	12	121	nc		45		nc	77		39		
Common Gull	9		1	3	nc	1			3					nc					
Lesser Black-backed Gull	91	7	1	41	nc	nc								nc				38	4
Herring Gull	1,604	235	6	144	40	nc	64	68	3		18	nc	nc	nc	137	64	489	152	104
Great Black-backed Gull	123	20		21	18	nc	2	2	3	nc	2	5		nc	16	6	20	3	22
Kittiwake	333					322								nc			3	8	
Sandwich Tern	206	2		8			27			2		16	3			1			
Common Tern	2				41		2												
Arctic Tern	2						2												
Kingfisher	0																		
ADDITIONAL SPECIES																			
Fulmar	18	8	2			3								5					
Black Scoter	1				1														
TOTALS - WILDFOWL	3,169	183	136	289	685	96	462	94	208	132	289	2	46	55	12	7	17	22	11
- WADERS	4,662	185	12	19	2,750	131	289	100	19	83	72	124	14	113	137	4	0	10	0
- GULLS & TERNS	2,792	272	12	155	353	154	41	401	85	31	130	2	0	84	3	0	230	94	520

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

<http://www.ntbc.org.uk/>

Bulletin 2011 No 5

MONTHLY SUMMARY – MAY

13th July 2011



HIGHLIGHTS

Quail	Notable influx late in month.
Manx Shearwater	Passage noticeable late in month.
Spoonbill	Four at Druridge, up to two at East Chevington.
Crane	Singles at several localities.
Avocet	First breeding in the county at Cresswell Pond.
Temminck's Stint	Two at Holywell Pond and one at Beadnell and East Chevington.
Pectoral Sandpiper	One on Holy Island from 9th to 16th.
Curlew Sandpiper	One at Cresswell Pond on 30th.
Terek Sandpiper	One at Hauxley from 28th to 30th. Fifth record for county.
Spotted Redshank	One on Blyth estuary on 7th.
Wood Sandpiper	Influx with seven at West Hartford and several elsewhere.
White-winged Black Tern	Adult in Druridge Bay area from 10th to 12th.
Turtle Dove	Single in allotments in Tynemouth.
Wryneck	Single on Holy Island from 1st to 6th.
Hooded Crow	Single still present on Holy Island & North Sunderland.
Black Redstart	Single on Holy Island on 1st.
Great White Egret	Two at Castle Island on 10th and 11th.
Red-breasted Flycatcher	A late record - one on the Farne Islands on 26th.
Black-headed Bunting	A late record - a female on the Farne Islands on 31st.

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Atlas sponsorship
Beached birds
Bulletin section writer – volunteer needed.
Moths in Northumberland



The popular White-winged Black Tern at Druridge
10th May by Chris Barlow

WEATHER

After a fine, warm start, it was a generally changeable month with westerly airstreams bringing plenty of cloud. It was a dry month.

1st to 4th An easterly then south-easterly air flow gave a generally fine and settled start to the month. It was windy at times, especially on 1st and 2nd.

5th to 10th A slow-moving area of low pressure lay over the near-Atlantic, bringing unsettled conditions into western areas. Temperatures climbed to 6th and 7th. For the remainder of the period, it was unsettled with showers generally spreading from the east.

11th to 20th High pressure over the mid-Atlantic brought a generally westerly flow, with the north-west seeing the most unsettled conditions and the south and east staying largely dry. Maximum temperatures were close to or somewhat above normal, reaching 20 °C in the south-east on 18th and 19th.

21st to 27th A series of deep low-pressure systems passed north-eastwards over the UK, bringing unseasonably strong winds for a time. These were separated by quieter, drier interludes. The 22nd and 23rd saw strong winds across much of England, particularly over the Pennines. Winds then eased, with mainly dry weather and some chilly nights.

28th to 31st The southern half of England was cloudy with a little light rain and drizzle at times, a front moving south-eastwards on 30th. This was followed by high pressure building from the south-west on 31st.

CLASSIFIED LIST

The following account consists of unchecked reports. The species/subspecies marked * require descriptions.

A complete list of all sightings that need notes is included in the NTBC website www.ntbc.org.uk under the County Records Committee section and in Birds in Northumbria 2009 page 224.

The Inland and Coastal Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) tables are at the rear of the bulletin. These contain counts additional to those in the Classified List.

TARGET SPECIES

The target species for 2011 are Gadwall, Snipe and Stonechat

Please report all records for these species.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

The largest gatherings were 137 in the Tweed Estuary on 13th (MHu), 132 at Killingworth Lake on 11th (LJM) and 100 at Castle Island on 31st (AT). Smaller gatherings were 20 at West Ord on 22nd and 12 at Grindon Lough on 29th. Broods were noted at Burradon Pond (seven young), Capheaton Lake (two broods 12 young), East Chevington North Pool (eight young), East Chevington South Pool (seven young), Gosforth NR (six young), Linton Pond (five young), Matfen GC (seven young), Swallow Pond (three young), Willington Gut (six young) and Woodhorn Flashes (six young). Nesting pairs were noted at Bates Mines Water Treatment Plant (Blyth), Coanwood Pond and Exhibition and Leazes Park (Newcastle). One to four were noted at Arcot Pond, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Ellington Pond, Hauxley NR, Learmouth Lake, Morpeth, Ouseburn Mouth (Newcastle) and Wylam.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

The only record was of a single at West Ord on 7th (MHu).

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

On 10th 60+ flew N over the dunes at Druridge Pools (TRD/JD). Three flew NW at Haughton Strother GP on 18th (MR). At Cresswell Pond 81-83 were present on 2nd (TB/STH/GB) with 60+ remaining on 4th (MSH), and six remaining on 6th (TB). Two were at Grindon Lough on 19th and one was in the Tweed Estuary on 13th.

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Ten flew N at West Hartford on 19th (PJA). Peak counts of adults were 75 at Hauxley NR on 15th (HRS), 45 at High Acton Mill (Blanchland) on 16th (RWM/MIM), 32 at East Chevington on 12th (PRM), 16 at Hedgeley GP on 14th (DM *et al.*) and 12 at Arcot Pond on 19th (DM). One to ten were noted from Beehive Flash (Earsdon), Cocklawburn Pond, Druridge Pools and Grindon Lough.

Breeding data are as follows:

Location	No. of Broods	No. of young	Observer/Comments
Woodhorn Flashes South Pool	5	21	STH on 13th
Branton GP	2	6	LJM on 17th
Killingworth Lake	1	5	PCF on 19th
Low Newton	1	4	IDR on 27th
Backworth	1	3	LJM on 11th
Hauxley NR	1	3	HRS on 15th

The Low Newton family party was chased by a herd of cows, which the adults distracted to save the juveniles. Despite one being trampled, it survived.

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Light passage was noted during the month. On 28th 15 flew N at Sandon Bay (Holy Island) (IK), 13 flew NW at Stag Rocks on 24th (TM), 11 flew W at Tynemouth on 31st (CGK) and one flew W at Swallow Pond on 13th (JPD). Peak counts of adults were 40 at Hauxley NR on 15th (HRS), 30 at Killingworth Lake on 25th (LJM), 26 at both Capheaton Lake and Grindon Lough on 14th (DM/ALT/HD/ACo) and 14 at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 3rd/4th (DM) and at Swallow Pond on 6th (JPD). One to nine were noted at Beehive Flash (Earsdon), Beldon Burn, Cocklawburn Pond, Druridge Pools, Learmouth Lake, Plenmeller Common, West Ord and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Breeding data are as follows:

Location	No. of Broods	No. of young	Observer/Comments
Hauxley NR	5	15	HRS on 15th
Hedgeley GP	3	20	LJM on 17th
Leazes Park Newcastle	3	8	DM by 25th
Branton GP	2	11	LJM on 17th
Coanwood Pond	2	7	BNR on 1st
Wansbeck Business Park	1	9	LJM on 23rd
Holywell Pond	1	5	MSH on 7th
Bank's Pond Dinnington	1	5	LJM on 12th
Duke's Pond Rising Sun CP	1	5	CDH on 15th
Woolsington Ponds	1	4	SRB on 25th
Woodhorn Flashes North Pool	1	3	STH/PJA on 21st
Heighley Gate Garden Centre Pond	1	2	DM on 30th
Linton Pond	1	1	CDH on 15th
Big Waters	1	1	GB on 30th

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

A single was at Woodside Reservoir on 30th (AT).

Pale-bellied Brent Goose *Branta bernicla hrota*

Singles were noted at Coquet Island on 28th (DD-L), Hauxley NR (swimming with Greylags) on 30th (PJA) and at Castle Island on 31st (AT).

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Budle Bay held 129 on 31st (MSH up from 102 on 14th (CGK). Other peak counts were 38 at Castle Island on 31st (AT), 21 at Kitty Brewster on 8th (GB), 16-17 at Cresswell Pond and Hauxley Reserve, and four to eight at Druridge Pools, Elswick, the Long Nanny Estuary, Holywell Pond and West Hartford. One to two were also at Beadnell, the Beehive Flash (Earsdon), Grindon Lough, Swallow Pond (over), Woodhorn Flashes and Yarrow Slake.

Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Beadnell	1	9	CGK/MSH. On 21st
Haughton Strother GP	1	9	MR. Down to 4 by 30th
Hauxley Reserve	1	8	HRS. On 28th
Monk's House Pool	1	4	BS/DWS. On 28th.

April correction - "An early brood of eight young was at Druridge Pools on 3rd" should read "Ten including one pair were at Druridge Pools on 3rd".

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

Single drakes were at Mitford Hall on 1st (ADMc) and Swallow Pond on 26th (JPD/SPP).

Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Shittleheugh, Redesdale	1	3	TRD on 29th

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

30 at Grindon Lough on 30th (DM) fell to 16 by 26th-27th (PRM). Three to four were at Castle Island, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Hauxley Reserve and Plenmeller Common, and one to two at Big Waters, Capheaton Lake, Coanwood, Derwent Reservoir, East Chevington and Newton Pool, mainly in the first half of the month.

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

East Chevington held a peak of 42 adults on 12th (PRM), 32 were at Cresswell Pond on 23rd (LJM), 19 at Hauxley Reserve on 15th (HRS), 16 at Druridge Pools on 5th (IDR), five to six at Castle Island and Woodhorn Flashes, and three to four at Holywell Pond and Newton Pool. One to two were also at the Beehive Flash (Earsdon), Big Waters, Capheaton Lake and Hedgeley GP.

Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
East Chevington	1	9	PRM on 12th

Gadwall is a **target species** for 2011. Please report all records.



Drake Gadwall at Hauxley
Colin Bradshaw

Teal *Anas crecca*

One to two were at Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Grindon Lough, Melkridge Common and Woodhorn Flashes on occasional dates between 1st-26th.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Newcastle Leazes Park attracted 48 on 3rd (DM), 40 were at Morpeth on 30th (DM), 30-38 at Arcot Pond and Grindon Lough (LJM/PRM), and ten to 21 at Cupola Bridge, Druridge Pools, Ellington Pond, Hauxley Reserve, Heighly Gate and Newcastle Exhibition Park. Breeding data were as follows (new broods unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
River Aln	4	27 (12, 11, 3, 1)	MLC. On 3rd
Druridge Pools	4	23 (8,7,4,4)	IDR/JF. On 15th
Haughton Strother	3	27	MR
Richardson Dees Park, Wallsend	3	15 (7,7,1)	CDH. On 31st
Arcot Pond	3	13 (8, 3, 2)	LJM. On 25th
Killingworth Lake	3	12 (8,3,1)	LJM. On 25th
Woodhorn Flashes	2	23 (12,11)	GB. On 2nd and 29th
Jesmond Dene	2	12 (10,2)	MJCo. From 1st
Newcastle Civic Centre	2	10 (8,2)	DM. On 5th
Wallsend Dene	2	6 (4,2)	LJM. On 18th

Single broods of Mallards were also at Blagdon Hall (1 young), Bothal Pond (7), Burradon Pond (12), Castle Island (8), Corbridge (5), Duke's Pond (3), Hauxley Reserve (3), Jesmond (9), Linton Pond (1), Newburn (3), Newcastle Exhibition Park (9), Swallow Pond (7), Willington Gut (3).

Pintail *Anas acuta*

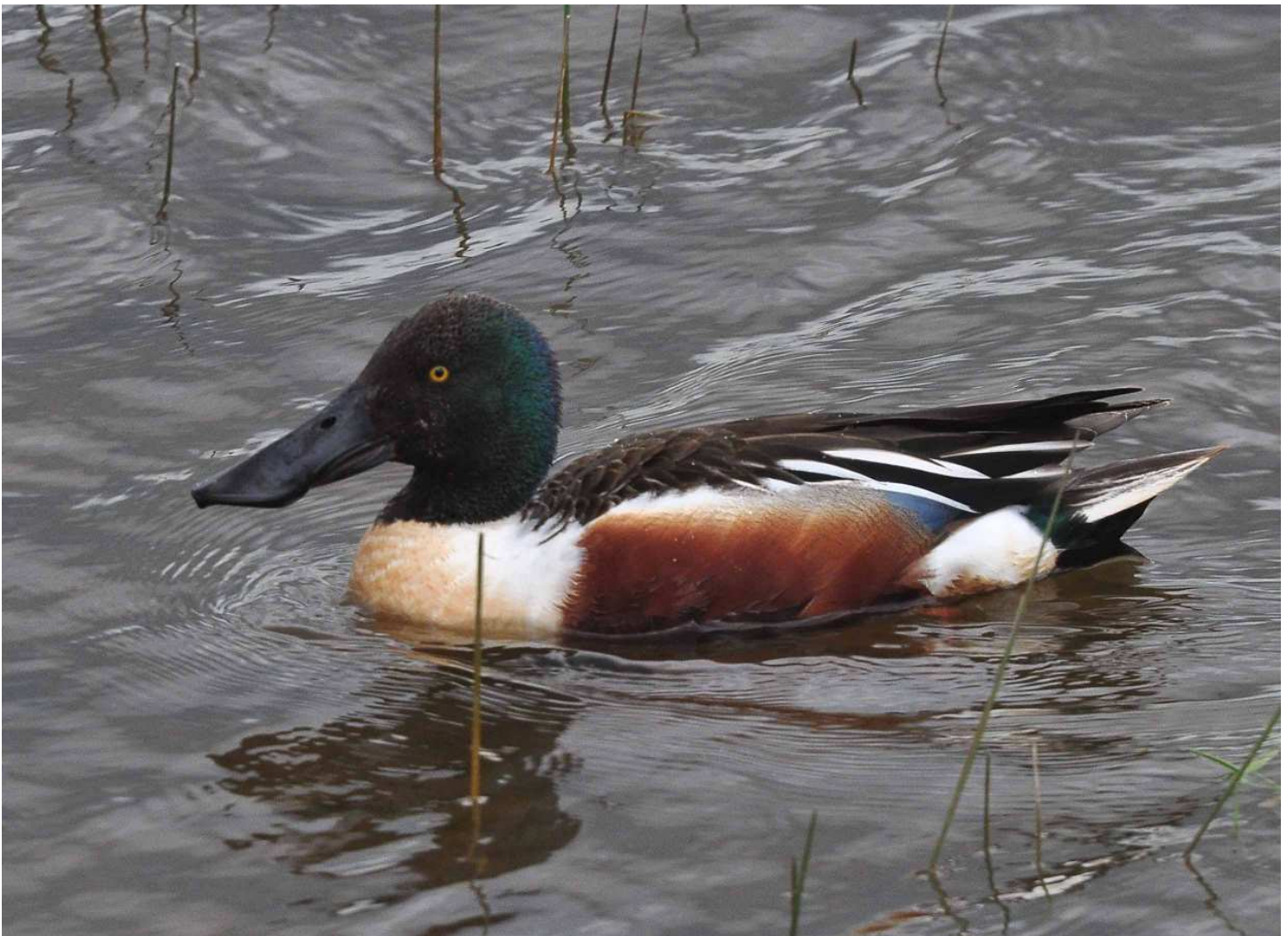
A pair was at Druridge Pools on 2nd-3rd (GB/STH/IDR/JF *et al.*).

Garganey *Anas querquedula*

Druridge Pools attracted three drakes and a duck on 2nd (TB), two drakes on 1st and 3rd, a single drake regularly until 29th, and a duck on 1st and 3rd (IDR/JF/MSH *et al.*). One of the above drakes was aged as a second-calendar-year bird (MSH). Three birds were at Holy Island on 9th (RA), and single drakes visited Cresswell Pond on 8th, 15th and 30th (AT/IF/MSH), East Chevington on 1st and 8th (AA/AT), Ellington Pond on 30th (TB), and Lynemouth Flash on 8th (AT).

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

A peak of seven (all drakes) was at Druridge Pools on 5th (IDR), with two to six (including one female) there regularly between 6th-31st (IDR/JF *et al.*). Six (five drakes) were at East Chevington on 2nd (GB) and three to four (one female) on 5th and 12th (IF/PRM). Single pairs were also at Grindon Lough (PRM) and Woodhorn Flashes (GB), and more unusually at Colt Crag Reservoir (the first Atlas record for NY97; TRD/JD), and single birds at Arcot and Cresswell Ponds.



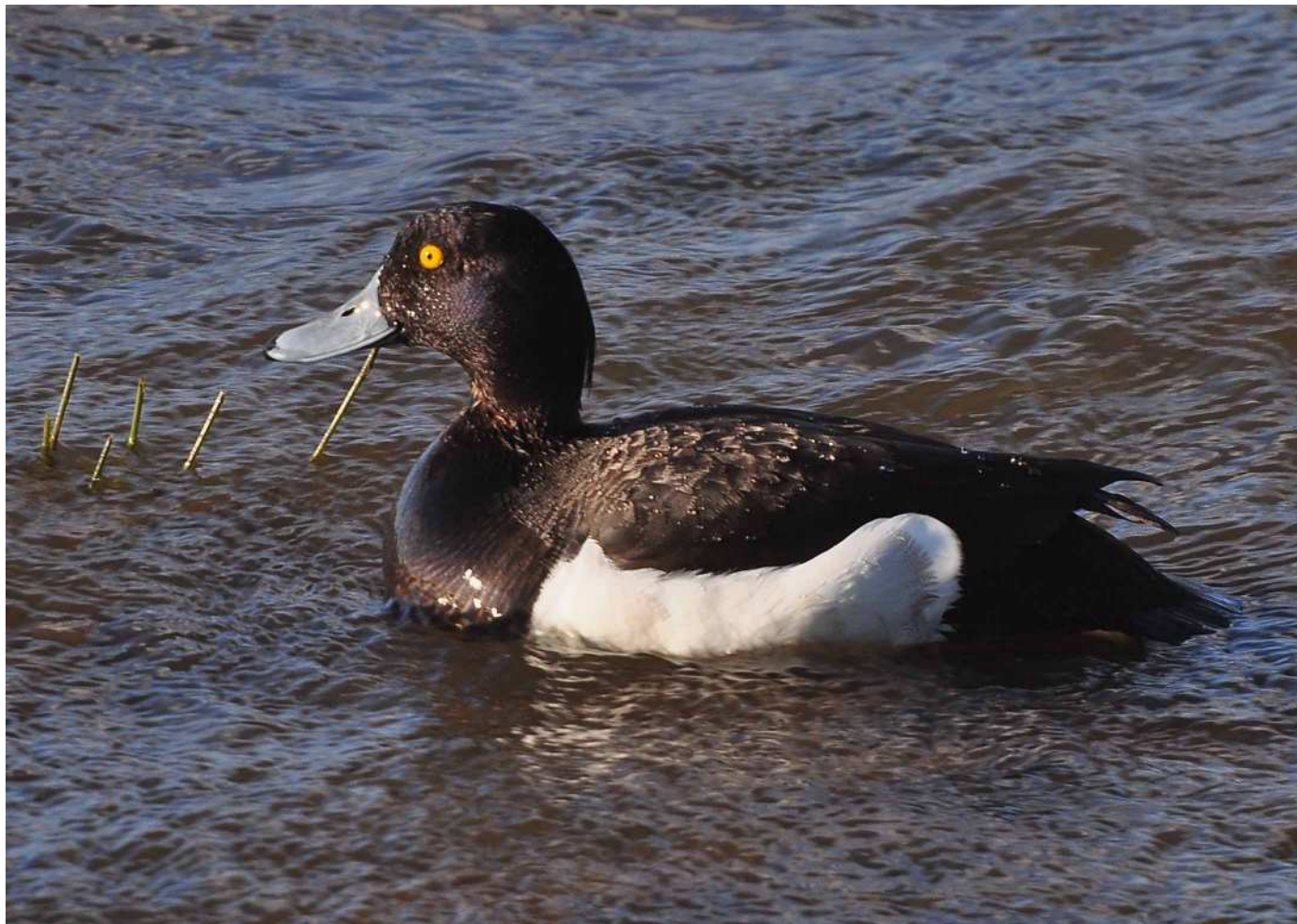
Drake Shoveler at Druridge Pools
10th June by Tim Dean

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Peak counts were 21 at Swallow Pond on 18th (JPD), where three to 18 were present on several dates between 2nd-24th, 14 at Killingworth Lake on 25th (LJM), and three at West Allotment Pond on 9th (CGK). One to two were also at Big Waters, Druridge Pools, Hadrian and Holywell Ponds, and Newton Pool.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Largest counts were 34 at Newcastle Leazes Park on 3rd (DM), 30 at Druridge Pools on 5th (IDR), 26 at Hedgeley GP on 17th (LJM), 22-23 at Hauxley Reserve (HRS) and Swallow Pond (JPD), and ten to 16 at Branton GP, Haughton Strother GP, Holy Island Lough, Newcastle Exhibition Park and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. One to six were also at Arcot and Cocklawburn Ponds, Coatenhall Reservoir, Tweedmouth Dock and West Ord.



A Drake Tufted Duck in the sunshine
Druridge Pools on 20th May
by Tim Dean

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

A gathering of 250 off Snipe Point, Holy Island on 28th consisted mainly of adult drakes (IK), 70 were at Seahouses on 28th (DWS), 44 in Druridge Bay on 24th (PCF), 36 at Cocklawburn on 24th (MHu), and 11 at the Tweed Estuary. Two were on the River Blyth at Kitty Brewster on 8th (GB).

Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods/'creches'	No. of young	Observer/notes
Holy Island (Coves Bay/Sandy Bay)	3	17 (10,4,3)	IK. On 28th
Budle Bay	2+	7 (5,2)	DWS. On 28th

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

About 80 were off Holy Island on 15th (ADM), 54 at Cheswick on 24th (MHu), and two to six off Coquet Island, Druridge Bay and Seahouses.

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Single pairs were at Cocklawburn Pond on 3rd (MHu) and Holy Island Lough on 8th (ADM), and single females at Bolam Lake CP on 12th (TRD/JD) and Holy Island Lough on 15th (ADM). Breeding again took place at the site used in 2010, with a brood of four young noted on 5th and 17th (TRD/JD/LJM).

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

12 were at Cheswick on 24th (MHu), four at East Chevington on 2nd (GB) and one there on 10th and 12th (TRD/JD/PRM), and two at Budle Bay on 22nd (TM). A drake, first noted in April, was at Haughton Strother on 1st (MR).

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

A gathering of 160 was at West Ord on 7th (MHu) and 105 were at Yarrow Slake on 5th (BWG). Ten were at Berwick Little Beach on 31st (TRD), eight at Castle Island on 8th (GB), three at East Chevington and Wylam, and one to two at Allen Banks, Bothal Pond, Budle Bay, Cornhill on Tweed, Cupola Bridge, Druridge Pools, Harthope, Haydon Bridge, Horsley, Low Cocklaw (Berwick), Mitford, Ovingham and Rothbury.

Goosander breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Ovingham	1	7	SW. On 29th
Lesbury	1	5	TAC. On 13th

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

During two-hour TTVs on 1st 32 were on Blanchland Moor and on 4th 16 were at Acton (RMH). On 7th 12 were at Newbiggin (Beldon Burn) and seven at Riddlehamhope, including a female leading the observer away from the nest (BNR). One to four were noted at Alnwick Moor, Bowden Doors (Belford), Shield Bridge, Sipton Burn and Whickhope Nick.

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

Very few reports were received. Single males were noted at Low Stublick on 1st (TAC/MLC), Haltonlea Fell on 9th (SW) and Meadow Cottage (Allendale Common) on 14th (DM/ALT/HD/ACo). A female was at Whickhope Nick on 17th (BNR).

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

The largest count was five at Widdrington on 2nd (GB). One to two were noted at Beehive Flash (Earsdon), Brierdene Farm (Whitley Bay), Chibburn Farm and High Chibburn Farm (Widdrington), Druridge Pools, Shilford, Skirl Naked (Harthope Valley), Slaggyford, Whitfield Hall and in an Old Hartley garden.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Four were at Druridge Links and Pools on 25th (IDR) and three at Chare Ends (Holy Island) on 1st (ADM). Pairs were by the A1 near Morpeth, Alnmouth, Arcot Pond, Backworth, Bellasis Bridge, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Farm, Holywell Pond, Juniper, Newcastle Airport and Shieldbridge. A single was at Linden Hall.

Quail *Coturnix coturnix*

The species was well reported especially at the end of the month. The earliest was one singing at 01:00am at Cresswell Pond on 15th (PS). Two were singing at Kyloe Woods on 31st (MSH) and singles near Todridge and Beukley (Bingfield) on 21st (ALT), Seahouses GC on 26th/27th (MSK/NEWT *et al.*), East Ditchburn on 28th (TAC/MLC), Newton Links House on 29th (CB/JGS), Beukley again on 30th (ALT), Big Waters on 30th (KB/GB), Tritlington on 30th/31st (AT) and Middle Ord on 31st (MHu).

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

The highest counts were 14 during a two-hour TTV at Broomfield Fell (Longwitton) (PCF) and 12 during a BBS survey at Welton (Whittle Dene) (MJCo). Breeding was confirmed at Low Hauxley on 19th, where an adult accompanied at least eight newly fledged young (MJC) and at Cresswell Pond where an adult accompanied at least four young on 25th (SRB). One to six were noted at Chibburn Farm (Widdrington), Druridge Pools and Links, Elyhaugh Farm (Felton), Wallsend Dene and an Old Hartley garden.

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

Light passage was noted with three N at Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) on 27th (IK) and two N at Newbiggin on 29th (GB). Two were offshore at Druridge Pools on 19th/31st (IDR) and singles, at Cheswick on 6th (MHu) and East Chevington (a juvenile) on 10th (TRD/JD).

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

Two flew N at Druridge Links on 31st (IDR). At breeding colonies ca.35 pairs were on cliffs at Coves Bay (Holy Island) on 28th (IK), 24 were at High Point (Whitley Bay) on 21st. (MN) and 14 pairs at Whitey Bay cliffs on 24th (JMA). In the Berwick area 20 were at Marshall Meadows and four at Needle's Eye on 31st (TRD). On 1st ca.15 were noted on Holy Island (ADM).

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

N passage was noted at the end of the month with 84 in 2 hours at Newbiggin on 27th and 35 in one hour there on 30th (AT), six in 90 minutes at Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) on 27th (IK) and one at Druridge Links on 31st (IDR).

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

Light passage was noted at Seahouses Harbour on 28th when 50+, nearly all sub-adult birds, flew N in 55 minutes (DWS) and five flew S at Marshall Meadows on 31st (MHu). Offshore ca.30 were in Druridge Bay on 31st (IDR) and 20 at Low Newton on 27th (TRD/JD). Two were in Druridge Bay on 17th. An interesting record was of one flying S ca.800 metres inland over Chugdon Wood, Ellington on 30th (TB). One was found dead at Holy Island North Shore on 6th with fishing line down its throat (IK).

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Four flew N at Druridge Links on 31st (IDR) The peak roost count was 30 at Blyth South Harbour on 19th (STH/PJA). Nine were at East Chevington North Pool on 14th (DM/ALT/HD/ACo). One to four were noted at Druridge Pools and Links, Hedgeley GP, Whittle Dene Reservoirs and Wylam riverside.

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Two flew N at Low Newton on 27th. The peak count at Meadow Haven (Berwick) was 14 on 15th and nearby on 31st three were at Marshall Meadows and Needle's Eye (MHu). Two were at East Chevington on 12th and one immature at Blyth South Harbour on 19th.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

One was in Warkworth Gut on 21st (NFO).

***Great White Egret** *Ardea alba*

Two adults were at Castle Island on 28th (JPD).

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Three arrived from NE at Tynemouth on 31st (CGK). The peak counts were 12 in the Tweed Estuary on 13th, six at Druridge Pools on 31st (IDR) and five at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 25th (MR). One to four were noted at Arcot Pond, Bywell, Dipton Mill, Elyhaugh Farm (Felton), Gosforth Park NR, Grindon Lough, Hauxley NR, Hexham, Holywell Dene, Leazes Park (Newcastle), Reaver Hill, Riding Mill, Wark, Warkworth Weir, Wylam riverside, and raiding a garden fishpond at Southfield Green, Cramlington.

Breeding activity noted during the month is tabulated below.

Site	Activity	Observer/Date
Druridge Links & Pools	8 nests, 5 occupied (Three young were ringed in one nest and one in another.)	JF/IDR/PHA on 6th
Chollerton	3 nests raised young	MR

Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

Four, constituting the largest group seen in the county to date, arrived at Druridge Pools on 21st, where they remained until 23rd (TB *et al.*). Three remained until 30th, one of which was third calendar year, colour-ringed marked as a nestling at Schiermonnikoog, Netherlands in June 2009 (MSH). Presumably these birds accounted for the records of two at East Chevington North Pool on 25th (SRB), a single immature there on 24th (MSH) and flying S at Amble on 28th (DD-L).

The Druridge Spoonbills on 24th May
Chris Barlow

**Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

The highest counts were nine at Woodhorn Flashes on 29th (GB) and eight at Holywell Pond on 14th (BMo). Three were at Druridge Pools on 5th (IDR). Two were at Big Waters on 17th and singles were at Alnmouth Pond, Capheaton Lough, Cocklawburn Pond, Pallinsburn House, Rothley Lakes and Twizel (Berwick).

Breeding data are as follows:

Location	No of Broods	No. of young	Observer/Comments
Swallow Pond	3	5	JPD by 27th
Woodhorn Flashes	1	5	CDH on 15th
Heighley Gate Garden Centre Pond	1	3	DM on 30th
Arcot Pond	1	2	LJM on 18th
Newton Pool	1	1	TRD/JD/IDR on 27th
Holywell Pond	1	?	BMo on 14th

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

The peak count at Whittle Dene Reservoirs was eight on 25th (MR). Seven including juveniles were at Killingworth Lake on 1st/25th (BMo/LJM). The maximum count at Derwent Reservoir was five on 31st (IFo). A pair was at Airy Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield) all month (IFo) and a pair was nest-building at Big Waters on 1st (GB). Pairs were also noted at Druridge Pools on 2nd /10th, displaying, and on the same dates at East Chevington North Pool and at Bothal Pond on 19th. Singles were noted at Cresswell Pond and Holywell Pond.

Black-necked Grebe

Up to four birds were noted at both regular breeding sites.

April A pair was present throughout April at one site.

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Two birds were seen near Bywell Cottagebank on 4th and two were also seen at Wallish Walls on 11th (BNR). Single birds were seen at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 2nd (NO), near Blanchland on 4th (RMH), Chollerford on 7th (SW), Low Wakerley on 13th and 22nd (IFo), Allendale Common on 14th (PS), Hagg Bank (Wylam) on 20th (BNR), near Styford on 27th (JWP) and at Backwood Burn (Harthope Valley) on 28th (ADMc).

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

At the breeding site four birds, one male and three females, were present on the 19th (MSK/NEWT *et al.*). Other single birds were seen at Berwick on 10th (MHu), Cresswell Pond on several dates (ADMc/TB), Druridge Pools on 3rd (ADMc), Gosforth Park on 9th (*per* SRB), Holy Island on several dates (IK/RA), Holywell Pond on several dates (EG/CS), Prestwick Carr on 10th (*per* PCF), Swallow Pond on several dates (JPD/SPP) and at West Chevington on 28th (GB).

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

There were only three sightings of this elusive species during the month (Ra/BNR)

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Pairs were at Cramlington on 2nd and 12th (PJA/DM), Hyons Wood (Prudhoe) on 20th (BNR). Single birds were noted at 23 sites during the month.



Sparrowhawk in a Dinnington garden
Peter Fletcher

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Five birds were at Towsbank on 27th (JSB/EC), Greenhead East on 30th (BNR) and at Kyle Woods on 31st (MSH). Four birds were seen near Clennel on 4th (MJC) and at Haughton Strother (Humshaugh) on 21st (MR). 41 records of one to three birds were received this month.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetuss*

Single birds were noted at Sweethope Lough on 9th & 17th (JMA/RA), East Chevington on 12th (PRM), Colt Crag Reservoir on 26th (RA) and north of Rothbury on 28th (NO).

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Four birds were on Holy Island on 9th (ADM) and two were seen at Haughton Strother (Humshaugh) on 9th (MR) and at Greenhead East on 30th (BNR). Ten records of single birds were received.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Only one record was received this month, involving a single male near Cheviot on 7th (GB).

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

Single birds were noted at several sites in the south west during the month (BNR), Swallow Pond on 6th (JPD), Havannah NR on 21st (GB) and at Monk's House Pool on 23rd (TM).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Two birds were seen at Haughton Strother (Humshaugh) on 9th (MR) and single birds were seen at six other sites. (DM/STH/PJA *et al.*).

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Three birds were at Gosforth Park NR on 25th (*per* SRB), and singles were at Big Waters on 9th (GB), Swallow Pond on 15th (SPP) and at Woodhorn Flash on 21st (PJA/STH).

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Leazes Park (Newcastle) had the highest number with eight birds on 3rd (DM), followed by Druridge Pools with seven on 5th (IDR), five were at Wallsend Hall on 18th (LJM) and four at Arcot Pond on 7th (DM). One – three birds were at six other sites.

Coot *Fulica atra*

18 birds at Big Waters on 22nd was the highest count (GB), and eleven birds were at Swallow Pond on 24th and at Cramlington on 25th (LJM). Nine birds were at Silverlink Biodiversity Park (N Shields) on 12th (LJM). One to eight birds were at 12 further sites.



An attentive Coot parent
Killingworth Lake
Peter Fletcher
19th May

Crane *Grus grus*

Two birds flew S over Holywell Pond on 1st (BD) and a single bird was at Beadnell on 10th (AA/TRD) and at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 13th -14th (PCF *et al.*).



The Whittle Dene Crane in flight
13th May
Peter Fletcher



Oystercatchers in action at Hauxley NR
Chris Barlow

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Breeding reports included five pairs at Hauxley NR, three at Haughton Strother GP and two at Coanwood, one at Kirkharle, incubating at Hexham town, a family group of four in Allendale and nesting on an industrial roof at Wylam; also two displayed on the roof of Cramlington High School. There were 96 at Hauxley NR on 15th (HRS) and the regular high tide roosting flock at Cresswell Pond peaked at 61 on 29th (IFo/STH); 12-32 were noted at Cocklawburn, Druridge, Kitty Brewster and North Blyth. Small numbers were reported from another 19 sites.

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

The first pair was incubating at Cresswell Pond on 4th and two chicks appeared on 25th with a third by 29th at the latest, thus constituting the first breeding by this species in the County. A second pair was incubating by 15th and still sitting at the month end and a third pair was on the scene by 29th.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

Up to four were at Haughton Strother GP with copulation noted on 30th (MR). Two were at Castle Island on 7th (AT), two at Longhirst Flash on 18th (ADM_c) and singles were found occasionally at Airy Holm Reservoir, Beadnell, Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Grindon Lough and West Hartford.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

The Blyth estuary held some good numbers, 223 on 13th (LJM) and 302 on 29th (GB) and 210 were in the Tweed estuary on 22nd (MHu); around 100 were at Holy Island on 15th (ADM). Elsewhere, 18-84 appeared at Alnmouth, Boulmer Haven, Cheswick, Cocklawburn, Cresswell Pond and Low Newton with small numbers at another eight places. The only nest reported was one at North Blyth on 15th (PCF).

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

A pair had one young at Ridlees Cairn on 29th (TRD). Several were at Allendale Common on 14th, 19 at Black Hill on 25th, two at Slaggyford on 11th, one just below the summit of The Cheviot on 7th and one at Dod Hill on 29th. The only coastal migrants were about 40 at Holy Island on 8th (ADM).

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Holy Island held 50+ on 22nd (ADM) but otherwise it was low single figures: five at Kitty Brewster on 8th, up to three at Cresswell Pond on 8th and 12th and one at Berwick on 11th.

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

About 16-17 pairs bred on Holy Island and most produced offspring. Young were also seen at Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Holywell Pond, Slaggyford and Spartylea. Elsewhere 28 were at Acton (Blanchland) on 4th, 18 at Sinderhope on 31st and small numbers were noted at a further 11 places.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

Two were noted at each of Kitty Brewster on 8th (GB), Cresswell Pond on 19th (MSH) and Tynemouth on 26th (DRW).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Highest count was 96 at Cocklawburn on 24th (MHu). St Mary's held 55 on 1st (MSH), including three colour-ringed individuals. One had been in the area since January 2011, having been marked at Gardskagi, Iceland on 28th May 2010. Another present in the area since November 2010 had been ringed at Bewan, North Ronaldsay on 15th May 2007; it was reported back on North Ronaldsay on 14th May 2011. Bamburgh, Cheswick, Coquet Point, Holy Island and Low Newton had 12-32 at times; six at Kitty Brewster on 29th were unusual so far up the estuary.



Sanderling at Hauxley
Chris Barlow

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

One was at Holy Island on 31st (RA).

***Temminck's Stint** *Calidris temminckii*

One was found at Beadnell Flash on 10th (*per* TRD), two were on the east flash at Holywell Pond on 14th and 15th (ASJ *et al.*) and one at East Chevington on 17th (MSK/NEWT).

***Pectoral Sandpiper** *Calidris melanotos*

One was present at Holy Island on 9th to 16th (RA *et al.*).

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

One in non-breeding plumage was at Cresswell Pond on 30th (MSH *et al.*).

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

The few mainland reports were of three at Tynemouth on 11th, one at Stag Rocks on 14th and three at Coquet Point on 24th, with one at the latter on 26th.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

The Tweed estuary held 140 on 8th (MHu) and 83 were in the Blyth estuary at Kitty Brewster on 29th (GB). The most at Cresswell Pond were 23 on 25th, 22 were at Alnmouth on 30th, 15 at Low Newton on 27th and nine at Cheswick on 12th. Up to six featured at Grindon Lough where singing was heard on 29th (MRS) and small numbers were found at another six places.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

Two were at East Chevington on 1st (MSH), two at Swallow Pond on 9th (SPP) and two at Druridge Pools on 10th (TRD/JD). Singles appeared at Holywell Pond on 24th and at Druridge Pools on 30th.

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Eight were noted at Slaggyford and five at Knarsdale Common on 11th (SW). Otherwise singles, mostly displaying or singing, were found at Alnwick Moor, Blanchland, Dancing Green Hill, Druridge Pools, Dudlees, Holy Island Lough, Pithouse Fell, Prestwick Carr, Quarry House Moor and Sipton Burn.

Snipe is a **target species** for 2011. Please report all records.

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Two were roding at Sleafy Forest on 14th (DM *et al.*) and singles were noted at Allenheads, Bingfield, Harthope Valley, Softley and Woolsington pools.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Five, probably the same, were at East Chevington on 21st/22nd (JPD *et al.*) and Hauxley NR on 28th (CGK/MSH). Cresswell Pond hosted one on 1st to 3rd and 5th/6th with four on 24th (PCF) and probably the same four were also seen on 24th at Druridge Links & Pools (IDR). Three visited Hauxley on 13th with two on 15th, three at East Chevington on 20th and one at Holy Island on 1st.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Around 20 were on Holy Island on 8th (ADM) and ten were at Boulmer Haven on 14th (DM *et al.*). Three were at Kitty Brewster on 7th/8th, three at Low Newton on 27th and singles at Cresswell and East Chevington.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

N passage was light: three at Newbiggin on 8th (GB), three at Howick on 12th (MJC), two at Hauxley on 19th and one at Druridge Links on 3rd; two flew E at Linden Hall on 8th and one W at Holy Island on 8th. Most on the ground were seven at Holy Island on 2nd and up to six at East Chevington. One or two were recorded at Berwick, the Blyth estuary, Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond, the Tweed estuary and Widdrington.

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Larger counts included 49 at Fenham-le-Moor and 30+ in Budle Bay on 31st (MSH), 23 at Black Hill on 25th (SW) and 11 at Slaggyford on 11th. Eight or fewer were noted at a further 20, mostly breeding, areas.

***Terek Sandpiper** *Xenus cinereus*

An adult at Hauxley NR found by a visiting birder on 28th remained to 30th (HRS *et al.*).



The Hauxley Terek Sandpiper
29th May Colin Bradshaw

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

On the breeding front, three pairs were noted at Featherstone Castle on 27th (JMA), two pairs at Fontburn Reservoir, two pairs at Cornhill on Tweed and single pairs at Clennel, Druridge Pools and Wark. Three were at Eals on 27th and at Reaver Hill on 2nd, with two at Backworth, Beanley, Branton GP, Carham on Tweed, Castle Island, Chollerford, Colt Crag Reservoir, Cupola Bridge, Derwent Reservoir, East Chevington, Haydon Bridge, Hexham, Ingram Bridge, Lilburn Tower, Riding Mill and the Tows Bank area. Singles appeared at another 11 places. Eight passage birds were at Cresswell Pond on 8th (ADMc).



Common Sandpiper
Druridge Pools
10th May
Tim Dean

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Two singles: at Sheepwash Bridge on 2nd (PCF) and Hauxley NR on 29th (STH).

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

An adult in summer plumage was in the Blyth estuary on 7th (GMi).

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Two were found in the Blyth estuary on 7th (GMi) and at West Hartford on 25th (LJM). Singles were present at East Chevington 1st to 3rd, Bothal Pond and Druridge Pools on 2nd, the Blyth estuary, Cresswell Pond and Druridge on 8th, Cresswell Pond and Warkworth Gut on 13th, the Wansbeck estuary on 15th and Hauxley NR on 26th.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

An excellent spell for this migrant was headed by seven at West Hartford on 6th to 8th (PJA/LJM *et al.*) with two present on 10th. Four flew around Swallow Pond on 6th (JPD/SPP) before moving off S and one was there on 8th; three were at Bothal Pond on 1st (AA) and three at Druridge Pools on 6th (IDR). Singles were reported at Beadnell Flash on 10th/13th, Druridge Pools on 2nd and Earsdon on 11th.

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

A 'deranged' adult led the observer away from obvious young in grass at Sinderhope on 31st (BNR). All other breeding reports were largely circumstantial. Five or six were present regularly at Grindon Lough (DM/PRM), five at Hauxley NR on 15th, up to two at Druridge Pools and singles at Blanchland, Knarsdale Common, Knockburn, Slaggyford and West Hartford.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

The few reports involve five at Hauxley NR on 15th (HRS), two at Newbiggin on 8th (GB) and two at Tynemouth on 26th (DRW).

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

A dark phase flew S at Newbiggin on 27th (ADM/AT) and a pale phase N at Holy Island on 28th (IK).

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

One flew N at Newbiggin on 27th (AT/ADM).

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

The breeding colony at Needle's Eye, north of Berwick, is still expanding with at least 700 adults present on 31st (TRD). Nearby the roost at the Tweed Estuary held 132 on the 6th (MHu). Elsewhere only a few reported with two at Elswick Wharf in Newcastle gathering nesting material on the mudflats on 5th (DM), two adults at Blyth Harbour on 19th (STH/PJA) and a single with terns at the Long Nanny beach on 27th (TRD/JD).

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

The peak count was a gathering of 250 at Haydon Bridge on 2nd (JMA) followed by 105 at Elyhaugh Farm (Felton) on 29th (JF/IDR) and 97 at the River Wansbeck in Morpeth on 30th (DM). Smaller groups of 42 at Druridge on 19th catching St Mark's flies over the bushes (IDR) and 36 at Hauxley on 15th (HRS) were noted. Nesting attempts included 16 visible nests at Swallow Pond on 24th (LJM), a lone nest in a tyre on the island at Big Waters on 17th (GB) and a pair in suitable habitat at High Acton Mill near Blanchland on 16th (RWM/MIM). Otherwise up to 15 at various localities both coastal & inland.

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

The gathering of first-summer in the Druridge Bay area has again been notably on a small scale hence echoing last year's reduction in numbers. The peak count of five first-summer and a second-summer at East Chevington was made on 30th (TB) showing a gradual rise from one on the 11th, two on 22nd and five on 26th. Probably the same individuals were responsible for counts at Cresswell Pond with a peak there of four first-summer on 28th (MSH) with a lone first-summer lingering there from 26th to 30th. At the Long Nanny three first-summer and an adult were a notable addition to the tern gathering on the beach on 27th (TRD/JD). Finally two first-summer were found at Monk's House Pool on 22nd (TM) and a single at Holywell Pond on 22nd (EG).

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

A single sighting at Newbiggin of a first-summer on 1st (STH) was the only report this month.

Common Gull *Larus canus*

The only sightings noted all month were 42 first-summer at Haughton Strother GP near Humshaugh on 1st (MR), ten at Elyhaugh Farm (Felton) on 29th (JF/IDR) and six first-summer at the Tyne Estuary on 31st (CGK).

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

Some large spring gatherings were noted with 49 at Swallow Pond on 16th increasing to 60 on 18th (SPP/JPD), 45 at Elyhaugh Farm (Felton) on 29th (JF/IDR) and 36 at Elswick Wharf on the Tyne on 5th (DM). Nesting attempts involved two nests at Davy Bank (Wallsend) on 31st (CDH) and a juvenile at Grindon Lough on 29th with three adults was presumably locally bred. Otherwise numbers noted were small with up to 12 at a variety of localities.

'Northern' Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus intermedius*

One at Swallow Pond on 15th (JPD) was identified as this Scandinavian subspecies.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argentatus*

Some large counts noted with peaks of 220 at the Seghill tip on 10th (CGK) which included 85 first-summer, 198 on the Tweed Estuary on 13th (MHu) during a WeBS count, 180 on the Tyne Estuary on 31st (CGK), 150 at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 31st (mostly first-summer birds) and 140 at Elyhaugh Farm (Felton) on 29th (JF/IDR). The only breeding noted was of nine nests on buildings at Davy Bank (Wallsend) on 31st (CDH). Otherwise up to 12 birds seen at a number of localities. A leucistic bird or possibly a hybrid was present at the Tyne Estuary from 27th to 31st (KWY/CGK) where it gave every impression of being an Iceland Gull at distance but photos have revealed the primaries to have dark markings. Closer inspection may reveal its true identity.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

Only two reports received, three at Druridge on 17th (MJCo) and a single at Hauxley on 15th (HRS).

Little Tern *Sternula albifrons*

The Long Nanny breeding colony had at least 30 adults present on 27th (TRD/JD) with lesser numbers on other dates. A gathering of 14 at Budle Point on 14th (CGK) were probably birds from the Lindisfarne colony where four to five pairs were noted on 6th (IK). The only other reports were of five at Low Newton on 27th (TRD/JD) plus a single N at Newbiggin on 1st (STH/AT) and, unusually, one at East Chevington North Pool on 24th (MSH) bathed briefly before flying out to sea.

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

The only sighting was a single at Pam Point (Amble) on 26th (TM).

White-winged Black Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus*

A fine adult in full summer plumage on 9th (JF) was first seen at Cresswell Pond before moving to East Chevington. The following day it again favoured East Chevington with a brief visit to Druridge Pools (CDB) for 20 minutes. It then remained faithful to East Chevington and showed well until the 12th.



The summer plumaged White-winged Black Tern
Druridge Pools 10th May by Chris Barlow

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

Some large counts were made with the peak being 142 at Saltpan Rocks (Cocklawburn) on 12th (MHu). A high-tide roost count at Budle Point on 14th (CGK) revealed at least 140 to be present. Other large concentrations noted were 86 at Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 1st (MHu), 80 at East Chevington on 14th (MN) and 80 at Low Newton on 27th (TRD/JD). The only group noted in the S of the county was 45 at Tynemouth on 11th (DRW). At Druridge 25 were noted offshore on 31st (IDR) with 20 at Little Beach (Berwick) on 31st (TRD). The only other coastal reports were of three at the Long Nanny on 27th (TRD/JD) and a single at Hauxley on 15th. Of most interest though was a single at Houghton Strother GP on 25th which was found dead on 30th (MR). This was a ringed individual and the details have been sent to the BTO.

Common Tern washing at Hauxley
24th May by Peter Fletcher

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

The prime locality was Swallow Pond with a peak of 25 found there on 20th (JPD) with lower numbers on other dates. At Big Waters 11 were noted on 9th (GB) and at Whittle Dene Reservoirs seven were seen on both 14th and 17th (PRM/EAW/JSB) with seven also found on the Tyne Estuary on 31st (CGK). The Gosforth Park colony comprised nine birds on 17th (*per* SRB) but were being continually harassed by a Magpie. Up to four were seen at Arcot Pond, Backworth, Druridge, East Chevington, Elswick, Hagg Bank, Hauxley, Horton Grange, Low Prudhoe and West Allotment Pond.



Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*

At the Coquet island breeding colony ten birds were present on 17th (TAC) when the first eggs were laid. Otherwise only singles reported with birds offshore at Druridge on 19th (IDR), on the beach at the Long Nanny on 27th (TRD/JD) and at Hauxley on 30th (MSH).

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

The Long Nanny breeding colony had at least 600 birds present on 27th (TRD/JD). The only other reports were four at Cheswick on 9th (MHu) and three at East Chevington on 20th (JSB).

Guillemot *Uria aalge*

Offshore at Low Newton at least 120 were noted moving back and forth on feeding forays on 27th (TRD/JD). On the breeding cliffs north of Berwick at Needle's Eye at least 120 were present on the cliffs at this expanding mainland colony on 31st (TRD). Around 40 were present offshore at Druridge on 31st (IDR).

Razorbill *Alca Torda*

Up to ten were offshore at Low Newton on 27th (TRD/JD) with five on the breeding cliffs north of Berwick at Needle's Eye on 31st (TRD) and four offshore at Druridge on 31st (IDR).

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

Four moved S at Low Newton on 27th (TRD/JD) with two N on 29th (GB). A single bird on the cliffs north of Berwick at Needle's Eye was found in ideal breeding habitat (TRD).

Rock Dove / Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

There were just two reports: 25 at Elyhaugh Farm (Felton) on 29th (JF/IDR) and two at Chibburn Farm (Widdrington) on 5th (MJCo).

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

The peak count was 25 at The Whiggs (Great Whittingham) on 30th (ALT) with eight at Hagg Bank (Wylam) on 5th (BNR), five at Gosforth Park N.R. on 11th (*per* SRB), four at Blagdon Hall Estate on 22nd (LJM/PJA) and three at two locations on the Beldon Burn on 7th (BNR). Two birds, often pairs, were reported from 15 widespread localities and singles from a further five including five locations in Jesmond Dene.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

The peak counts were 133 at Swallow Pond on 28th (JPD), 80 at Marden Farm (Tynemouth) on 5th (MN), 45 at Beaufront Hall (Hexham) on 10th (BNR), 29 at Druridge Links and Pools (IDR) and 13 at Chibburn Farm (Widdrington) on 5th with 12 at Jesmond Dene on 1st (MJCo). Two to eight birds were at three further locations with a nest found at Druridge Links and Pools on 5th having had two large young predated by 19th (IDR).

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

A two-hour TTV at Dinnington produced 23 birds on 12th (LJM) whilst five were in the observer's garden in that location on 14th (PCF). Four were at Hagg Bank (Wylam) on 19th (BNR), three in gardens at Old Hartley and Walbottle (RJP/KR/LR) and two at Druridge Links and Pools, Ellington Pond, High Chibburn Farm and Welton near Whittle Dene.

Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*

A single bird was found at Prior's Park Allotments (Tynemouth) on the 11th (DRW).

The Prior's Park Turtle Dove
Duncan Watson on 11th May

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

Three males were chasing each other at Fontburn Reservoir on 2nd (TRD/JD) whilst two were found at Tows Bank on 1st (BNR), West Hepple on 3rd (TAC), Winnows Hill (Slaley) on 4th (RMH), Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 4th and 19th (TB/ASJ), Slaggyford on 11th (SW) and Harthope Valley on 14th (BCFT). Single birds generally calling were found at a further 17 widespread localities.



Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Only one report of two birds at Holywell Dene on 19th (KWY) and a single hunting there on 24th (CS). Breeding was confirmed by young in nest at Stagshaw (Corbridge) (MR) and food-carrying at Warkworth Gut on 8th (NFO). Singles were also at The Snook (Holy Island) on 8th and 15th (ADM), Chevington North Pool on 9th (ADM), Holywell Pond on 11th (EG), Bellion on 13th (TRD/JD), Cresswell Pond on 27th (TB) and Widdrington Moor on 31st (AT).

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Birds were seen at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) and Swallow Pond all month (TB/JPD) with nests found at Old Deanham (Wallington) on 6th (SRB) and Hedley on the Hill on 8th (AA). Single birds were seen or heard at Whalton on 1st, Hepscott Manor on 10th (ADM), Longwitton on 7th (JD), Rising Sun Farm on 15th (SPP), Portgate (Corbridge) on 19th (TWi), and Widdrington Station on 29th (JF/IDR).

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Three were calling occasionally at Scotland Gate during the month (SLB/MSK) and three were calling at Wark North Tyne on 14th (PRM). Two males called at Gosforth Park and a pair called at Prestwick Carr on 14th (DM/ALT/HD/ACo) with single calling birds at High Shield (Allenheads), Ayre Castle, Bingfield, Oakwood, Ovingham, and Tyne Green (Hexham) on three dates. Birds were seen being mobbed at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 4th (TB), and Grindlestone Law on 25th (JSB) with an individual roosting on a tit nest box at Dipton Wood on 20th (AT). Single birds were also at Hulne Park (Alnwick), Halton Red House, Rothbury, Simonburn, Slaggyford, Thropton and at Northumberland Park North Shields all month.

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

A pair was seen being mobbed by Magpies whilst hunting in the south east of the county on the 4th with a single at the same location on 1st (PJA/DM).



Three views of an upland master
A Short-eared Owl in the south west
John Clark
27th May

**Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus*

Probable breeding was confirmed in the south west of the county with two individuals there on 27th and a single hunting on 14th (JSB/EC/DM *et al.*). Single birds were also seen at Chare Ends (Holy Island) on 1st (ADM) and Knarsdale Common on 11th (SW).

Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*

A single bird was observed for ten minutes having been disturbed by a dog walker at High Acton Mill between Derwent Reservoir and Slaley on 13th (DW).

Swift *Apus apus*

Birds were observed from the 1st of the month with two birds at Farnley (Corbridge) and Shiremoor with a single at Alnwick on that date (RB/MB/CGK/JMA). Over the next five days there were reports of one to seven birds from 14 widespread localities with the first double-figure counts being 16 at West Ord and 10+ at Wark on 7th (MHu/PRM/EAW). The peak counts for the month were 100+ at Swallow Pond on 24th (JPD), 90 at Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 27th (ASJ), 60 at Cresswell Pond on 15th (IF) and 40+ at East Chevington on 22nd (MSH). One to 32 birds were seen at 24 further widespread localities.

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Only five reports of single birds at Farnley (Corbridge) on 1st (RB/MB), Chollerton on 8th (ALT), Mitford on 19th (AT), Reeth Pond (Newburn) on 23rd (PCF) and Castle Farm Bridge (Jesmond Dene) on 29th (MJCo).

Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*

A bird found in a hawthorn bush by the willows at Chare Ends (Holy Island) on 1st stayed until 6th (ADM/MJC).

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

The only report of two birds came from Dipton Mill on 9th where two called close together (BNR). There were 23 reports of single birds with Harthope Valley, Gosforth Park and Dipton Wood being the hotspots. Other sites were Arcot Pond, Healey, Heddon on the Wall, Letah Wood (Hexham), Fontburn Reservoir, Forestburn Gate, Netherwitton, Oldpark Wood, Sleafy Forest, Swallow Pond (rare at this location - possibly only the second record) and Weetslade CP.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

The peak count was three pairs plus young in nests at Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 22nd (MNC) and six at Gosforth Park N.R. on 25th (LJM). Five adults visited an Old Hartley Garden on 21st with birds recorded throughout the month from 11th (RJP). A pair fed three young at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 28th (TB) and three were found at Holywell Pond on 26th (MN), Prestwick Carr on 27th (PCF) and Redesmouth near Steele on 31st (ADM). Two birds were at Felton, Prudhoe, Rising Sun CP, Stonehaugh and Whickhope with singles at a further 34 widespread localities

Magpie *Pica pica*

The peak count was 39 at Swallow Pond on 3rd with 35 there on the 20th (JPD). Only two other reports of six at Druridge Links and Pools on 5th (IDR) and two in Jesmond Dene on 22nd (MJCo).

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Three were at Hulne Park (Alnwick) on 27th (TAC/MLC) with pairs at South Healey on 2nd, Allen Banks on 10th (ADM), Broomfield Fell (Longwitton), Holystone Common on 7th (PCF) and Redesmouth near Steele on 31st (ADM). Singles were found at Beacon Hill, Plessey North Moor (Cramlington), Dipton Wood, Hepburn Woods, Jesmond Dene, Oldpark Wood, Pallinsburn House, Prospect Hill, Swallow Pond, Tranwell and Whitfield Hall

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

Peak counts of 80 at Whitfield Hall on 21st (BNR), 76 on a two-hr TTV in the Clennel tetrad on 4th (MJC), 74 at Swallow Pond on 6th (JPD) and 38 at Tows Bank S on 1st (BNR). One to eight birds were at Druridge Links and Pools, Jesmond Dene, a Walbottle garden, Welton and Chibburn Farm (Widdrington).

Birds showing characteristics of the Nordic race ssp *monedula* were at Brunton Park (Gosforth) on five dates from 3rd to 24th (GB) and Woosington on several dates around the 7th (CDB).

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

A two-hour TTV on 4th recorded 322 in the Clennel tetrad (MJC) and 188 were found at Redesmouth near Steele on 31st (ADM). Eighty were in the Juniper/Dye House/Dotland area on 3rd (BNR), 73 on a TTV at Chibburn Farm (Widdrington) on 5th (MJCo) and 38 at a rookery with around 15 AONs at West Ditchburn on 28th (TAC/MLC). Nine were found on a BBS survey at Welton on 10th (MJCo) and four visited a Walbottle garden on 1st (KR/LR).

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

The peak count was 113 at Redesmouth near Steele on 31st (ADM) with 17 at Elswick on 5th (DM) eight were at Druridge Links and Pools on 5th and Elyhaugh Farm (Felton) on 29th (IDR/JF) with six at Jesmond Dene on 18th (MJCo). An aberrant bird with grey wings was at Holy Island leading to some mistaken claims of Hooded Crow (IK).

Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix*

The real McCoy was at Holy Island on 10th (RA) and presumably the same bird at Seahouses (North Sunderland) on 14th, 15th and 21st (CGK/MSH).

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

A BBS count at Kyloe Woods on 25th found 28, nearly all singing (Tbr), whilst a two-hour TTV at Broomfield Fell (Longwitton) on 7th recorded 11 (PCF). Six sang at Dipton Woods on 14th (DM), two were in the Vicar's Garden (Holy Island) on 1st (ADM), at Dipton Wood on 2nd and Beldon Burn on 7th (BNR). Single birds were found at Dam Dykes (Cramlington), Westwood (Hexham), the Snook (Holy Island), four locations in Jesmond Dene, Whickhope and Whitfield Hall.

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Nineteen at Elyhaugh Farm (Felton) on 29th included four singing males and a family party (JF/IDR), ten were at Greenhead East on 30th (BNR) whilst a pair had seven nestlings in a box at Stannington on 19th (RWM/MIM). Seven were caught and ringed at Ellington Pond on 28th with four pulli ringed there on 27th and four at two nests in boxes at High Chibburn Farm (Druridge) on 3rd (IDR/JF). Eight young fledged from a clutch of ten in a Walbottle garden nest-box whilst a pair used an artificial Sand Martin nest at Gosforth NR and broods at Kirkley Hall were reported fledging two weeks earlier than normal. One to two birds were at Jesmond Dene, Swallow Pond and Welton.

Great Tit *Parus major*

Low numbers with nine at Whitfield Hall/ Park Head on 21st the peak count (BNR). Four were at Jesmond Dene on 18th (MJCo) and Elyhaugh Farm (Felton) on 29th (JF/IDR) with pairs feeding young at Stannington on 19th (RWM/MIM) and Dam Dykes (Cramlington) on the same date (DM). A clutch of five laid in a nest-box in a Walbottle garden all successfully fledged (KR/LR). Singles were at Druridge Links and Pools, Ellington Pond (re-trapped), Chibburn Farm (Widdrington) and Welton.

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

The peak counts were 15 on a BBS at Kylloe Woods on 25th (TBr), nine at Softley on 29th (BNR), six at Prestwick Carr on 27th (PCF) and four at Elyhaugh Farm (Felton) on 29th (JF/IDR). Two birds visited an Old Hartley garden during the month with singles at Druridge Links and Pools, Jesmond Dene and High Chibburn Farm (Widdrington).

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

An adult with at least three fledged young was at Slaley Hall on 29th (RMH), two were at Bingfield on 1st (ALT) and single singing birds at Prestwick Carr on 8th and Cramlington on 16th (PCF).

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

Three were at Redesmouth on 30th (ADM), two at Mitford on 2nd (ADMc) and an adult fed a juvenile at Linden Hall on 22nd (NFO). Just two reports of singles at Hartburn Bridge on 1st and Oldpark Wood on 3rd.

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Reports from just six locations the peak being 13 on a BBS at Welton near Whittle Dene on 10th (MJCo). Nine were singing at Weetslade Colliery CP on 1st (LJM), eight at Broomfield Fell (Longwitton) on 7th (PCF), seven including five males at Druridge Links and Pools on 3rd (IDR), six on a TTV at Chibburn Farm (Widdrington) on 5th and five at St Mary's on 20th (ASJ).

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

The peak counts were at colony sites being 61 at Tyne Green (Hexham) on 27th (BNR) with ca. 50 at Moot law Quarry (Ingoe) on 7th (ALT). 47 were at Druridge Links and Pools on 5th with 30+ there on 6th (IDR), around 30 at Farnley (Corbridge) on 1st and at Monk's House Pool on 31st (RB/MB/MSH). Twenty were at Branton on 5th and Riding Mill on 14th with six to 12 at Beehive Flash (Earsdon), Ellington Pond, Greenhead, Lambley and two locations at Wylam. Colony counts recorded 49AON at Spetchells (Prudhoe) on 29th (TWi) and nine at Red Burn near West Ditchburn on 28th (TRD/JD) whilst movement was noted at Budle Point on 15th with 30/h moving west (CGK).



A Sand Martin
Druridge Ponds
21st May
Peter Fletcher

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

The peak count was 70 moving N at East Chevington on 8th (IF), with 43 at Greenhead East/Blenkinsopp Wrytree on 30th (BNR) and 40+ near Denwick on 28th (DS/BS). Numbers at Druridge Links and Pools were above 30 from 3rd to 19th the peak being 40+ on 6th with eight AON at Druridge (IDR). 19 were found during a BBS at Welton on 10th (MJCo), 18 at Tyne Green (Hexham) on 27th (BNR), 15+ at Ellington Pond on 28th (JF/IDR), 13 at Dipton Mill on 9th and 11 at Whitfield Hall on 21st (BNR). Four to ten birds were reported from four further locations with nesting records from Exhibition Park (four pairs), Dam Dykes (Cramlington) (one pair), Dobbies Garden Centre (Ponteland) (two pairs) and Heighley Gate Garden Centre (Morpeth) (two pairs) (DM). Movement records involved 120/h W at Budle Point on 14th and two over Cheviot summit on 7th (GB).

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

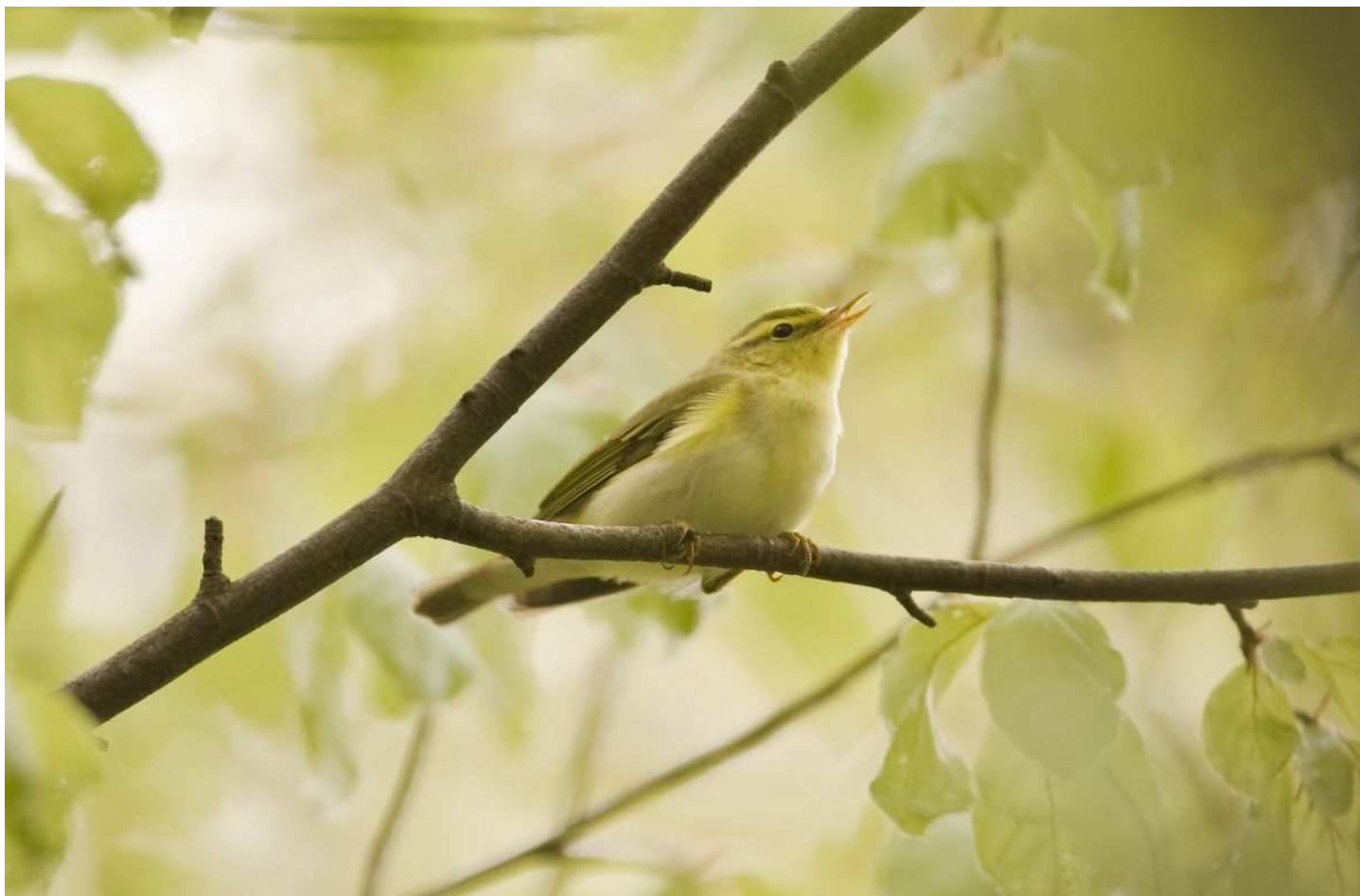
A gathering of 150 after rain at Gosforth Park NR on 23rd was the highest count (*per* SRB), with 40 at Backworth on 11th (MN), 30 at Capheaton Village on 14th (DM), 20 at Cresswell Pond on 15th (IF), 19 at Beldon Burn (Newbiggin) on 7th (BNR) and 15 at Druridge Links and Pools on 19th (IDR). At Netherton Park (Stannington) the peak was 12 on 11th (RWM/MIM) whilst one to ten birds were seen at Aydon, Cramlington, Dotland, Exhibition Park Newcastle, Felton, Holywell Dene, Northumberland Park (North Shields), Parson Shields, Rothbury and Whitley Bay with nesting noted at Netherton Park on 15th (one pair) and Whitley Bay on 24th (five pairs) (JMA).

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

Family parties included 16 birds (perhaps two families) at Three Hills NR (Wideopen) on 21st (GB), 14 (three families) at Rothbury (Old Railway Line) on 31st, 8 (seven juveniles) at Rothbury on 19th and six to seven at Richardson Dees Park (Wallsend) and Wallsend Dene from 18th-19th. One to six were reported from a further nine inland localities.

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

The only reports were of three at Sidwood on 16th (ASJ) and one singing at Cupola Bridge on 5th (CB).



Wood Warbler singing
5th May
Cupola Bridge
Colin Bradshaw

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

The only passage birds were six at Holy Island on 1st-2nd and again on 6th, three on 8th and one on 22nd (ADM *et al.*). Nine were singing at Crow Hall Lane (Cramlington) on 7th (DM) and seven at Wallsend on 30th. Seven were in Jesmond Dene on 1st. Four to six were reported from Carlisle Park (Morpeth), Dipton Mill, Dipton Wood, Felton, Kellas (Slaley), Ponteland and Tyne Green (Hexham) and one to three from a further ten localities, including a pair feeding young at Craster by 20th.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

A light coastal fall occurred early in the month with a peak of 23 at Holy Island on 8th (MJC/ADM) and up to seven at Druridge Links/Pools on 3rd (IDR). A highly impressive 62 singing males were counted between Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) to Garleigh Moor on 19th (ASJ). Elsewhere 34 were singing at Swallow Pond on 6th (JPD) and at Wingates on 22nd (ASJ), 32 at Alnwick Moor on 2nd (TAC/MLC), 18 were reported from Longwitton and Prestwick Carr, 17 near Felton, 15 singing at Branton GP, 13 singing at Kellas (Slaley) and 11 at Whickhope Nick. One to ten were reported from a further 17 potential breeding areas.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

This species was widely reported again this month, with a peak count of 18 at Swallow Pond on 6th (JPD). Six singing males were at Crow Hall Lane (Cramlington) on 7th (DM) and six (three pairs) at Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 29th (MNC). Four to five were noted at Farnley (Corbridge), near Felton, Jesmond Dene, Richardson Dees Park & Wallsend Dene, Silverlink CP (North Shields), Tyne Green (Hexham), Widdrington, Whitfield Hall, Widehaugh (Hexham) and Wylam and one to three from a further 19 localities including a first *BTO Atlas* record for Kingston Park Metro Station.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

Four passage birds were at Holy Island and one at Newbiggin GC on 8th (MJC/ADM/GB). In breeding areas the highest counts were seven singing at Linden Hall on 9th (NFO), five at Barrasford on 2nd (SW) and four at Farnley, Juniper and Softley (BNR). Counts of three came from Hyons Wood (Prudhoe), Hagg Bank (Wylam) and Stonehaugh and one to two from a further 24 localities.

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

Two passage birds were at Holy Island and one at Newbiggin GC on 8th (MJC/ADM/GB). Three to four were singing at Swallow Pond all month (JPD), three at East Chevington on 2nd (NFO) and Holywell on 12th (ASJ) and two at Whalton on 1st and Kirkley Hall on 17th (ADM). Single birds were reported from Alnmouth, Arcot Pond, Benridge Moor, Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay), Dinnington, Druridge Pools, Earsdon, Low Cocklaw (Berwick), Mitford, an Old Hartley garden, Pegswood, Prestwick Carr, St Mary's Wetland, Tynemouth, Wark-on-Tweed, Warkworth Lane, West Brunton, West Hartford and Widdrington Moor.

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

Passage birds included a peak of four at Holy Island on 8th (ADM) and one there on 22nd. Some sizeable populations were noted in favoured areas including 33 singing from Holywell-Backworth on 15th (ASJ), 31 at Swallow Pond on 6th, 26 at Wingates on 22nd (ASJ), and 17 in the Dan Dykes-Beacon Lane (Cramlington) area on 7th (DM), 15 at Prestwick Carr on 14th (PCF) and 14 at North Sunderland on 10th (MJC). Up to nine were reported from Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) and Brockwell (Cramlington) area and one to five at a further 25 mainly lowland localities.

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

Optimistic migrants were heard on Holy Island on 2nd (North Dunes) and 6th (The Heugh) (MJC/IK). At Druridge Links/Pools the peak count was four (three reeling) from 3rd-6th (IDR). Three were heard at Arcot Pond on 1st (DM), East Chevington on 7th (MN) and well inland at Slaggyford on 11th (SW) and two at Big Waters on 1st and St Mary's Island on 22nd. Singles were reported from Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay), Craster, Cresswell Pond, Duke's Pond, East Sleekburn, Errington Red House (Colwell), Gosforth Park, Holywell Pond, Linden Hall, Long Nanny, West Hartford and Widdrington Moor. More unusual was a bird singing from a private garden at Netherton Park (Stannington) to 5th.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

By far the highest count was 36 at East Chevington on 7th (MN). A 2.5km stretch of the Lower Whiteadder Water (Berwick) produced 18 on 10th (TBr) when 13 were singing at Arcot Pond (LJM). Counts of 12 came from Gosforth Park NR, Prestwick Carr and the Whittle Dene Reservoirs area from 10th-14th, nine at Holy Island Lough on 6th, eight+ at Holywell Pond on 7th and eight from Branton GP, Druridge Pools and Lesbury. One to four were reported from a further 13 localities including an unusual migrant at Brandling Park (Jesmond) on 13th and one at Linden Hall (the first for eight years) on 8th.



Sedge Warbler at Gosforth Park NR
Colin Bradshaw

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

The peak count from the stronghold at Gosforth Park NR was seven on 10th, where a bird was feeding young by 29th (*per* SRB). The other favoured locality at East Chevington held four on 8th (IF) while singles were reported from Backworth, Big Waters, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Holy Island Lough (into a third week), Killingworth Lake, St Mary's Island, Swallow Pond (only the second record), Whittle Dene Reservoirs and Woodhorn Flashes.

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Confirmed breeding was noted at Gosforth Park NR and Houghton Strother GP where pairs were feeding young in nests. Two were at Alnwick on 31st and singles at Barrasford, Beacon Hill (Longhorsley), Blanchland, Cambo, Carlisle Park (Morpeth), Cornhill on Tweed, Fontburn Reservoir, Hagg Bank (Wylam), Jesmond Dene, Langley Castle, Newbiggin Farm, and Rothbury and near Wooperton.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

One to two were reported from 20 typical breeding localities.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Several observers commented on the scarcity of the species this year following the severe winter of 2010-2011. The highest counts were ten (including juveniles) at Softley and seven in Jesmond Dene on 29th (BNR/MJCo). Only two were heard during a survey at Elyhaugh Farm (Felton) on 29th (JF/IDR) and only one in a Druridge Pools / Links patch on 3rd (IDR). A pair was feeding a brood in a tit box at Kenton on 31st.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

420 at Swallow Pond on 28th was the highest count (JPD), followed by 165 at Prestwick Carr on 28th (PCF). Elsewhere 26-70 were reported from Hagg Bank (Wylam), Walbottle and West Hartford and 13 at Jesmond Dene. Most flocks contained good numbers of juveniles.

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

Successful breeding was reported from the Breamish and Harthope Valleys where adults were seen with single juveniles and at Holywell Dene where a juvenile was being fed on 27th, the first successful breeding here in four years. Elsewhere two birds were carrying food at Tows Bank (South Tyne) on 1st; three birds were at Spartylea, two at Ingram and Matfen and singles at Cupola Bridge and Featherstone Castle.



A Dipper doing what Dippers do
Windyhaugh on the Upper Coquet
29th May
Tim Dean

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

Two passage birds were on Holy Island on 1st (RA) and one on 6th (MJC) and further migrants at Backworth on 3rd (MSH) and Ellington on 7th (TB). In breeding areas a minimum of five were at Hawsen Burn (Harthope Valley) on 6th (ADMc) and a single at nearby New Burn. Elsewhere further singles were at Makendon (Upper Coquetdale) and in the south west at Knarsdale Common, Parson Shield and Slaggyford.

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

BTO Atlas work produced TTV counts of 45 in the Gosforth area on 26th and 32 at Dinnington on 12th (LJM). 17 were counted between Tyne Green and Hexham centre on 27th and nine at Welton (Whittle Dene) on 10th. One to eight were reported from a further eight localities, including successful breeding in gardens at Cramlington, Gosforth (2nd clutch), Kenton (2nd or 3rd nest) and Stannington.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

One to two late passage birds were at Holy Island on 2nd, and 6th-7th (TB/IK/MJC). More intriguing were one or more birds in the Harthope Valley at Backwoodburn on 6th and Langleeford on 13th (ADMc).

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

12 'singing in the rain' at Newbiggin (Blanchland) on 7th was the highest count (BNR). Six were counted in Jesmond Dene on 1st (MJCo) and one to four at a further eight localities including juveniles at Lesbury, Slaggyford and Softley.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

Two to three late migrants were at Holy Island on 6th (IK).

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Most reports were of family parties. The highest single count was ten at Swallow Pond on 31st, where two adults and three young were present on 22nd (JPD). In the Newbiggin (Blanchland) area a total of 13 included two family groups on 7th (BNR). In Richardson Dees Park (Wallsend) there was a pair with two young and two other unaccompanied young on 19th (LJM). Elsewhere pairs with young were at Breamish Valley (Bulby Wood car park), Carlisle Park (Morpeth) and Leazes Park (Newcastle). A bird carrying food at Holywell Dene on 27th was considered unusual and a first for the site (RJP). One to two were reported from a further six localities.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

On Holy Island passage birds were a single on 8th, three on 22nd and four on 29th (ADM). In breeding areas birds began appearing during the first week, becoming more widespread by mid-month. At Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) nest building was noted on 12th (MSH) and three pairs were present on 19th (ASJ). Two pairs were at Linden Hall by the end of the month (NFO). Singles or pairs were reported from Berwick, Bolam Lake, Featherstone Bridge, Haughton Strother GP, High Brunton, Holywell Pond, Hulne Park, Backwood Burn and Langleeford (Harthope Valley), Linhope (Ingram Valley), Matfen, Middleton (near Hartburn), Netherwitton, Roddam, Tynemouth, Slaggyford, Snope Burn (South Tyne), Softley, Stamfordham, Stocksfield Hall, Whitfield Hall and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

A BTO Atlas TTV to the Gosforth area produced 27 on 25th (LJM). One to four were reported from a further six localities, including juveniles at Craster, Elyhaugh Farm (Felton) and Jesmond Dene. A pair successfully fledged young from a shed at Dobbie's Garden Centre (Ponteland).

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

There was only one record this month, a male on the Lonnens (Holy Island) on 1st (CP/ADM).

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Very well reported again this month. Seven at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 19th was the highest count (ASJ) followed by four at Fontburn Reservoir on 2nd and Nunnykirk on 19th (TRD/JD/ASJ) and three at Pallinsburn House on 9th (TRD/JD). One to two were reported from a further 53 potential breeding areas. Confirmed breeding was noted at Haughton Strother (leaving nest hole), Howlett Hall (feeding young) and Letah Wood (using a nest box). A passage bird was at Holy Island on 6th.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

There was a light 'fall' from 5th-8th. Six birds were on Holy Island on 8th, and one on 6th (MJC/ADM) and singles at Druridge Links/Pools on 5th, Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 7th, Newbiggin GC, Tynemouth and West Hartford on 8th and Swallow Pond on 11th. In breeding areas the Hawsen Burn was well reported with a peak count of eight+ (five males/three females) on 6th (ADMc). Elsewhere in the Harthope Valley two+ were at Langleefordhope, two at Snear Hill and a single at New Burn on 7th. Four were reported from the Breamish Valley on 17th (LJM). In Upper Coquetdale three were singing at Bygate on 29th (TRD) and a male was at Blackburn. Other singles were at Featherwood (Otterburn Ranges) and Redpath (Harwood).

Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*

On Holy Island (North Dunes) a pair accompanied four juveniles on 15th, perhaps the only breeding pair here this year (ADM). A pair with a single juvenile were at Druridge Links/Pools on 3rd-6th and three juveniles from two broods were reported here on 25th (IDR). The only other coastal record was a male at East Chevington on 14th. Inland a pair were noted at Addycombe (Rothbury) on 28th and singles at Dancing Green Hill (carrying food), Hareshaw Common (Bellingham) and West Chevington.

Stonechat is a **target species** for 2011. Please report all records.

Wheatear *Oenanthe Oenanthe*

On-going passage was noted at Holy Island throughout the month. Ten to 11 were present from 1st-2nd, followed by 11 on 6th, nine on 8th, ten on 15th and seven on 29th (ADM/MJC). Further coastal migrants included up to seven at Druridge Links/Pools on 6th (IDR), six+ at Newbiggin on 8th (GB) and six at Seahouses GC on 25th (NEWT *et al.*). Inland passage produced a peak of seven at Swallow Pond on 6th with one to three until 20th (JPD) and five+ at Backworth on 7th. One to two were reported from 18 upland breeding areas.

Birds showing characteristics of the **Greenland race** *O.o.leucorrhoa* were ten on Holy Island on 6th (IK), three and five at Cheswick on 6th and 9th respectively (MHu), one at Low Hauxley on 19th and another at Cocklawburn on 24th. Perhaps more unusual was an inland bird on clear fell at Whickhope Nick on 17th (BNR).



Male Wheatear
West Hartford
Peter Fletcher

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Four were noted at Nunnykirk on 19th (ASJ), two males were singing at Fontburn Reservoir on 2nd (first record here for several years) and singles at Crabtree Ford (Hexhamshire), Dipton Wood, Gunnerton, High Brunton (no female yet), Slaggyford and Snope Burn (South Tyne).

Dunnoek *Prunella modularis*

Seven were found at Welton near Whittle Dene during an Atlas visit on 10th (MJCo), six at Flyhaugh Farm near Felton on 29th (JF/IDR), five visited a Walbottle garden on 1st (KR/LR) and four at Druridge Pools and Links on 25th (IDR). Two (including a juvenile) were ringed at Ellington Pond on 28th (IDR/JF).

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

20+ were nesting at Rudchester Farm (north of Horsley) on 26th (MJC) and fledged young were being fed by adults at Netherton Park (Stannington) on 19th (RWM/MIM). 49 were noted at Dinnington during an Atlas visit on 12th (LJM), 36 at Greenhead on 30th (BNR), 32 in the Clennel tetrad on 4th (MJC), 20 at Land Ends Farm (Haydon Bridge) on (2nd) (JMA), 12 at Druridge Links and Pools on 3rd (IDR) and Flyhaugh Farm near Felton on 29th (JF/IDR).

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

Successful breeding was observed at Haughton Strother GP (MR), Hepscott (LJM), Linden Hall (NFO) and Wallington Hall (TM). There were two occupied nest boxes at Riding Mill on 3rd (BNR) and a pair were nest building at Backworth on 10th (CGK). 15 were at Haughton Strother GP on 30th (MR), 11 at Elyhaugh Farm near Felton on 29th (JF/IDR), eight on feeders at East Fenton on 30th (TRD/JD), six at Beal Farm on 30th (IK), five at Druridge Links and Pools on 3rd (IDR), four at Dilston on 14th (DM/ALT/HD/ACo) and one-three were also at Akeld Steads, Baralees Farm, Biddlestone Townfoot, Broom House (Alnwick), Cresswell Pond, Donaldson's Lodge, Great Bavington, Hartburn, Hyons Wood (Prudhoe), Kirkharle near Capheaton, Low Cocklaw (Berwick), Middleton Bank Top, Middle Ord (Berwick, Netherton Park (Stannington), Pallinsburn House, Perch's Cross, Prestwick, Roddam, Roddam Rigg (Wooperton), Shotton (Blagdon), Stickle Heaton, Wark, West Brunton and West Ord.

Yellow Wagtail (*ssp* undetermined)

The "Flava" Wagtail reported at Chare Ends, Holy Island on 10th APRIL was not a Blue-Headed Wagtail (MJC).

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava flavisoma*

Breeding was observed at Canty's Brig (near Berwick) on 1st (IK), Rudchester Farm (near Horsley) on 26th (MJC) and West Ord on 31st (TRD). Six at Whittle Dene between 2nd-11th (IK/MR), three at Haughton Strother GP on 7th (MR), Bywell Bridge on 12th (PCF) and Wark on 30th (PRM). Pairs were noted at Broom House near Alnwick on 12th (TRD/JD) and Netherwitton on 13th (TRD/JD). Single migrants were on Holy Island between 7th-8th (IK/ADM/MJC) and Newbiggin Golf Course on 8th (GB). Singles were at Bothal Pond, Coopers Kennel Flash, Cresswell Pond, East Shield Hill near Howick, Scrainwood, near Shelly, Swallow Pond and Vallum Farm near Whittle Dene.

Yellow Wagtail (*Ssp Flavissiona*)

Two males were at Druridge Links and Pools on 24th with a female there on 31st (IDR).

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Breeding was confirmed at Whittle Dene (one juvenile) on 26th (MR), Featherstone Bridge (three juveniles) on 27th (JSB/EC), Holywell Dene (two juveniles) on 27th (RJP), Whittle Dene (one juvenile) on 26th (MR) and Rothbury (two juveniles) on 31st (JD). Three were at Redesmouth on 31st (ADM), two at Hartburn on 7th (TRD/JD), Allen Heads on 16th (TRD) and Jesmond Dene on 29th (MJCo). Singles were also noted at Alnwick, Beanley, Bigg Market (Newcastle) Blindburn, Upper Coquetdale), Cambo, Corbridge, Grainger Street (Newcastle), Hawson Burn (Harthope Valley), Leazes Park (Newcastle), Parson Shield, Redesdale Camp, Sipton Burn (Allendale), Stonehaugh, Thrum Hill (Rothbury), Wark and Whickhope Byreshield.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrellii*

On Holy Island, ten were present on 1st and by 29th there were 14 including three juveniles (ADM). Breeding was confirmed at Druridge Pools and Links (two fledged juveniles) on 25th (IDR). 12 were noted at Redesmouth on 31st (ADM) and four at Greenhead on 30th (BNR).

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

One at Druridge Links and Pools on 5th increased to two on 6th (IDR). One at Cresswell Pond on 12th (PRM) increased to two on 14th (TB) and one again on 19th (MSH). Singles were also observed at Ingram on 7th (TAC/MLC), Lynemouth Flash on 10th (MSH), Holy Island on 15th (LDM), Lynemouth Flash on 20th (TB), Holywell Pond on 26th (MN) and Lynemouth Flash on 31st (MSK/NEWT).

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

Migrants involved two on Holy Island on 8th (MJC/ADM) and a single at Seahouses Golf Course on 25th (NEWT *et al*). Ten were found at Bingfield on 5th (TAC), four at Kellas (Slaley) on 11th (BNR), three at Old Park Wood on 3rd and 13th (TRD/JD), two at Fontburn Reservoir on 2nd (TRD/JD), Chibburn Farm (Widdrington) on 5th (MJCo), Broomfield Fell (Long Witton) on 7th (PCF), Langleeford (Harthope Valley) on 14th (BLFT) and Wingates on 22nd (ASJ). Singles were also noted at Alnwick Moor, Backwood Burn (Harthope Valley), Bellshiel, Dipton Wood, Harbottle, Holystone Common, Matfen, Redesdale Camp, Redpath, Shelly, Slaggyford, Softley, Thrunton Woods, Titlington, Tows Bank (Eals), West Hepple and Winnows Hill (Slaley).



A Meadow Pipit showing what it is made of
Otterburn Ranges on 7th May
Peter Fletcher

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

54 were found at Acton (Blanchland) during an Atlas visit on 4th (RMH), 53 at Blanchland Moor on 1st (RMH), 46 at Whickhope Nick on 17th (BNR), 24 at Druridge Links and Pools on 25th (IDR), 15 at Beldon Burn (Newbiggin) on 7th (BNR), 13 at Broomfield Fell (Long Witton) on 7th (PCF) and 11 at Prestwick Carr on 28th (PCF). Breeding was confirmed at Druridge Pools and Links between 2nd-3rd with three nests (two with eggs, one with very small young) found (IDR).

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

A nesting pair was noted at High Point, Whitley Bay on 21st (MN). Two were also at Stag Rocks, Bamburgh on 14th (DM/ALT/HD/ACo). Singles were at Needles Eye and Little Beach (both Berwick) on 31st (TRD).

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

86 were found in the Clennel tetrad during an Atlas visit on 4th (MJC), 28 at Broomfield Fell (Long Witton) on 7th (PCF), 25 at Elyhaugh Farm near Felton on 29th (JF/IDR) and one-20 were at a further nine widespread localities.

Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*

Five visited a Walbottle garden on 1st (KR/LR) and four at a Cramlington garden on 13th (PJA). One was ringed at Ellington Pond on 28th (IDR/JF).

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

18 including fledged juveniles were at Elyhaugh Farm near Felton on 29th (JF/IDR), 12 at Chibburn Farm, Widdrington on 5th (MJCo) and Druridge Links and Pools on 19th (IDR). One to ten were at a further nine widespread localities. One was ringed at Ellington Pond on 28th (IDR/JF).

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

Three flew S at Lynemouth on 2nd (GB). A newly fledged juvenile was observed at Slaley Hall on 29th (RMH). 20 were observed at Whickhope Jock's Pike on 17th (BNR) and Allenheads Village on 23rd (JMA), 15 at Kyloe Woods on 25th (TB), one at Whickhope Nick on 17th (BNR), ten including juveniles at Stonehaugh on 30th (SW), four at Dipton Wood on 14th (DM/ALT/HD/ACo) and Winters Gibbet (Harwood Forest on 22nd (TRD). One to three were at a further 12 typical localities.

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

26 were at Druridge Links and Pools on 25th (IDR). Eight were at Hyons Wood (Prudhoe) on 20th (BNR), four at Druridge Bay beach on 17th (AJCo), three at Welton near Whittle Dene on 10th (MJCo) and two at Reaver Hill on 2nd (SW).

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis cabaret*

Ten were found at Sipton Burn, Allendale on 14th (DM/ALT/HD/ACo). Four were at Whickhope Nick on 17th (BNR) and Grindon Lough on 26th (PRM), three at Oldpark Wood on 3rd (TRD/JD), Whickhope Jock's Pike on 17th (BNR) and Kilham Hill on 24th (TRD/JD). One to two were at a further ten widespread localities including a migrant on Holy Island on 8th (ADM).

Redpoll *sp.*

Correction In the April 2011 bulletin there is a record of 'Redpoll *Acanthis flammea*' at Big Waters (GB). The bird was indeterminate between Lesser and Mealy.

Common Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

Confirmed breeding was noted at Beldon Burn (BNR), Dipton Wood (BNR), Netherwitton (TRD/JD) and Wickhope Nick (two family parties - BNR). Post-breeding movement was indicated by 33 flying over Matfen on 30th (ALT), 12 south-west over Chapel House (Newcastle) on 26th (IK), four south over Tynemouth on 2nd (KWY) and two at Eshott on 9th (MSH). Ca.40 were at Sleaford Forest on 11th (RMH), 13 at Dipton Wood on 14th (DM/ALT/HD/ACo), ten at Walbottle on 4th (MJC), nine at Grindon Lough on 26th (PRM), seven at Newlands Grange on 16th (TRD), five at Clennel on 4th (MJC), four at Redpath on 22nd (TRD) and Swallow Pond on 25th (JPD). One to three were at a further 11 typical forest localities.

Five were at Craggside on 27th (MJC). Three were found at Tyne Green (Hexham) on 27th (BNR). One to two were at a further 26 widespread localities including gardens at Old Links

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

A male in full breeding plumage was discovered on the summit of Cheviot on 6th (ADM).

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

Ten were found at North Sunderland (Seahouses) on 10th (during an Atlas visit – MJC), eight at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 19th (ASJ), seven at Juniper on 3rd (BNR) and Holywell on 12th (ASJ), six on the edge of Dipton Wood on 14th (DM/ALT/HD/ACo) and one to five at a further seven widespread localities including one ringed at Ellington Pond on 28th (IDR/JF).

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

11 were at Druridge Links and Pools on 3rd (IDR) and East Chevington on 7th (MN), ten at St. Mary's Wetland on 12th (ASJ), five at Arcot Pond on 19th (DM) and one to two at Beehive Flash (Earsdon), Capheaton, Ellington Pond, Slaggyford, Valley Park (Cramlington) and Welton near Whittle Dene.

ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN**Escapes**

Black Swan *Cygnus atratus* A startling addition to Newton Pool with one present on 26th-27th (TM/TRD/JD).

Muscovy Duck *Cairina moschata*

One at Arcot Pond on 21st followed the observer around the pond presumably after food (PJA).

The Newton Black Swan
Tim Dean on 27th May

Indian Peafowl *Pavo cristatus*

Two at Cocklaw Walls on 30th were free to roam (ALT).

Helmeted Guinea fowl *Numida meleagris*

Three at Cocklaw Walls on 30th were free to roam (ALT).

Birds of Unknown Origin**Rose-ringed Parakeet** *Psittacula krameri*

Sightings again at Ponteland with one in Main Street on 10th with presumably the same individual at Prestwick from 13th to 18th where it again favoured a window sill on Hill Top (PCF)

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Those observers marked with an asterisk after their name(s) have submitted records online using the club spreadsheet, copies are available by emailing Dick Myatt at dick@dickmyatt.co.uk

Apologies for any accidental omissions.

BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION

This bulletin was compiled by Lyndsay McDougall (Mute Swan to Egyptian Goose, Red Grouse to Black-necked Grebe), Graeme Bowman (Ruddy Shelduck to Ruddy Duck), Trevor Blake (Honey Buzzard to Crane), Ian Forsyth (Oystercatcher to Skua), Tim Dean (Ivory Gull to Puffin, Escapes, Hybrids and Unknown Origin, List of Contributors, Highlights), Peter Fletcher (Feral Pigeon to Red-rumped Swallow), Mike Richardson (Cetti's Warbler to Pied Flycatcher), Dee McKeown (Dunnock to Corn Bunting), and Steve Holliday (WeBS Inland Counts). Thanks again to Ann McKeown for typing the section Dunnock to Corn Bunting. Thanks to Barbara Welch of NNBC for providing data. Proof reading was by Mike Smith.

Edited by Steve Barrett Sscmagpie@aol.com

Distributed by Alan Watson apusx@blueyonder.co.uk

BULLETIN SECTION WRITER

Ian Forsyth wishes to give up writing the 'Waders' section after several years sterling effort. Have we a volunteer out there willing to take over?

Several evenings at the middle/end of each month are needed. Please send an email to Steve Barrett Sscmagpie@aol.com to volunteer or for more information.

RECORD SUBMISSION

Please send all record cards to Tim Dean, 2 Knocklaw Park, Rothbury NE65 7PW, to arrive on, or preferably before, the 8th of the month following that in which the records were collected. Please write cards legibly to ensure that your sightings are correctly recorded.

E-mail: Members are encouraged to e-mail their records on an Excel-style spreadsheet. Please e-mail Dick Myatt at dick@dickmyatt.co.uk for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and Grid references: The use of standard location names and the inclusion of grid references greatly increases the value of records in subsequent analyses. A 1km square grid reference is the ideal e.g. NY8067 for Grindon Lough, but 2km square references (tetrads) are also acceptable e.g. NY86D in this case. A list of localities and their tetrad grid references (tetrad/Locality List) can be downloaded from the 'Resources & Downloads' section of the Club website at <http://www.ntbc.org.uk> – the use of these names, wherever possible, would be highly appreciated.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Please keep submitting your articles, photographs, sketches and illustrations for the bulletin. Thanks again to those who have supplied the excellent photographs. Please send to Steve Barrett at Sscmagpie@aol.com

ELECTRONIC BULLETIN

The NTBC bulletin can be received electronically or as hard copy. The electronic bulletin arrives earlier than the printed version, it is in colour and we save the cost of printing and stamps. Ask for an e-mailed bulletin from;

jo.bentley@waitrose.com

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS 2011

Annual subscription is a bargain £23. For membership enquiries please contact jo.bentley@waitrose.com

NTBC WEB SITE

The Club website is an excellent resource for all interested in birds in the north east. There are numerous interesting sections, including a photograph gallery, site information and trip reports together with extensive reference information for birding in our area. The site is at www.ntbc.org.uk

If you have any ideas or things you would like to see or hear about on the site please let Chris know on 0751 582 5024 or email christopher.knox@o2.co.uk

NTBC SIGHTINGS PAGE

The club sightings web page gives listings of birds seen locally. Adding a sighting is simple. A short email is all that is needed. If anyone would like to be added as a contributor please contact Alan Tilmouth at ntbcorg@gmail.com

The sightings page can be found at <http://ntbcsightings.posterous.com>

INDOOR MEETINGS

The next meeting will be, as usual, at Newcastle Falcons on Thursday 8th September at 7pm.

The first meeting will be - On Track in Tsavo and Sokoko – the speciality birds of Eastern Kenya

COMMITTEE NEWS

2007-2011 Bird Atlas Sponsorship

The response to the opportunity to sponsor a species in the forthcoming Bird Atlas has been fantastic, with £1400 raised so far. I am sure that there are many members that would like to preserve their name for posterity on the page of their favourite bird but who think they may have missed out in the rush!

Not so, dear friends! There are loads of brilliant birds left, just waiting for your support.

The humble blue tit, magnificent osprey, iconic curlew, kestrel and kingfisher: these are just a few examples of the Northumbrian avifauna waiting anxiously for your cheque.

To secure your selection, email Steve Lowe at zappa99@live.co.uk or phone 0191 2527438 for details.

Go on – you know you want to!

Steve Lowe

Survey Data

The Club has now moved to using the latest data from recent survey work carried out in connection with the Atlas project to respond to data requests. The committee wrote to Mike Hodgson, who had been maintaining and supplying the 'old data' for this purpose on the Club's behalf, to acknowledge and thank him for all the efforts he has made over past years in ensuring we can respond to these data requests.

Bird Fair

A copy of the Northumberland Winter Atlas was donated to the Northumberland Birdfair stand. The Fair starts on 19th August this year.

WeBS

The Club gives a special thank you to Julie Roper for her efforts in coordinating Coastal Webs.

COASTAL WeBS

Due to the recent handover from Julie Roper to Tom Cadwallender of the Coastal WeBS co-ordinator role - the May and June Coastal WeBS reports will be included in the June Bulletin (Bulletin 2011 No 6).

INLAND WeBS

In the April bulletin the Inland WeBS table was shown as 2010 instead of 2011.

NORTH-EAST ENGLAND BEACHED BIRDS

North-east England Beached Bird Survey Group (NEBBS) Newsletter 20 (June 2011) is available on-line at;

<http://www.nhsn.ncl.ac.uk/news/cms/beached-bird-surveys/>

Just page down to the Newsletters section. Please take a look. If you have any feedback please get in touch.

Dan Turner

MOTHS IN NORTHUMBERLAND

Moths can be quite stunning and the great thing is that they can be found pretty much everywhere, including your garden. They are extremely important to the health of our environment by playing vital roles in the ecosystem that sustains life - and that includes us!

Moths and their caterpillars are important food for birds, hedgehogs, bats, frogs, toads and other insects. They are also important pollinators of plants, including many of our food crops.

To date 1,231 different species of moths have been recorded in Northumberland, and new species are being discovered every year. In 2010, 22 new species were recorded in our counties.

The Northumberland moth's website provides access to the county database which currently holds 253,309 records. The earliest record in the database is for a Magpie Moth recorded in June 1769 by The Reverend John Wallis at Simonburn, Northumberland. If you have found a moth and want to know what it is then please browse the gallery, or submit your sighting to the county recorder. If you would like to learn how to catch moths in your garden then check out the get involved page.

www.northumberlandmoths.org.uk

Regards

Tom Tams

County Moth Recorder

INLAND WeBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND

Version:

Interim

Year: 2011

Month: MAY

[illegible]

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

<http://www.ntbc.org.uk/>

Bulletin 2011 No 6

MONTHLY SUMMARY – JUNE

2nd August 2011



HIGHLIGHTS

Garganey	Popular male at Holywell Pond from 5th to 7th.
Goldeneye	Bred again at same site in repeat of the first county breeding last year.
Quail	Many records as last month. Influx continued.
Great Northern Diver	Single off Holy Island on 13th.
Manx Shearwater	Noticeable passage early in month.
Bittern	One summering at Gosforth Park.
Little Egret	Only two birds reported: at Arcot Pond and Lindisfarne.
Spoonbill	Up to four in Druridge Bay area and at Castle Island.
Osprey	Several sites with sightings.
Hobby	Singles at Gosforth Park and at Rising Sun CP.
Avocet	The surviving juvenile still present at Cresswell Pond plus up to eight adults.
Little Stint	Single on Holy Island on 1st and two at East Chevington on 14th.
Ruff	Single at Bothal Pond on 2nd and a male at Castle Island from 27th to 29th.
Black-tailed Godwit	Eight at Amble on 22nd.
Spotted Redshank	One in breeding plumage at East Chevington on 26th.
Wood Sandpiper	Single at Caistron on 12th.
Nightjar	Unusual occurrence of one at Marden farm estate on 9th flushed by a cat !

CONTENTS

Farnes photographs galore.

Indoor Meeting - 8th September – 'The speciality birds of Eastern Kenya'.

Bird Atlas Sponsorship.



A classic Farnes sight
A Puffin with a sand eel dinner
by Peter Tapsell on 27th June

WEATHER

1st to 5th A sunny, settled start to the month. It was particularly warm from 2nd to 4th, with plenty of sunshine and light winds allowing temperatures to climb above 22 deg C widely.

6th to 25th This period was generally unsettled. Heavy thundery showers occurred across northern areas on 7th, transferring E to leave breezy, showery weather until 10th. The nights of 10/11th and 11/12th saw unusually low overnight minimum temperatures, falling widely below 5 deg C with a few rural areas recording an air frost, early on 12th. However, cloud and rain then quickly spread in from the south-west. The unsettled conditions continued, as weather fronts brought further spells of rain or showers, sometimes thundery with gusty south-westerly winds. Between the fronts there were brief interludes of more settled weather. However, showers developed widely on several days, for example on 22nd and 23rd, in a generally brisk westerly air flow.

26th to 30th High pressure brought very warm, humid air across eastern areas. On 26th, temperatures exceeded 27deg C widely in central and eastern areas. On 28th, there was a thundery end to the brief heatwave. The 29th and 30th saw further showers, locally thundery down the eastern side, whilst pressure built to bring fine but rather cool weather.

CLASSIFIED LIST

The following account consists of unchecked reports. The species/subspecies marked * require descriptions.

A complete list of all sightings that need notes is included in the NTBC website www.ntbc.org.uk under the County Records Committee section and in *Birds in Northumbria 2009* page 224.

The Inland and Coastal Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) tables are at the rear of the bulletin. These contain counts additional to those in the Classified List.

TARGET SPECIES

The target species for 2011 are Gadwall, Snipe and Stonechat.

Please report all records for these species.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

The largest gatherings were 376 in Tweedmouth Dock on 27th (MHu), 156 at Killingworth Lake on 6th (LJM), 88 at Castle Island on 12th (STH/DM/PJA) and 14 at Grindon Lough on 11th (PRM). Further broods were noted at Caistron (three broods, 16 young), Castle Island (four young), Bolam Lake (three young), Exhibition Park (Newcastle) (two young), Farnley Haughs (five young), New Heaton (two young), West Allotment Pond (four young), Whittle Dene Reservoirs (seven young) and Woodhorn Flashes (seven young). One to five adults were noted from Broomlee Lough, Greenlee Lough, Leazes Park (Newcastle), where the breeding attempt failed, Linton Ponds, Shield-on-the-Wall and Woodside.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Two were at West Ord on 2nd (MHu) and a single nearby at Norham on 10th (TRD/JD).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Away from breeding sites only low numbers were reported with seven at Catcleugh Reservoir on 2nd and at Castle Island on 12th, four at Grindon Lough on 29th and one at Arcot Pond on 12th. Additional breeding data are as follows:

Location	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/Comments
Caistron	65 adults	85	TRD on 12th
East Learmouth	1	7	TRD on 4th
Backworth	1	6	CGK confirmed brood size on 2nd

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Passage was noted during the month. On 7th 82 flew N at East Ord (MHu), 40 flew N at Ellington on 8th (TB), 18 flew S at St Mary's Island on 9th (CGK), 13 flew N at Budle Bay on 7th (CGK) with another 13 arriving in off the sea at Cresswell on 13th (AT) and four flew S at Berwick Little Beach on 9th (MHu). Peak counts of adults were 128 at Castle Island on 29th (AT), 78 at Killingworth Lake on 24th (LJM), 30 at Cresswell Pond on 18th (MN), 26 flying around Arcot Pond on 8th (BMo) and 23 on the Tyne at Newcastle Business Park on 8th (DM). The peak count at Leazes Park (Newcastle) was 19 on 27th with 13 at Linton Pond on 19th. One to eight adults were at Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Greenlee Lough and Tweedmouth Dock.



A family of Canada Geese
Woolsington Ponds 16th June
by Steve Barrett

Further Canada Goose breeding data are as follows:

Location	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/Comments
Caistron	45 adults	65	TRD on 12th
Castle Island	47 adults	13+	GB on 19th
Cresswell Pond	1	8	MN on 4th
Greenlee Lough	1	5	MRS on 12th
Shasun Pharma Dudley	1	5	LJM on 7th
Bolam Lake	1	5	TRD on 22nd
Widdrington Moor Pond	1	5/6	GB on 25th
East Learmouth	1	3	TRD on 4th
Catcleugh Reservoir	1	2	PRM on 2nd
Plenmeller Common	1	2	BNR on 5th

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Four were on Holy Island on 1st (RA).

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Counts of adults included 143 in Budle Bay on 4th (CGK), 18 at Castle Island on 12th (GB), 16 at Cresswell Pond on 4th (MN), six to 13 at Boulmer, East Chevington, Kitty Brewster and the Long Nanny Estuary, and one to three at Elswick, Middle Ord Pond (Berwick) and Middle Stobswood.

Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods/'crèches'	No. of young	Observer/notes
Cresswell Pond	2+	31	MN between 4th-18th
East Chevington	3	21	PCF on 5th
Castle Island	2-3	18	STH/GB from 12th
Boulmer	2	13	PCF on 29th
Hauxley Reserve	1	9	CDB on 18th
Branton GP	1	8	TRD/JD on 11th
Scotswood	1	7	SRB east of Lemington Gut on 15th
Haughton Strother	1	2	MR on 6th

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

A drake was at Northumberland Park (North Shields) from 6th-8th (MNC).

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

Grindon Lough held 29 (17 drakes) on 11th -12th (PRM/MRS) and eight to 25 between 2nd-29th (TRD/PRM/MRS/AT), 12 were at Cresswell Pond on 30th (AT), and singles at Castle Island and East Chevington.

Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Whitfield Lough	4	16	BNR on 24th: 9 young with two adult females and 7 young with 2 adult females
Capheaton Lake	1	7	STE on 22nd
Derwent Reservoir	1	6	IFo half-grown young on 6th.

An agitated female at Plenmeller Common on 5th may have had an unseen brood (BNR).

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Peak counts were 77 at Cresswell Pond on 16th (ADM), 20 at Castle Island on 12th (DM/STH/PJA) and 12 at Caistron on 12th (TRD). Four were at Holywell Pond and one to two at Arcot Pond, Big Waters, Grindon Lough, Newbiggin and Woodhorn Flashes.

Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
East Chevington	3	14 (8,4,2)	PRM on 23rd
Castle Island	1	12	STH/DM/PJA on 12th. Presumed same, down to 9 by 19th (GB)

Gadwall is a **target species** for 2011. Please report all records.

Teal *Anas crecca*

Grindon Lough held nine on 11th and 44 on 29th (PRM), ten were at Derwent Reservoir on 10th (IFo), four to five at Castle Island, Monk's House Pool and Swallow Pond, and one to two at Arcot Pond, Big Waters, Chollerford and Plenmeller Common.

Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Blaxter Lough	1	2	TRD on 29th

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Peak counts were 105 at Castle Island on 12th (DM/STH/PJA), 52 at the Tweed Estuary on 10th (MHu), 49 (including some well-grown young) at Haughton Strother on 25th (MR), 43-47 at Big Waters and Newcastle Leazes Park, and 20-26 at Arcot Pond, Grindon Lough and Linton Ponds. One to 17 were at Byker, Elswick, Newcastle Civic Centre and Exhibition Park, Plessey, Welton and Wooler.

Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Swallow Pond	5	38 (13,8,7,7,3)	JPD from 16th-29th
Castle Island	3	20 (11,6,3)	GB/STH <i>et al.</i> on 12th
Big Waters	3	15 (9,4,2)	GB on 25th
Killingworth Lake	3	14 (8,4,2)	GB/LJM from 6th-22nd
Arcot Pond	3	12 (6,4,2)	LJM on 6th
Newcastle Leazes Park	3	11 (5,4,2)	DM from 6th-13th
Humford, Bedlington	2	12 (8,4)	ASH on 9th
Jesmond Dene	2	12 (9,3)	MJCo on 2nd and 30th
West Ord	2	9 (5,4)	MHu on 7th
Whittle Dene Reservoirs	2	9	MR
Newcastle Civic Centre	2	7 (6,1)	DM on 13th
Holywell Pond	2	6 (4,2)	JPD on 20th

Single broods were also noted at the following sites (no. of young in brackets): Dilston Haughs (4), Dinnington (3), Harthope Valley (5), Haughton Strother (new brood of 6 making 4 broods, 29 young this year), Holywell 'flash' (2), Holy Island Lough (6), Linton Ponds (4), Woodhorn Flashes (8) and Wooler (4).

Pintail *Anas acuta*

A drake was at Castle Island on 28th (TB).

Garganey *Anas querquedula*

Single drakes were at Cresswell Pond on 4th and 7th (ADMc) and Holywell Pond on five dates between 4th-11th (EG/ASJ/SPP *et al.*).

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

East Chevington held 12 on 23rd (PRM), eight (seven drakes) were at Cresswell Pond on 8th and 10th (ADMc) and one on 23rd (TRD/JD), and two at Grindon Lough on 25th and 29th (PRM).

Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
East Chevington south pool	1	6	ADMc/PJA on 6th and all present on 17th

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Holywell Pond attracted 20 on 28th (CS), 17 on 15th (JPD) and seven on 23rd (CS), 12 (ten drakes) were at Big Waters on 12th and nine on 25th (GB), three at Cresswell Pond on 22nd and 28th (TB), and one to two at Castle Island, East Chevington and Killingworth Lake.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Peak gatherings were 46 at Cresswell Pond on 18th and 24th (MN/JPD), 42 at Castle Island on 30th (STH/PJA), 28 at Newcastle Leazes Park on 6th (DM), 26 at Swallow Pond on 1st (JPD) and 16-19 at Killingworth Lake and Linton Ponds. One to seven were also at East Chevington, Haughton Strother GP, Newcastle Exhibition Park, Northumberland Park (North Shields), Plenmeller Common, Tweedmouth Dock and West Ord.

Breeding data for Tufted Duck were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Newcastle Leazes Park	2	9 (6,3)	DM from 13th-21st
Haughton Strother GP	1	6	TWi on 22nd
Swallow Pond	1	6	JPD on 1st
Capheaton Lake	1	5	STE on 22nd
Woodhorn Flashes	1	2	STH/PJA small young on 30th

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

About 700, mostly sub-adult drakes, were at Lindisfarne NNR, including about 300 regularly in the Snipe Point area and about 400 at Black Law/Beacons (IK), 332 were at Islestone (Bamburgh) on 6th (CGK), 84 at Cheswick on 24th (MHu), 45-51 at North Blyth and St Mary's, 19 at Newbiggin and two to three at Blyth South Harbour, Druridge Bay and the Tyne Estuary-North Shields Fish Quay.

Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods/'crèches'	No. of young	Observer/notes
Budle Bay	3	27 (10, 9, 8)	CGK on 4th
Seahouses	2	--	TRD/JD on 18th



An Eider duck sitting
The Farne Islands
6th June by Alan Tilmouth

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

15 flew N at Newbiggin on 23rd (AT), 116 were at Cocklawburn on 30th (MHu), 62 at Cheswick on 24th (MHu), 47 at Islestone (Bamburgh) on 6th (CGK) and one at Newbiggin.

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

An unseasonal six, including one drake, flew N at Stag Rocks on 5th (CGK) and an immature drake was at Castle Island on 12th (DM/STH/PJA). Breeding again took place, with a brood of three young noted on 11th at the same locality as used in 2010 (TRD/JD).

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

One at Cresswell Pond on 18th (MN) was the sole report.

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

The regular summer flock at Lindisfarne NNR increased from 25 on 12th to about 120 by 26th (IK). 44 were at Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 19th (MHu), 38 at the Tweed Estuary on 10th (MHu), 13 at Berwick Little Beach, four at Catcleugh Reservoir and one to two at Castle Island, Dodd's Well (Berwick), Jesmond Dene and Twizel.

Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Bellingham	2	5 (3,2)	SW brood of 2 were ½ to ¾ adult size on 18th
Dilston Haughs	1	10	SW on 4th
Warden Bridge	1	8	SW on 5th
Norham	1	8	TRD/JD on 10th
Catcleugh Reservoir	1	7	PRM on 2nd
Derwent Reservoir	1	7	IFo; probably a full-grown brood on 17th
Wooler	1	6	JR on 19th
Countess Park Wood, Redesmouth	1	5	TRD/JD on 21st
Haughton Strother GP	1	3	MR on 4th

Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis*

A drake was at Holywell Pond on 24th (EG).

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

Four were on Dryburn Moor on 15th (TRD). Singles were at Allenheads, Slaley Forest, Swinhope Moor and Wellhope Moor.

Breeding records are detailed below.

Location	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/Comments
Whitfield Law	8	14 in three broods and five broods hidden	BNR on 24th
Whitfield Lough	4	17 in two broods and two hidden broods	BNR on 24th
Plenmeller	1	6 on Common	BNR on 5th
Cheviot Summit	1	5	JMA on 29th
Dykerow Fell	1	4	BNR on 19th
Beldon Burn	1	2	BNR on 3rd

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

Six males and a female were at Swinhope Shield on 11th (ASH), six males were in Allendale on 1st (MSK/NEWT) and two females, behaving as if young were present, were on Plenmeller Common on 26th (BNR).

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

Very few were reported this month. Counts of two came from Great Tosson, Harthope Valley and Haughton Strother GP and singles at Plenmeller Common and Warden.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Four were at Great Whittington on 30th (ALT) and three at West Ord on 26th (MHu). A nesting pair was at Backworth throughout the month and pairs were also at Bellasis Bridge, High Park, Holywell Pond and Marshall Meadows. Two males were near Outchester and singles noted from Laverock Hall Farm Pond (Blyth) and in the St Mary's area.

Quail *Coturnix coturnix*

The species continued to be well reported. Three were singing at Maiden Hall on 17th (TRD). Two were calling from a winter wheat field at High Cocklaw (Berwick) on 4th (TBr) and other counts of two came from Thornton on 10th (TRD/JD), Sandyford on 22nd (TRD) and Great Whittington on 24th (AA). Singles, mainly heard calling, were at West Ord on 2nd, near Outchester on 3rd, Stickle Heaton on 4th, South Hazlerigg on 9th, Beukley (Bingfield) and Warton on 12th, Christon Bank on 16th, Billylaw (Ord Moor) on 18th, Wallridge on 20th/26th and Cresswell Pond on 24th.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

The highest count was eight at Welton (Whittle Dene) on 15th (MJCo). One to two were noted at Chibburn Farm (Widdrington), Wooler and in gardens at Old Hartley and Walbottle.

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

Light passage was noted with three N in one hour at St Mary's Island on 5th (JPD) and two N at Stag Rocks on 5th (CGK) and at Newbiggin on 12th (AT). Singles were offshore at East Chevington on 23rd, Cocklawburn on 24th and Druridge beach on 27th.

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

One was off Holy Island on 13th (RA).

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

At breeding colonies 34 apparently occupied nests were counted at Needle's Eye (Berwick) on 7th (MHu) and 28 apparently occupied nests were on Tynemouth Cliffs on 13th (DMT). At Marshall Meadows 20 were breeding on the cliffs on 28th (TRD) and three were at Stag Rocks on 18th (TRD/JD).

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

At Newbiggin 13 flew S and one N on 27th (ASH). All other movements during the month involved N flying birds. On 5th, at Church Point (Newbiggin) 65 in 28 minutes (AT) and 29 at Stag Rocks (CGK). On 23rd four were noted at East Chevington and Newbiggin and a further count of three came from East Chevington. Two were noted at Newbiggin on 12th and one at St Mary's Island on 22nd. At Longstone (Farne Islands) 15+ were present on 4th (MSH/AC).

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

On 27th 44 flew past at Newbiggin. At Stag Rocks five flew S on 18th, four flew N at Berwick Little Beach on 28th and two flew N at East Chevington on 23rd (TRD/JD). Singles flew over the visitor centre at Druridge Bay CP on 9th and N at Newbiggin on 26th. The largest offshore counts were 19 at Druridge beach on 27th (MJCo) and 14 at Cocklawburn on 24th (MHu). Five were off Sharper's Head on 28th.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

The peak roost counts were 32 at Blyth South Harbour (all but two on the offshore wind turbines) on 5th (DMT), 17 at Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 28th (MHu) and 15 at North Shields Fish Quay on 25th (DMT). Ten were at Black Middens rocks on 22nd (JMA). Inland 18 were at Castle Island on 19th (MSH) and 12 at East Chevington on 26th (STH/IFo). A single was at Druridge beach on 27th.

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

The only records were three apparently occupied nests at Needle's Eye, one with three young on 7th and on 28th 14 were at the Meadow Haven (Berwick) roost and five at Berwick Little Beach (MHu).



A Shag on Inner Farne
24th June by Steve Barrett

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

A single was at Gosforth Park on 7th (IK) and on 11th/17th (*per* SRB).

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Numbers continued low with only two reported, these being at Lindisfarne NNR, just south of the causeway on 10th (AT) and a juvenile at Arcot Pond on 30th (STH/PJA).

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Three flew S low over the sea at Newbiggin on 26th (STH/IFo). The peak counts were 15 at Hauxley NR on 9th (PT/LM) and Holywell Pond on 20th (JPD). Nine were in the Tweed Estuary on 10th (MHu), Castle Island on 12th (DM/STH/PJA) and at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 25th (MR), eight at East Chevington on 24th (JPD), Cresswell Pond on 25th (PCF), Holywell Pond (four juveniles) on 26th (BMo) and Druridge Pools on 28th (PT/LM). One to four were noted at Alwinton, Arcot Pond, Elswick Wharf, Grindon Lough, Riverhill Farm (occupied nest), Tyne Estuary, Wark and one apparently hungry bird eating a warbler, thought to be a Sedge Warbler, at Big Waters NR.

Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

Birds remained in the county throughout the month, with four still being seen at Hauxley NR on 9th (PT/LM), Cresswell Pond on 14th/23rd/26th (AT/ADM/ASJ). Three were seen at East Chevington on 23rd and at Castle Island on 29th/30th (AT/MSH/STH/PA). One to two, presumably from this influx, were seen at Bell's Pond (Cresswell), Castle Island, Druridge Pools and East Chevington on nine further dates. An immature flew E over Swallow Pond on 30th (SPP).

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

The highest counts were eight (three juveniles) at Woodhorn Flashes on 12th (GB) and three at Woodbridge on 4th (TRD). Singles were at Killingworth Lake, Nelly's Moss Lake (Craggside) and Tyne Green (Hexham).

Further breeding data are as follows:

Location	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/Comments
Holywell Pond	3	12	JPD/SPP by 29th
Gosforth Park NR	6 adults	4	<i>per</i> SRB on 7th
Linton Ponds	1	3	CDH on 19th
Holy island Lough	1	2	IK on 10th
Woolsington ponds	1	1	SRB on 16th
Whittle Dene Reservoirs	1	1	PCF on 28th

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

At Killingworth Lake a total of five adult birds and five juveniles (two large and three very small) were noted from 22nd-29th (LJM/BMo/GB). Three were at Derwent Reservoir on 9th/10th (IFo) and at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 25th (MR). Two were at Bothal Pond from 2nd-8th with singles seen there on 15th/17th (TB). A pair remained throughout the month at Airy Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield) (IFo). Singles were noted at Holywell Pond and Langley fishing lake.

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

Two pairs hatched three and two young respectively at one site, whilst at the other regular breeding site three adults were noted but no young seen. A pair was observed at one other site.

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

A single bird was in the North of the County at Willow Green (Otterburn) on 14th (DPR) and other singles were at Humshaugh also on the 14th (IK/SW) and at Low Waskerley on several dates (IFo).

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

A single female was seen at East Chevington on 23rd (PRM/SPP).

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

Only three birds were noted this month, including one bird carrying a young Rabbit at one site and one bird being mobbed by hirundines at another site (IK/JD/EC).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

A family party of six birds was at one site on 14th (CS). Pairs were at Wark on 4th (TRD) and in an observer's garden at Old Hartley (Holywell Dene) on 15th (RJP). Singles birds were noted throughout the month in gardens at Rothbury (TRD/JD) and at Scotland Gate (SLB/MSK). Other single birds were noted at 12 other sites during the month.



An alert Sparrowhawk in a Tranwell garden by Peter Tapsell

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Eight birds were in the Harthope Valley on 6th (MSH/AC) and seven birds were in the Happy Valley (Wooler) on 12th (MJC) and at Milbourne and Woodside on 20th (MJC/ASJ). Five birds were in Wark Forest tetrad and at Sweethope Lough on 4th & 26th respectively (MJC/PRM). One to three birds were seen at over 30 sites.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetuss*

A pair was noted at a site on 19th and 25th (IK/CDB) and singles were seen near Alwinton on 11th (JR), Holy Island, Mitford and Plashetts on 14th (RA/ADMc/PA), Colt Crag on 16th and 26th, at Fontburn on 24th (EC) and at West Ord on 28th (TRD). The returned nesters at Kielder were viewed by many members of the public.



A successful Osprey at Fontburn

Kestrel *Falco tinninculus*

Seven birds including four adults and three young were in the Harthope Valley on 12th (BMo); four juveniles were at Callerton on 13th (AJ). Three birds were at Sweethope Lough on 26th (PRM), Blagdon on 27th (ASJ) and at Haughton Strother GP (Humshaugh) on 28th (MR). 21 records of one to two birds were received.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Single birds were at three potential breeding sites, and another was at the Long Nanny on 26th (MSH).

*** Hobby** *Falco subbuteo*

A single bird was at Gosforth Park NR on 1st and 2nd (*per* SRB) and another bird was at Duke's Pond (Rising Sun CP) on 13th (SPP).

A Hobby which visited Gosforth Park NR
2nd June
by Keith Cochrane

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Four breeding pairs with young were observed. Single birds were seen at Berwick on 21st (BWG), Holy Island Castle on 23rd (IK) and a bird caught and ate an Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus* at Cresswell Pond on 25th (PCF).

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Two birds, an adult and a juvenile, were at Gosforth Park NR on 7th (IK), a single bird was at Backworth on several dates (CGK *et al.*) and another single bird was heard calling at Caistron on 12th (TRD).



Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Ten young were at Killingworth Lake on 24th and eight were at Arcot Pond on 12th (LJM), six birds were seen at Waren Mill Caravan Park on 5th (CGK), Leazes Park on 6th (DM) and at Linton Pond on 19th (CDH). One to five birds were at six further sites.

Coot *Fulica atra*

26 birds were at Woodhorn Flash on 18th (STH), 15 birds at Killingworth Lake on 6th (LJM), 14 birds were at Leazes Park on 21st & 27th (DM) and 13 birds were noted at Big Waters on 12th (GB). One to seven birds were at eight further sites.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

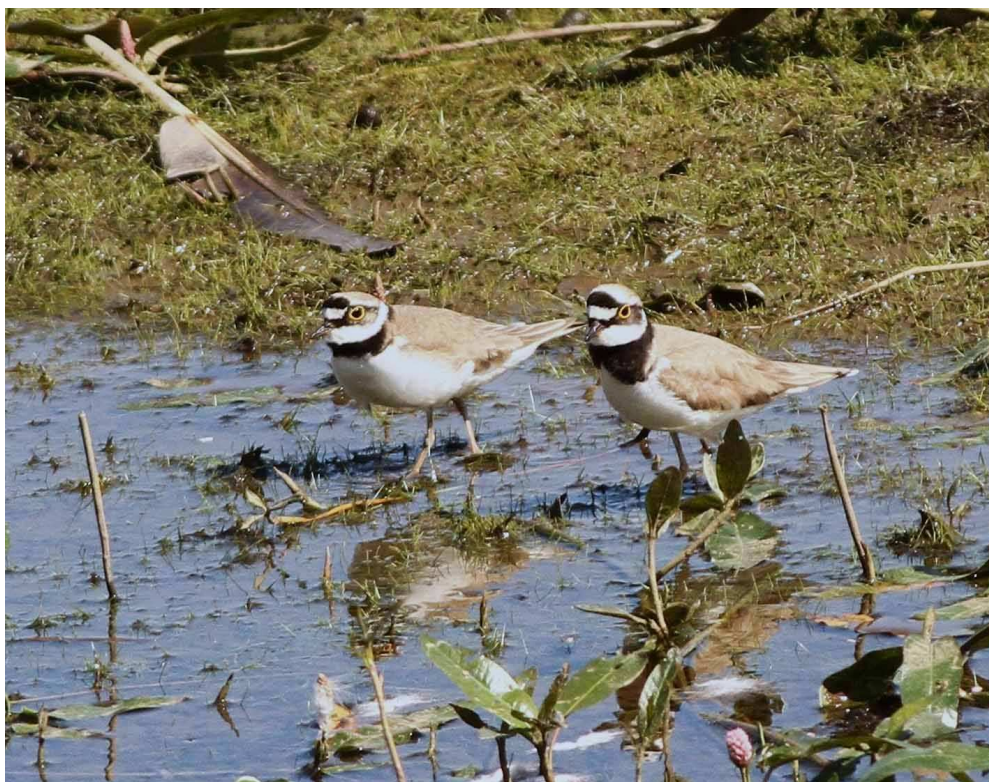
Further breeding reports came from Alwinton, Castle Island, Dudley (Cramlington), Linbriggs, Middle Stobswood, South Middleton, near West Hartford and Wooler. The highest coastal gatherings were 73 at Hauxley NR on 15th (PCF), 72 at Cresswell Pond on 18th (MN) and 64 at North Blyth on 29th (AT), with 47-50 at Cocklawburn, Lindisfarne and Newbiggin. Small numbers were reported from another 15 sites.

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

The surviving chick from the first pair at Cresswell Pond was seen up to 12th (TB *et al.*) and then found about 600m west of the Pond on 24th (ADM) with two adults. It had returned to the Pond by 28th. A second pair was still incubating on 18th but the outcome appears to have been unsuccessful. Eight adults were present on 11th (MSH) and six on 18th.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

At one confidential site three tiny chicks on 6th had all fledged by 30th, on which date there were also five adults; at another confidential site a pair had one small chick on 24th. A further confidential site held up to four adults through the month and yet another had three on 12th. Up to three were seen at Haughton Strother GP but breeding failed owing to predation. Two were on a gravel bank in the Tyne at Hexham on 5th and two at Holywell Pond on 15th; singles were noted at Bothal Pond, Castle Island, Cresswell Pond and Longhirst Flash.



A pair of Little Ringed Plover in the west of the county
24th June by John Clark

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Nesting was reported at Budle Point on 5th, near Bamburgh on 6th, Norham on 10th and from a beach amongst fishermen's huts on Holy Island where the outcome was expected to be failure. Amble Braid held 35+ on 5th and Holy Island causeway 30+ on 3rd (MSH/AC), 12 were at Long Nanny on 5th and ten at Berwick on 9th; six or less were noted at Branton GP, Caistron, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Bay, Elswick Wharf, Middle Stobswood, Newbiggin and West Hartford.

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

Records came from several breeding areas: Allenheads, Beldon Burn, Blackhill, Blanchland Moor, Otterburn Ranges, The Cheviot, Wellhope Moor and four areas of Whitfield Moor (JMA/TRD/JR/BNR). The first returning to St Mary's were 40+ on 27th (MSH/AC), rising to 68 on 29th.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*
At Holy Island 12 flew S on 12th (IK).

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

It was said to be a good breeding season in the Lambley area with many young seen (MRS); two late broods were noted at each of Linton Ponds on 19th and Holy Island on 23rd. The largest post-breeding flocks were 105 at Cresswell Pond on 16th (MSH), 85 at Holywell Pond on 23rd, 71 at Castle Island on 26th and 66 at East Chevington on 26th; 11-56 were noted at Broomlee Lough, Elswick Wharf, Grindon Lough, Plenmeller Common, St Mary's, Swallow Pond, West Hartford and Wooler and small numbers at a further seven places.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

A presumed non-breeder was at Little Beach (Berwick) on 28th (TRD).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Cocklawburn held 18 on 8th and six were at Cheswick on 13th (MHu) with two to four at Amble Braid, Holy Island, Long Nanny and Stag Rocks.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

One remained at Holy Island on 1st (RA) and two were at East Chevington on 14th (MSK/NEWT).

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Alarm calling was heard at Whitfield Lough and Whitfield Moor on 24th and a very agitated pair made distraction attempts at close quarters on Wellhope Moor on 18th (BNR); singing was again heard at Grindon Lough on 2nd (MRS). At Amble Braid 25+ were present on 5th and 20+ were near Holy Island causeway on 3rd (MSH/AC). Seven or fewer were at Cocklawburn, Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Kitty Brewster, Long Nanny, Newbiggin and North Blyth.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

Singles appeared at Bothal Pond on 2nd (TB), at Castle Island on 27th to 30th (SRB *et al.*) and Hauxley NR on 30th (PT/LM/IW).

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Three were displaying SW of Spylaw on 5th (NFO) with two at Blanchland Moor, in the Breamish Valley, Holywell Pond, Lambley and Wellhope Moor. Singles were recorded at another 13 potential breeding sites.

Snipe is a **target species** for 2011. Please report all records.

A Snipe at Plenmeller on 2nd June by John Clark

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Two were displaying at Slaley Forest on 19th (PRM) and one on 26th; singles were noted at Alnwick, Beldon Burn, the Harthope Valley and Harwood Forest.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Eight were at Amble Braid on 22nd (TB).

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Two were at Kitty Brewster on 12th, two at Lindisfarne NNR on 25th and singles in Budle Bay on 4th and Seahouses harbour on 6th.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Just a single was reported, at Hauxley NR, on 24th (MSH).

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

The largest count was of 32 at Plenmeller Common W on 5th (BNR) then ten to 17 at Beldon Burn, Clennel, Cresswell Pond, Wellhope Moor, Whitfield Hall and Whitfield Moor. Up to seven were noted at another 12 locations.

A Common Sandpiper at Caistron
12th June by Tim Dean

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

A total of 16 pairs were found in Upper Coquetdale on 10th (ASJ) and eight pairs at Hepple the same day (ASJ); 19 in



the Happy Valley tetrad included three broods of fledged young on 12th (MJC). Three pairs were at Greenlee Lough, two pairs at Old Quickening Cote and young were noted at Haughton Strother GP, Redesmouth and Windyhaugh. Three to seven were found at Caistron, Castle Island, Corbridge, Derwent Reservoir, Doddington Bridge, Haltwhistle, Harthope Valley, Warden Bridge and Wooler with one or two at another 18 places.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Two were at Castle Island on 29th (AT) and one at Hartford Flash on 27th (SRB).

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

One in breeding plumage was at East Chevington north pool on 26th (ADM/AG *et al.*).

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Two were at Hauxley NR on 27th (SRB).

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

One was at Caistron on 12th (TRD).

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Probable breeding took place from Brandon to Ingram in the Breamish Valley for the first time in many years (MRS) and likely breeding occurred at Broomlee Lough and Whitfield Moor. The roost at North Blyth staithes increased from 19 on 24th to 36 on 29th (AT) and 20+ were at Hauxley NR on 24th, nine at Elswick Wharf on 23rd, nine at Grindon Lough on 25th and eight at Holywell Pond on 15th.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

The peak at Hauxley NR was 20 on 27th (SRB) and 11 roosted at North Blyth staithes on 29th (AT).

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

Two were off Coquet Island on 23rd (JPD) and singles were at Druridge on 27th, East Chevington on 23rd and Newbiggin on 27th. Much more unusual was one which circled Holywell Pond for five minutes before flying inland SW on 11th (SPP).

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

One was off Church Point, Newbiggin on 5th (AT).

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

The increasing colony at Needle's Eye was counted with 1,310 occupied nests revealed on 7th (MHu). A WeBS count at the Tweed Estuary showed a high count of 235 on 5th in the gull roost (MHu). Elsewhere most of the attention was focused on the River Tyne breeding birds with specific counts at the main sites given here with number of nests in brackets :-

Tyne Bridge (326), Baltic Arts Centre (57), Quayside buildings (55), Guildhall (27) - all on 15th (DM).

The maximum count at the regularly counted sites showed 28 at Blyth South Harbour on 5th and 20 at the Tyne Estuary up to North Shields Fish Quay on 13th (DMT). The only other concentrations were 13 at Newbiggin on 25th on rocks (STH) and 12 at Berwick on 28th (TRD). Elsewhere one to five were seen at East Chevington, Elswick Wharf, Seahouses and Sharper's Head (Berwick).

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

The large breeding colony at Plenneller Common was in full swing with 1,100 individuals counted on 5th (BNR). The moorland colony at Blanchland Moor was surveyed during a Timed Atlas visit and revealed around 250 birds present. At Castle Island up to 115 birds were noted during June with most being first-summers. Other counts involved 110 at Whitfield Lough on 24th (BNR) and 88 at Elswick Wharf on 23rd (DM). Elsewhere numbers noted were small with up to 15 at many localities.

A Little Gull at Cresswell Pond
25th June by Peter Fletcher

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

There was a notable increase this month in the Druridge Bay area but still not on a par with recent years. The peak count at Cresswell Pond was 17 on 26th (ADM) all being first-summers with a gradual rise in numbers as the month progressed. A lone second-summer was in the gathering on various days during the month. There was obvious movement between here & East Chevington with



the peak count at the latter site being nine first-summers on 8th (ADMc). Elsewhere the only sightings were single first-summers at Budle Bay on 4th (CGK), Cocklawburn on 21st (BWG) and the Blyth Estuary on 26th (AT).

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

The mid-summer lull continued with three first-summers and a second-summer being noted at Newbiggin after 24th with only a lone first-summer present there on 10th & 18th (AT/IFo/STH/TB). An interesting sighting involved three adults together at Ellington on 17th (TB). Elsewhere single first-summers were found at East Chevington on 6th (ADMc), Castle Island on 12th (DM/STH/PJA), St Mary's Island on 14th (SPP) and Cresswell Pond on 21st (ADMc).

Common Gull *Larus canus*

The only counts received were 26 first-summers at Berwick Little Beach on 5th (MHu), six at Castle Island on 12th (DM/STH/PJA) and two at Sweethope Lough on 26th (PRM).

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

Always well reported in the summer with groups at many sites. The peak counts noted were 36 at Seghill Tip on 11th (CGK), 35 at Swallow Pond on 13th (SPP) and 30 at Blyth Harbour on 24th with three apparently occupied nests there (AT/DMT). Other groups counted were 25 at Whitfield Law on 24th with 14 apparently occupied nests, 21 at Darques Farm (Redesdale) including six immatures on 5th (JR) and 20 at Elswick Wharf on 8th (DM). Elsewhere up to 12 were at many localities both coastal and inland.



The North Shields aberrant Gull
Duncan Watson on 5th June

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

The prime count was 800 at Boulmer Steel on 2nd (JMA). Other peak counts involved 276 at the Tyne Estuary up to North Shields Fish Quay on 13th (DMT), 230 at Seghill Tip on 11th (CGK) and 220 at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 6th (CGK). Other groups involved 67 at Newcastle Business Park on 8th (DM), 57 at Blyth South Harbour on 21st (DMT) and 50 at Black Middens (Tynemouth) on 22nd (JMA). Breeding sites showed at least five nests with young at Blyth Harbour and two nests at North Shields Fish Quay. Up to 30 were at several sites. The very pale individual at North Shields Fish Quay from last month was again seen on 5th, 18th and 26th (DMT). This bird can easily be thought to be an Iceland Gull at a distance as the dark primary markings are hard to discern. Also a leucistic bird was seen flying SW at Middle Stobswood on 26th (ADMc).

Yellow-legged Gull *Larus michahellis*

An adult was reported coming into the pools at Plenmeller Common low over the moor on 5th (BNR).

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoides*

A third-summer was reported at Swallow Pond on 26th.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

Some larger counts this month with 56 being the peak at the Tyne Estuary up to North Shields Fish Quay on 25th (DMT), 42 at St Mary's Island on 9th (CGK), 20 at Blyth South Harbour on 5th (DMT) and 17 at Seghill Tip on 11th (CGK). Otherwise only singles reported at Blyth South Harbour, Castle Island and Elswick Wharf. The Blyth individual somehow manages to survive even though its right leg is sticking out at right angles to its body !

Little Tern *Sternula albifrons*

The Long Nanny colony at Newton saw at least 24 birds present on 22nd (TB) with five pairs nesting at Lindisfarne. The only other reports were of four birds at East Chevington North Pool on 26th (STH/IFo) and a single at Druridge Pools in front of the Oddie Hide on 16th (NSK/NEWT).



Terns at Two colonies.

Above: a Little Tern at the Long Nanny colony by John Clark on 8th June and below:
Sandwich Terns on Inner Farne by Alan Tilmouth on 2nd June

**Sandwich Tern** *Sterna sandvicensis*

Several large groups seen with 80 at Boulmer on 16th (ASJ), 64 at East Chevington South Pool on 16th (ASJ) and 53 at Newbiggin on 25th (STH). Otherwise up to 12 were at several coastal localities.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

The islands on East Chevington North Pool still remain popular for loafing birds and 67, including one juvenile, were counted on 26th (STH/IFo). Most other counts involved breeding areas with at least 26 adults present at Swallow Pond with seven chicks on the breeding rafts there (SPP/JPD) and 14 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs including at least two breeding pairs on the nesting raft (MR). There were three occupied nests at Gosforth Park on 30th after the first breeding attempts were predated. Further breeding attempts were being made at Newcastle Quayside and Shasun Pharma near Cramlington. One pair with a fledged youngster was found at Cresswell Pond on 26th, an indication of birds moving away from breeding areas with young in tow (MSH). Nine were found at Castle Island on 30th (STH/PJA) with one to four seen at Arcot Pond, Killingworth Lake, Leazes Park, Redheugh Bridge (Newcastle), Scotswood, Tweedmouth Dock & Woodhorn Flash.

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*

Only a few birds noted, East Chevington being most popular with two present there on 8th & 23rd and one on 26th and 29th (TB/PRM/per ASH/AT). Single birds were seen at the Black Middens in the Tyne Estuary on 13th (DMT) and at Boulmer on 16th (ASJ).

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

Only one report received of two at East Chevington on 23rd (TRD/JD). This site regularly hosts loafing birds so presumably under-reported this month.



The Farne Islands

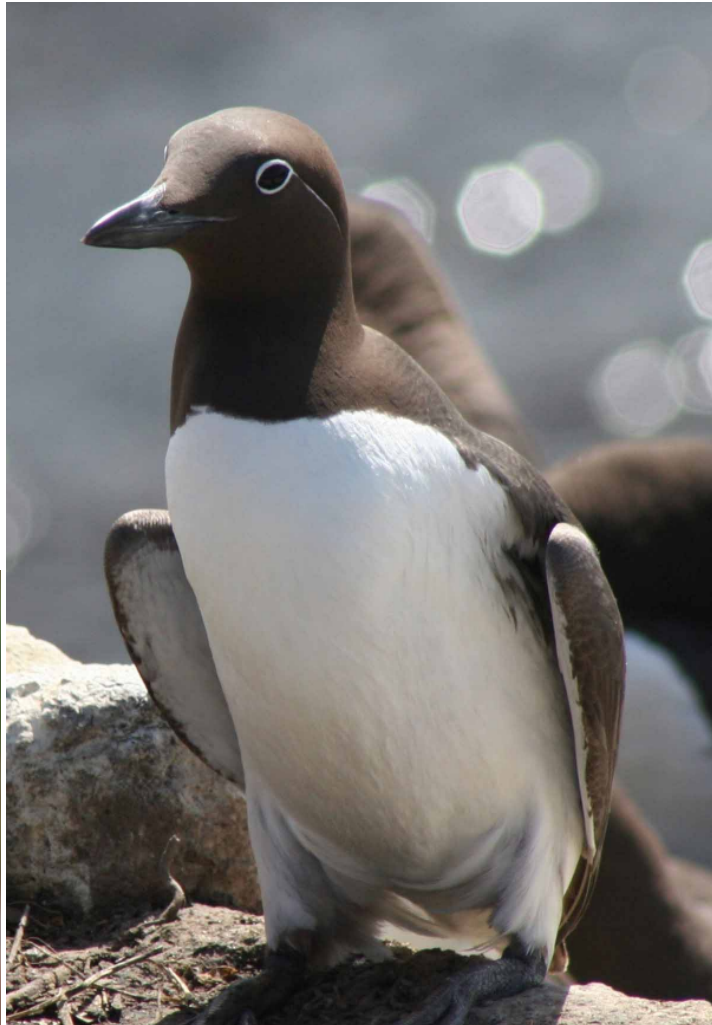
Above: an Arctic Tern on 2nd June
by Alan Tilmouth

Below: a Guillemot on 24th June
by Steve Barrett

Guillemot *Uria aalge*

Most counts typically came from the north of the county with 85 feeding in Spittal Bay on 8th with 40 there on 16th plus 46 at Cocklawburn on 24th (MHu). Otherwise one to four noted off Berwick Little Beach, Seahouses and Stag Rocks (Bamburgh).





Auks on The Farne Islands in June - top left: a Razorbill by Steve Barrett
Bottom: left a Puffin by Alan Tilmouth and
right: a 'bridled' Guillemot by Steve Barrett

Razorbill *Alca Torda*

Only two reports received with a high count of 36 occupied nests at Needle's Eye N of Berwick being an indication of a welcome spread onto the mainland, plus a single bird off Berwick Little Beach on 28th (TRD).

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

The main count involved passing birds off St Mary's Island with 24 S and 2 N there on 22nd (MSH) and ten noted there on 28th (SPP). Otherwise up to six found at Meadow Haven, Needle's Eye & Spittal Bay in the Berwick area.

Rock Dove / Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

The maximum monthly counts were 66 at Blyth South Harbour on 5th and 38 at North Shields Fish Quay on 25th (DMT) with two at Cockle Park Farm on 4th (JR).

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

A feeding flock of 35 near Great Whittington on 22nd including juveniles was the largest count (EC). Five were at Weetslade Colliery CP on 13th and Banks Pond (Dinnington) on 22nd (LJM), four at Ellington on 7th, Otterburn Ranges on 19th and three at Rothbury on 22nd. One to two were at a further fifteen widespread localities including a Walbottle Garden and five different locations in Jesmond Dene on 26th.



Stock Dove in a Walbottle garden
30th June
by Ken Russell

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

The peak counts were 79 on a two-hour TTV in the Happy Valley tetrad on 12th (MJC) and 61 at Minsteracres north east on 10th (BNR). 16 fed by the roadside in Newcastle Business Park on 12th (PCF) with 12 at Jesmond Dene on 19th, Woodside on 20th and Chibburn Farm Widdrington on 24th (MJCo). Occupied nests were found at Cockle Park Farm and two locations at Wooler with fledged young amongst 8 birds at Alwinton (JR). Three to 11 were at Welton (near Whittle Dene) and in an Old Hartley Garden.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

A TTV at Woodside recorded five on the 20th with four at Welton on 15th (MJCo) and in an Old Hartley Garden during the month (RJP). A pair had one juvenile at Cockle Park Farm on 4th (JR) and an adult and juvenile were in a Walbottle Garden on 5th. One to two were at Wooler and Jesmond Dene.

Turtle dove *Streptopelia turtur*

A lucky householder saw and photographed a bird in a garden in Killingworth on 15th (V Samuelson).



A Turtle Dove in a Killingworth Garden
15th June by Viv Samuelson

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

Three were calling at East Chevington on 17th and observed being chased round the south pool by warbler/pipit *sp.* (EC/JSB/PJA) with two in the Chevington Burn area on the same day, presumably the same birds (ADM). Two were at Wark Forest Shitlington tetrad on 4th (MJC) and calling at Holystone and Simonside on 10th (ASJ). Singles were seen or heard at a further 21 widespread localities.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Pairs with nests in trees were reported from two sites in the Ponteland area (*per* PCF) with all other sightings being singles at Budge Fields, Cresswell Pond, Holywell Pond near Outchester and West Chevington. One bird was found dead without obvious sign of injury at Holywell Dene on 6th (RJP) although there were several sightings of single birds after this date. For the first time at Holy Island broods of five and four were hatched during the month (IK).

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

A pair were at a nest at Backworth throughout the month (CGK *et al.*) and two were at Ingoe on 20th (ALT). Singles were seen at the above locations on 11th and 24th, almost daily Chugdon Wood (Ellington) (TB) and at Stagshaw on 15th, East Trewick on 16th, Hepscott Manor and Eachwick on 19th and Swallow Pond on 26th.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Breeding was confirmed by a pair at Spindlestone on 6th (CGK) with singles at Holefield near Learmouth on 6th, Low Carrith (Hesleyside) on 14th, Slaley Forest on 19th, Blagdon on 22nd and Walbottle Hall on 29th.

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

Two sites in the south east of the county had breeding birds with juveniles seen and heard at one of these sites and also at a third location in the south west of the county.

Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*

Two birds were at Slaley Forest on 26th (AA) with singles heard in the same locality on 17th and 29th. A surprise find was one flushed by a cat in the observer's garden at Marden Farm Estate (Tynemouth) on 9th (MN) with another found at Harwood on 26th (AT).

Swift *Apus apus*

The peak counts were 90 at Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 26th (ASJ) with 80 at Castle Island on 23rd (AT), 64 at East Ord on 7th (MHu) and 50 again at Castle Island on 12th (DM/STH/PJA). 16 to 35 were at Arcot Pond, Big Waters, Tyne Green Hexham, Holywell Dene, Killingworth Lake, Linton Lane, Marden Farm Estate and Wallridge Fell. One to ten were at nine further widespread localities.

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

There were three sightings of single birds on the Wansbeck at Scotch Gill, Borough Woods and Mitford on 9th (ADMc). All other sightings were again singles at Haughton Strother on 15th, Hartford Bridge and Reeth Pond (Newburn CP) on 24th and Farnley Haughs (Corbridge) on 29th.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Two were yaffling in the Harthope Valley on 12th (BMo) with one seen or heard at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 3rd, Gosforth Park NR on 4th, Slaley Forest on 11th, Wark (North Tyne) on 26th and Farnley Haughs (Corbridge) on 4th and 29th.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Atlas surveys produced the peak counts with ten in the Clennel tetrad on 10th and nine in the Wark Forest tetrad on 4th (MJC). Seven, including a family party, were at Black Lough (Edlingham) on 29th (IRD) and five at Broomfield Fell (Longwitton) on 5th, Happy Valley tetrad on 12th and a family party at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 24th. Two to four, many including juveniles, were at Arcot Pond, Dinnington, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Haughton Strother, Holywell Dene, Newbiggin, Newcastle Town Moor, Plessey, Hyons Wood (Prudhoe), Swallow Pond, Wark and Welton near Whittle Dene. Singles were reported from a further 49 widespread localities in the county.

Magpie *Pica pica*

The peak count was 35 at Swallow Pond on the 9th (JPD) with ten at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 26th (DM) and seven at Jesmond Dene on 26th (MJCo). Four including two juveniles were in a Walbottle garden on 19th and at Welton near Whittle Dene on 15th. One to two were at Barrowburn in Upper Coquetdale, Stickle Heaton and Woodside.

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Well reported, mainly due to Atlas work, with the peak count being a family party of four at March Burn (Healey Mill) on 28th (BNR). Two were at Ellington on 4th, Harthope Valley on 12th, Swallow Pond on 16th and 29th, Plessey on 17th, Hagg Bank (Wylam) and Rothbury on 22nd. Singles were found at a further 20 widespread localities.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

An evening roost at Wark (North Tyne) held 290+ on 24th (PRM) whilst two-hour TTVs recorded 138 in the Clennel tetrad on 10th (MJC) and 136 in Dinnington on 29th (LJM). 76 were at Wellhope Moor on 18th, 64 in the Happy Valley tetrad on 12th, 59 at Prestwick Carr on 19th and 46 including fledged young at Cockle Park Farm on 4th. One to 16 were at Alwinton, Holywell Dene, Jesmond Dene, Walbottle, Woodside and Wooler.

Birds showing characteristics of the Nordic race *spp monedula* were still at Melton Park (Gosforth) (GB) and Killingworth Lake (PCF).

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

A large gathering of 400 was following a combine harvester at Black Heddon on 20th (ASJ) with TTVs accounting for the next highest counts of 300 at Chibburn Farm (Widdrington) on 24th (MJCo), Clennel tetrad on 10th and Happy Valley tetrad on 12th (MJC). 70 were at Whitfield Hall also on 12th (BNR) with 45 including fledged young at Cockle Park Farm on 4th (JR).

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

The peak count was 95 at Carter Bar on 20th (JD) with the maximum counts at North Shields Fish Quay being 57 on 12th and 25th (DMT). Twenty one were found on a TTV in the Happy Valley tetrad on 12th (MJC) and at Elswick Wharf on 23rd (DM) with one to 13 at Alwinton, Chibburn Farm, Welton near Whittle Dene, Widdrington, Woodside and Wooler. Parents with fledged young were at Castle Farm Road Bridge (Jesmond Dene) and Arcot Lane.

Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix*

The single bird was again at Holy Island on 14th (RA).

Raven *Corvus corax*

Family groups were in evidence with the largest being two adults and four recently fledged young in the west on 19th (IK), the first successful breeding at the site for a number of years. Groups of five were at Featherwood (JR) and Riddlees Cairn (TRD) both on 19th, four at Great Dour on 19th, Harthope Valley on 6th and 12th and Happy Valley tetrad also on 12th. One to two were at Barrowburn, Beldon Burn, Cheviot summit, Errington Hill Head, Eshells Moor and Linbriggs.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Two-hour TTVs accounted for all the large counts with 68 and 45 found in Wark Forest tetrads on 4th, 23 in the Happy Valley tetrad on 12th and 22 in the Clennel tetrad on 10th (MJC). Nine were found at Broomfield Fell (Longwitton) on 5th and four were in territory at Alwinton on 11th with one to two at Jesmond Dene, Shilford, Welton, West Hartford and Wooler.

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Peak counts of 45 in the Clennel tetrad on 10th and 35 in the Happy Valley tetrad on 12th (MJC) with 30 including five family groups at Dipton Wood S on 1st and 14 at Gilsland Spa/Village on 8th (BNR). Six family parties were found at Haughton Strother on 4th (MR) with adults and fledged young at Cockle Park Farm, Alwinton and Wooler. A pair were nesting in a stone barn wall at Shildon near Blanchland with one to three at Chibburn Farm, Jesmond Dene, and Woodside.

Great Tit *Parus major*

Ten were found during a BBS at Welton near Whittle Dene on 15th (MJCo) with eight including fledged young on a two-hour TTV in the Happy Valley tetrad on 12th (MJC) and one adult and four young at Cockle Park Farm on 4th (JR). One to two including fledged young were at Alwinton, Jesmond Dene, Woodside and Wooler.

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

Again two-hour TTVs produced the peak counts with 47 in Happy Valley on 12th, 37 in Wark Forest on 4th and 18 in the Clennel tetrad on 10th (MJC). Thirteen were found at Morrallee near Bardon Mill on 6th (BNR) and nine including a family party of eight at Haughton Strother GP on 25th (MR). One to five were at Alwinton, in an old Hartley garden, three locations in Jesmond Dene, in a Walbottle garden and Chibburn Farm Widdrington.

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

A pair fed three to four juveniles outside the hide at Swallow Pond on 2nd (SPP) with an adult and four young at Prestwick Carr on 7th (PCF) and an adult with a single young at Arcot Pond on 8th (BMo). Two juveniles were at Farnley Haughs, (Corbridge) on 29th (MR) and one at Townfoot on 27th (TRD) remarkably being the first of the year for this observer.

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

Breeding was confirmed at Highford Bridge (Mitford) with a pair feeding six young on 9th (TB). Other sightings were scarce with two at Allen Banks, Featherstone, Haughton Strother GP, Mitford Castle and one at North Heugh being unusual for this location.

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Peak counts were of 34 in Upper Coquetdale on 10th, 24 in Sweethope/Great Wanney area on 26th (ASJ) and 28 on a two-hour TTV in Wark Forest/Shitlington tetrad on 4th (MJC). Seventeen were at Welton near Whittle Dene on 15th (MJCo) and 15 at Plenneller Common W on 5th (BNR) with one to nine at ten further widespread locations.

Skylark at Whittle Dene
Peter Fletcher
6th June

**Sand Martin** *Riparia riparia*

A large gathering of 200+ around a quarry at Hedley on the Hill on 8th (BMo) was the peak count with 130 at Wark (North Tyne) on 5th (PRM), 100 at Cresswell Pond on 4th (MN) and Haughton Strother GP on 25th (MR). 80 were at East Chevington on 4th, Woodhorn Flashes on 18th and Corbridge on 28th with 75 at Big Waters on 5th. Three to 60, often associated with nesting colonies, were at Alwinton, Breamish Valley, Budle Point, Haltwhistle, Hepple, Ingram, Stannington, Wellhope Moor and Wooler. Nesting counts were 100 AON at Old Bridge End on 5th (SW), 50 at Gold Island on 12th (TWi), 21 at Newbiggin on 19th (GB), three at Redshin Cove (Spittal) on 28th and two at Berwick Little Beach (MHu).

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Peak counts of 90 on two-hour TTVs in the Clennel tetrad on 10th and 27 in Wark Forest on 4th (MJC) with 17 at Alwinton on 11th (JR), 13 at Welton near Whittle Dene on 15th (MJCo) and six pairs nesting at Foxhunters Estate (Whitley Bay) on 1st (ASJ). Eleven were at Beldon Burn at Newbiggin and Riddlehamhope, Cockle Park Farm, Shilford, Wellhope Moor, Woodside and ten at Dipton Wood S and Haughton Strother GP. One to seven were at twelve widespread localities including one hawking round rocks at Longstone (Farne Islands) with nests containing eggs or chicks at Makendon, Old Quickening Cote, Whitley Bay and Wooler.

Swallow at Whittle Dene
23rd June by Peter Fletcher

**House Martin** *Delichon urbica*

Around 60 was the peak count at Backworth on 2nd (CGK) and Swallow Pond on 5th, 30+ at Beehive Flash on the same date (JPD) with the maximum monthly count in Holywell Dene being 25 on 19th (RJP). One to eight were at Alwinton, Barrowburn, Chibburn Farm, Holy Island, Jesmond Dene, Exhibition Park and Town Moor (Newcastle), Woodside and Wooler. Nest colony counts consisted 26 AON at Tosson on 10th, 16 at Ogle on 29th, 14 at Cresswell Village on 23rd (ASJ) and five at Needle's Eye (Berwick) on 29th (MHu).

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

16 were at Clennel on 10th (MJC) and Haughton Strother GP (Humshaugh) on 28th (MR), 14 at Happy Valley (Wooler) on 12th and 13 at Dukeshagg Wood (Prudhoe) on 2nd. A family party was at Dam Dykes (Cramlington) and eight to ten at Castle Island and Netherton Park (Stannington). One to six were reported from a further 13 potential breeding areas.

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

Three were in a Wark Forest tetrad on 4th (MJC) and singing at Allen Banks on 10th (EC), two at Gilsland Spa/Village on 8th (BNR) and a single at Tower Knowe (Kielder Water) on 3rd (RMH).

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

By far the highest count of the month was 26, including fledged young, at Happy Valley (Wooler) on 12th (MJC). Eight were at Shilford on 20th, seven in another Wooler tetrad on 19th and five to six at Hulne Park, March Burn, Newburn and Wylam (Hagg Bank). One to four were reported from a further 27 localities, including two passage birds in a Chapel House garden on 30th.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

BTO Atlas work was productive. Two Wark Forest tetrads produced a total of 96 birds on 4th, 33 were at Clennel on 10th and 28 at Happy Valley (Wooler) on 12th (all MJC). Other counts included 23 at Baybridge (Blanchland) on 10th (RMH), 23 from Brandon-Ingram (Breamish Valley) on 20th (MRS), 22 at Wingates on 10th (ASJ) and a total of 22 in the Belton Burn area on 3rd (BNR). At Prestwick Carr 17 were found over 2km on 11th and seven to 13 were noted at Dukeshagg Wood, Longwitton, Tasset Burn, Whitfield Hall and Wooler. One to six were reported from a further 14 localities.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

12, including fledged young, were at Happy Valley (Wooler) on 12th (MJC) and 11 at Shilford on 20th (BNR). Four were reported from Bellingham, Wark and Wooler and singles were at four sites in Jesmond Dene. Elsewhere reports of one to three came from a further 14 localities.

A Blackcap at Blayney Row
4th June by Peter Fletcher

**Garden Warbler** *Sylvia borin*

16, including fledged young, were at Happy Valley (Wooler) on 12th (MJC) and seven were in Wark Forest on 4th (MJC). Two to four were noted at Bellingham, Dukeshagg Wood (Prudhoe), Longwitton, Morralee (Bardon Mill) and Wooler and singles at a further 17 localities.

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

Two were singing at Holywell on 3rd (ASJ) and a pair showed well at Hartley cliffs on 26th (BMo). Elsewhere singles were at Arcot Pond, Bothal Pond, Brenkley, Cockle Park Farm, Dene House, East House, Ellington by-pass, Kirkley March, Northburn (Cramlington) and Red Row.

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

Continues to be well reported, with some interesting population counts received. A 40km cycle ride produced 49 singing males in the Berwick Hill-Milbourne-Ingoe areas on 20th, and 36 were heard singing from Backworth-Holywell on 4th (ASJ). At Prestwick Carr 25 were found over 2km on 11th (PCF) and 21 singing males were in the Bellasis Bridge-Saltwick/Shilvington area (a distance of 20km) on 15th (ASJ). Ten pairs were feeding young at St Mary's Island on 28th and 18 singing males were at Wingates on 10th (ASJ). 15 in the Breamish Valley (Branton-Ingram) on 20th was the observer's highest total here for eight years (MRS) and 11 were found during a BBS at North Sunderland on 13th (MJC). One to seven were reported from a further 17 localities, including many records of confirmed breeding.

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

Four reeling at Arcot Pond on 8th was the highest count (BMo). Three were reeling at Ellington on 18th (TB) and two at Budle Bay on 6th, Greenlee Lough on 12th, Low Angerton and Tutehill Moss (Harwood Forest) on 26th. Single reeling birds were also reported from Bamburgh, Big Waters, Burradon Pond, Cresswell Pond (two sites), Druridge Pools, Great Whittington, Laverock Hall Farm (Blyth), Linden Hall, Newbiggin, Seghill, St Mary's Island, Valley Park (Cramlington), Warkworth Gut, Warton and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Confirmed breeding was noted at Druridge Pools where a bird was feeding young in a nest by 3rd (ADMc).

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

23 singing males were located during a cycle trip in the Berwick Hill- Milbourne-Ingoe area (40 km) on 20th (ASJ). Eight pairs were at St Mary's Island on 16th (ASJ) and 13 birds at Whittle Dene Reservoirs (two pairs feeding young) on 16th (MR). Six to eight were reported from Bamburgh, Brandon-Ingram (Breamish Valley), Cresswell Pond and Prestwick Carr. Perhaps more unusual were upland records of three singing at Greenlee Lough on 12th and singles at Brocolitia, Housesteads and Midgeholme. Three were singing in unexpectedly dry areas at Holy Island on 24th, suggesting a high population here. One to four were noted at a further six more typical areas.

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Five at East Chevington on 23rd included a singing male (PRM). Three were singing at Holywell Pond on 15th (CS) and one at Arcot Pond, Capheaton, Cresswell Pond, Holy Island Lough, Whittle Dene Reservoirs and Woodhorn Flashes.

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

BTO Atlas workers continued to unearth some sizeable populations in our region. Birds were reported from 30 localities this month (this compares with ca.19 for the whole of 1981). An impressive 24 (including fledged young) were found in two hours in the Clennel tetrad on 10th and 16 (including fledged young) in the Happy Valley tetrad on 12th (MJC). Seven (five young) were at Low Carrith on 14th and six (four young) at Wooler on 19th (JR). Four juveniles were at Dilston on 4th and one to two birds at a further 25 localities including juveniles at Bellingham, Haughton Strother (Humshaugh), Northumberland Park (North Shields) and Woolsington.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Very well reported this month from typical woodland breeding areas. Two Wark Forest tetrads produced a total of 16 on 4th (MJC). Ten (including juveniles) were at Happy Valley on 12th and seven in the Clennel tetrad on 10th (MJC). A family party of six was found at Haughton Strother (Humshaugh) on 28th, five+ (including juveniles) were at St Cuthbert's Cave (Holburn Moss) on 24th (AJN), five juveniles at Duke's House Wood on 4th (SW) and five (three young) at Greenlee Lough on 26th (MJC). Elsewhere four were found at Shilford and one to three at a further 22 localities.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

There were some encouraging counts after a disappointing start to the year. Two tetrads in Wark Forest produced a total of 48 on 4th and 33 were (including fledged young) were found at Happy Valley on 12th (MJC). Eight (including five juveniles) were at Cockle Park Farm on 4th, seven in the Clennel tetrad, six in Jesmond Dene and one to four at a further eight localities, including a pair fledging young from a tit box in a Kenton garden.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

The only large flock was 560 at Cocklawburn on 13th (MHu). 100 were reported from Longframlington on 1st (JMA), 79 at Wellhope Moor on 18th, 24 (including many juveniles) in a Walbottle garden on 5th and one to 16 at eight localities.

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

Fledged young were reported from Barrowburn (1), Harthope Valley (?), Happy Valley (2), Holywell Dene (4), Ingram (3), Rothley Mill (1) and Wooler (2). Food was being carried to nests at Fulhope and Matfen on 11th and successful breeding was reported from Spindleston. One to three birds were reported from a further 14 localities.

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

The peak count from the Harthope Valley was six on 12th, with at least two juveniles at Hawsen Burn on 24th (BMo/IRD). A pair was also reported from Makendon (Upper Coquetdale) on 25th and a male at Cottonshope Head (Otterburn Ranges) on 19th.

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

BTO *Atlas* workers produced by far the highest counts, including 46 at Dinnington on 29th (LJM), 37 in the Happy Valley (Wooler) tetrad on 12th and 32 at Clennel on 10th (MJC). Another good count was 29 singing males at Marden Estate (Tynemouth) on 6th (ASJ), 16 birds were at Wooler on 19th and 13 at Cockle Park Farm on 4th (both WBBS counts -JR). Ten were at Hagg Bank (Wylam) and Shilford and one to seven at a further nine localities.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

16 in the Happy Valley (Wooler) tetrad on 12th was the highest count (MJC). A total of nine were reported from the Beldon Burn on 3rd (BNR) and seven at Longwiton and Milbourne. One to four were reported from a further 16 localities. Birds carrying food and/or fledged young were noted at Alwinton, Beldon Burn, Cockle Park, Happy Valley, Newbiggin GC and Wooler.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

15 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 16th included several juveniles (MR) and up to 14 were at Swallow Pond on 9th and 20th (JPD). Two family parties totalling 11 were at Riddlehamhope (Beldon Burn) and a further seven at nearby Middle Plant W. on 3rd (BNR). Nine including fledged young were at Happy Valley on 12th (MJC), a family party of five at Exhibition Park on 13th and four (adult + three young) at Ponteland CG on 14th. One to two birds were reported from a further four localities.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

Reports of confirmed breeding came from Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) where three pairs were feeding young on 10th, Ingram where there were again three pairs, one with three fledged young on 16th (ASJ), the Breamish Valley where two pairs with young were found between Brandon-Ingram on 20th (MRS), Stamfordham with four young fledging from a nest above a garden security light on 26th (EC), Holburn Mill (at least two young), Bingfield (three young), and Lanehead (pair collecting food for young). Six+ were reported from the Harthope Valley on 6th (MSH/AC) and five in Wark Forest on 4th (MJC). One to four were reported from a further 24 widespread localities in what was a very good month for the species.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Tetrad counts for the BTO *Atlas* included 31(including fledged young) at Happy Valley on 12th, 16 at Wark Forest on 4th and nine at Clennel on 10th (MJC). Six were in Jesmond Dene on 5th (MJCo) and one to four at a further eight localities including fledged young/adults with food at Cockle Park Farm, Netherton Park, The Wanneys and Wooler.

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Confirmed breeding was reported from Allen Banks, Great Whittington, Haughton Strother (two young), Highford Bridge (three young), Howlett Hall, Low Carritheth (two pairs), Prestwick Carr (three young), Rothbury (two young), Stamfordham (five young) and Tarsset Burn. One to three were reported from a further 22 potential breeding localities.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

The highest count from the Upper Coquetdale stronghold was 27 (12 pairs and three males), some with young on 10th (ASJ). In the Cheviot Hills eight pairs were feeding young in the Ingram area on 16th (ASJ), up to 15 (five pairs + five young) were reported from the Harthope Valley from 24th-28th (IRD/AA) and three pairs from the Carey Burn on 25th (MJC). Elsewhere a pair was at Cottonshope (Otterburn Ranges) on 19th and one to two at Featherwood and Fulhope.

Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*

Birds were reported from nine coastal and five inland localities.

Breeding records were as follows:

Site	Date	Adults	Young	Notes	Observer
COAST:					
Bamburgh dunes	6th	2	3		CGK
Budle Bay	6th	2	3		CGK
Cocklawburn	30th	1	3		MHu
Druridge	23rd	2	3		ASJ
East Chevington	18th / 23rd	1	1		NFO/TRD/JD
Monk's House	6th	2	2		CGK
INLAND:					
Broomlee Lough	27th	2	?	Pair feeding young	MJC
Wanneys	19th	2	?	Alarm calls from adults	IK
Wark Forest	4th	2	3	Shitlington tetrad	MJC

In addition two pairs were found at Warkworth dunes on 19th (NFO), a male at Bamburgh GC on 14th and one east of Cresswell Pond on 12th. Inland further birds were a pair at Ottercops on 29th and a male at Ford Moss on 6th.

Stonechat is a **target species** for 2011. Please report all records.

Wheatear *Oenanthe Oenanthe*

Three pairs with a total of 13 young were found at Carey Burn (Harthope Valley) on 25th (MJC), 15 in Upper Coquetdale and three pairs at Simonside on 10th (ASJ). An adult and juvenile were at Plashetts on 29th and one to two were reported from a further 14 localities, including a downy juvenile on rocks at Church Point (Newbiggin) on 28th (TB).

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

The only reports this month were a pair feeding young in a nest at Morralee Wood (Allen Banks) on 10th (EC), a male at Wark (North Tyne) on 4th and a female at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 24th.

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

12, including fledged young, were noted during an Atlas visit to Happy Valley (Wooler) on 12th (MJC), eight at Prestwick Carr on 11th (PCF), five at Cockle Park Farm on 4th (JR) and Clennel on 10th (MJC). One to two were at a further four widespread localities.

A Dunnock
Dinnington
20th June
Peter Fletcher



House Sparrows
Dinnington
1st June
Peter Fletcher

**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*

55 were observed at Holywell on 4th (ASJ), 50 at St. Mary's Wetland/Island on 4th (ASJ), 30 including fledged young at Cockle Park Farm on 4th (JR), 23 at North Sunderland (Seahouses) on 13th (MJC), 20 at Clennel on 10th (MJC) and a Walbottle garden on 12th (KR/LR), 18 at Alwinton (Upper Coquetdale) on 11th (JR) and 14 at Happy Valley (Wooler) on 12th (MJC). One to seven were at a further five urban localities.

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

11 pairs were found during a 40km cycle ride in the Berwick Hill-Milbourne-Ingoe area on 20th (ASJ). Breeding was confirmed at Corbridge (MR), Dilston (SW) and Waren Mill Caravan Park (CGK). 14 were at Loaning (East Ord) on 16th (MHu), 13 at Haughton Strother GP on 28th (MR), eight at Donaldson's Lodge on 4th (TRD) and Middleton near Hartburn on 22nd (TRD), six at Barelees Farm on 4th (TRD) and Great Bavington on 29th (TRD), five were at Sunilaws on 4th (TRD) and Shotton (Blagdon) on 28th (TRD), four at Wark on 4th (TRD), Stickle Heaton on 4th (TRD), Pallinsburn House on 4th (TRD), Cresswell Pond on 15th (PCF) and Bolam West Houses on 22nd (TRD). One to three were at a further 20 widespread localities.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

Confirmed breeding was observed at Cresswell Pond (ADMc), Dilston Haughs (SW), near Great Whittington (EC/JSB), Gunnerton (TWi) and St. Mary's Wetland (BMo). Six were at Whittle Dene on 16th (MR), pairs at West Ord on 5th (MHu) and Warton on 12th (JD) and singles at Bingfield, Caistron, Clennel, Cornhill on Tweed, Druridge, New Water Haugh, Stickle Heaton, Wallridge Fell, Walwick Grange and Wark. Two showing characteristics of *spp flavissima* were flushed from a cycle track at St. Mary's on 10th (PJA).

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Breeding was confirmed at Alwinton (Upper Coquetdale) (JR), Bellingham (SW), Featherwood (TRD), Happy Valley (Wooler) (MJC), Humford (Bedlington) (ASH), Old Quickening Cote (JR), South Hazlerigg (TRD), Spindlestone (CGK), Whittle Dene (eight juveniles from two pairs) (MR) and Wooler (JR). 11 including juveniles were noted during an Atlas visit to Happy Valley (Wooler) on 12th (MJCo). One to three were also observed at the Bigg Market (Newcastle), Bolam West Houses, Carr Shield, Holywell Dene, Hulne Park, Jesmond Dene, Stewart Shields (Otterburn Ranges), Thrum Mill (Rothbury), Tyne Green (Hexham) and Wark.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrellii*

Confirmed breeding was observed at Alwinton (Upper Coquetdale) (JR), Castle Island (DM/STH/PJA), Clennel (MJC), Cockle Park Farm (JR), Exhibition Park (Newcastle) (DM), Happy Valley (Wooler) (MJC) and Wellhope Moor (BNR). Atlas visits produced 20, including fledged young, in the Clennel area on 10th (MJC), 11 at Happy Valley (Wooler) on 12th (MJC) and seven at Beldon Burn (Newbiggin) on 3rd (BNR).

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

Breeding was confirmed at Ford Moss on 6th (TRD/JD). Five were at Ballyard Hill on 19th (TRD), four at Redesdale Camp on 19th (TRD), three at Chibburn Farm (Widdrington) on 24th (MJCo), two at Broomfield Fell (Long Witton) on 5th (PCF), Fenton Wood (Wooler) on 9th (TRD) and Slaley Forest on 11th (STH). Singles were also at Beldon Burn (Newbiggin), Langleeford (Harthope Valley), Riddlehamhope, Sweethope Lough and Winnowshill (Derwent Reservoir).

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Atlas visits found 116 at Wark Forest/Shitlington area on 4th (MJC), 70+ at Upper Coquetdale 10th (ASJ), 68 at Acton (Blanchland) on 24th (RMH), 65 at Burntshieldhaugh on 26th (RMH), 52 at Baybridge (Blanchland) on 10th (RMH), 51 at Blanchland Moor on 15th (RMH), 27 at Riddlehamhope (Beldon Burn) on 3rd (BNR) and Prestwick Carr on 16th (PCF). Counts of 25 and 24 in tetrads at Wark Forest during Atlas visits on 4th (MJC), 22 at Wellhope Moor on 18th (BNR), 20 at St. Mary's on 28th (ASJ) and 12-17 at a further six widespread localities.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

A pair were feeding young at Berwick Little Beach on 28th (TRD). One was at Sharper's Head on 28th (TRD).

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Breeding was confirmed at Cockle Park Farm (JR), Happy Valley (MJC), Walbottle (KR/LR) and Wooler (JR). At Wark Forest 189 and 179 were found in tetrads during Atlas visits on 4th (MJC). 178 in the Clennel tetrad on 10th (MJC), 51 at Happy Valley (Wooler) on 12th (MJC) and one to 24 at a further 13 widespread localities.

Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*

Family parties were at Happy Valley (Wooler) (MLC) and Walbottle (LR/KR). One to three were at a further seven widespread localities.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Family parties were noted at Cockle Park Farm (JR), Old Hartley (RJP) and Walbottle (KR/LR). 14 were at Chibburn Farm (Widdrington) on 24th (MJCo), ten at Wellhope Moor on 18th (BNR), seven at Woodside on 20th (MJCo) and six at Welton on 15th (MJCo).

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

Breeding was confirmed at Alwinton (Upper Coquetdale) (JR), Redheugh Farm (JR) and Shildon near Blanchland (JMA). Atlas visits to two tetrads at Wark Forest produced counts of 117 and 100 on 4th (MJC), 26 at Clennel tetrad on 10th (MJC), 21 at Haughton Strother GP on 25th (MR) and 12 at Beldon Burn (Newbiggin) on 3rd (BNR). Early autumn passage was indicated by 11 north over Bamburgh on 28th (BRS). One to ten were at a further 19 widespread inland localities.

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

Confirmed breeding was observed at Alwinton (JR), Cockle Park Farm (JR), Holy Island (unusual ground nest in base of strawberry plants – IK), Newbiggin (GB) and Wooler (JR). 18 were at Newbiggin on 19th (GB), 15 at Cockle Park Farm on 4th (JR), 14 at North Sunderland (Seahouses) on 13th (MJC) and one to ten at a further five widespread localities.

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis caberet*

Noted as common in the Simonside area on 10th (ASJ). A nest contained two eggs at Ford Moss on 2nd (IRD). At Wark Forest Atlas counts found 35 and 15 in tetrads on 4th (MJC), 12 at Ballyard Hill on 19th (TRD), ten flew over the Harthope Valley on 12th (BMo), seven at Broomfield Fell (Long Witton) on 5th (PCF), six at Redesdale Camp on 19th (TRD), five at Whitfield Hall on 12th (BNR), four at Riddlehamhope on 3rd (BNR), Sweethope Lough on 26th (PRM) and Longknowe on 28th (TTRD). One to two were also at Barmoor Castle, Barrow Hill, Beldon Burn, Blaxter Lough, Countess Park Wood (Redesmouth), Doddington North Moor, Ford Moss, Gowk Hill, High Farnham, Horsley, Nookton Burn, South Middleton and Stewart Shiels Plantation (Otterburn Ranges).

Common Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

Family parties were found at Barmoor Castle (TRD), Thrunton Woods (JD) and Whitfield Hall (BNR). 89 and 62 were noted in tetrads at Wark Forest on 4th ((MJC), 30 were at Shepherd Shield (Wark Forest) on 17th (AT), 15 at Longhorsley on 28th (RA), 12 at The Wanneys on 19th (IK), Ford Moss on 6th (TRD/JD), ten at Cottonshope (Otterburn Ranges) on 19th (TRD) and one-six at a further 18 widespread conifer localities. Post-breeding movement was very evident all month with one to 19 over Prestwick Carr on three dates between 6th-26th (PCF), 12 over Haughton Strother GP on 28th (MR), seven N over Ellington on 19th (TB) and SW over Monkseaton (Whitley Bay) on 27th (MSH), five over Corbridge on 27th (MR) and one to three at Eshott, Holy Island, Linden Hall, Linnels and Whittle Dene.

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

A family party visited a Walbottle garden on 26th (KR/LR). Four were found in the Clennel tetrad during an Atlas visit on 10th (MJC). Pairs were noted at a Rothbury garden all month (TRD/JD), Swallow Pond on 1st (JPD), Middle Ord (Berwick) on 2nd (TRD), Donaldson's Lodge on 4th (TRD), Warden on 5th (SW), Walwick Grange on 5th (SW), an Old Hartley garden on 5th (RLP), Prestwick Carr on 6th (PCF), a Wallsend garden on 12th (JPD), Cramlington Learning Village on 13th (PJA), Ord House CP (East Ord) on 14th (BWG), East Ord on 13th (MHu) and Shilford on 20th (BNR). Singles were also at Doddington North Moor, Sandyford, Scotland Gate, Seghill, St. Cuthbert's Cave and Whitfield Hall.

A juvenile Bullfinch
29th June in a Walbottle garden
by Ken Russell

**Yellowhammer** *Emberiza citrinella*

Breeding was observed at Alwinton (Upper Coquetdale) (JR), Cockle Park Farm (JR) and Happy Valley (Wooler) (MJC). 39 males were singing during a 20km cycle ride in the Blagdon-Bellasis Bridge to Saltwick-Shilvington area on 15th (ASJ), 38 in the Beacon Hill-Milbourne-Ingoe area on 20th (ASJ), 13 at Ingram Valley on 16th (ASJ), 11 at Ryal on 26th (ASJ), ten at Welton near Whittle Dene on 15th (MJCo) and Holywell on 8th (ASJ). One to eight were at a further 11 widespread localities.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Seven pairs were at St. Mary's Wetland on 4th (ASJ), 11 males in the Blagdon-Bellasis Bridge to Saltwick-Shilvington area on 15th (ASJ), eight at Arcot Pond on 25th (DM), seven at Prestwick Carr on 19th (PCF) and Cresswell Pond on 23rd (ASJ), three pairs breeding at Haughton Strother GP all month (MR), five at West Hartford on 25th (PJA) and one to two at a further nine widespread localities.



A Reed Bunting
Dinnington
12th June by Peter Fletcher

Corn Bunting *Miliaria calandra*

One was seen regularly at West Ord with Yellowhammer between 2nd-28th (BWG/MHu). Another was noted at Shoresdean near Thornton between 8th-10th (TBr/JD/TRD).



An increasingly uncommon species
A Corn Bunting photographed at Thornton
10th June by Tim Dean

ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN**Escapes****Bar-headed Goose** *Anser indicus*

Three at Hauxley on 28th (PT/LMo) were presumably responsible for a further sighting at Cocklawburn Pond the next day (BWG) when they were still heading N.

Hybrids**Canada Goose x Greylag Goose** *Branta canadensis x Anser anser*

Single hybrids were at Branton GP on 11th (TRD/JD) and at Killingworth Lake on 24th (LJM).

Birds of Unknown Origin**Rose-ringed Parakeet** *Psittacula krameri*

Sightings again at Ponteland this time at the Leisure Centre on 14th (CDB) and also fittingly at Dinnington in the observer's garden on 10th (PCF).



Ring-necked Parakeet
Dinnington
10th June
Peter Fletcher

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

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Bamburgh Ringing Station, Berwick Wildlife Group, Northern Experience Wildlife Tours.

Those observers marked with an asterisk after their name have submitted records online using the club spreadsheet. Copies are available by e-mailing Dick Myatt dick@dickmyatt.co.uk

Apologies for any accidental omissions.

BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION

This bulletin was compiled by Lyndsay McDougall (Mute Swan to Egyptian Goose, Red Grouse to Black-necked Grebe), Graeme Bowman (Ruddy Shelduck to Ruddy Duck), Trevor Blake (Honey Buzzard to Crane), Ian Forsyth (Oystercatcher to Skua), Tim Dean (Ivory Gull to Puffin, Escapes, Hybrids and Unknown Origin, List of Contributors, Highlights), Peter Fletcher (Feral Pigeon to Red-rumped Swallow), Mike Richardson (Cetti's Warbler to Pied Flycatcher), Dee McKeown (Dunnock to Corn Bunting), Dan Turner (WeBS coastal counts) and Steve Holliday (WeBS Inland Counts). Thanks again to Ann McKeown for typing the section Dunnock to Corn Bunting. Thanks to Barbara Welch of NNBC for providing data. Proof reading was by Mike Smith.

Edited by Steve Barrett Sscmagpie@aol.com

Distributed by Alan Watson apusx@blueyonder.co.uk

BULLETIN SECTION WRITER

We are always on the look-out for bulletin writers.

Please send an email to Steve Barrett Sscmagpie@aol.com to volunteer or for more information.

RECORD SUBMISSION

Please send all record cards to Tim Dean, 2 Knocklaw Park, Rothbury NE65 7PW, to arrive on, or preferably before, the 8th of the month following that in which the records were collected. Please write cards legibly to ensure that your sightings are correctly recorded.

E-mail: Members are encouraged to e-mail their records on an Excel-style spreadsheet. Please e-mail Dick Myatt at dick@dickmyatt.co.uk for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and Grid references: The use of standard location names and the inclusion of grid references greatly increases the value of records in subsequent analyses. A 1km square grid reference is the ideal e.g. NY8067 for Grindon Lough, but 2km square references (tetrads) are also acceptable e.g. NY86D in this case. A list of localities and their tetrad grid references (tetrad/Locality List) can be downloaded from the 'Resources & Downloads' section of the Club website at <http://www.ntbc.org.uk> – the use of these names, wherever possible, would be highly appreciated.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Please keep submitting your articles, photographs, sketches and illustrations for the bulletin. Thanks again to those who have supplied the excellent photographs. Please send to Steve Barrett at Sscmagpie@aol.com

ELECTRONIC BULLETIN

The NTBC bulletin can be received electronically or as hard copy. The electronic bulletin arrives earlier than the printed version, it is in colour and we save the cost of printing and stamps. Ask for an e-mailed bulletin from:

jo.bentley@waitrose.com

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS 2011

Annual subscription is a bargain at £23. For membership enquiries please contact jo.bentley@waitrose.com

NTBC WEB SITE

The Club website is an excellent resource for all interested in birds in the north east. There are numerous interesting sections, including a photograph gallery, site information and trip reports together with extensive reference information for birding in our area. The site is at www.ntbc.org.uk

If you have any ideas or things you would like to see or hear about on the site please let Chris know on 0751 582 5024 or e-mail christopher.knox@o2.co.uk

NTBC SIGHTINGS PAGE

The club sightings web page gives listings of birds seen locally. Adding a sighting is simple. A short email is all that is needed. If anyone would like to be added as a contributor please contact Alan Tilmouth at ntbcorg@gmail.com
The sightings page can be found at <http://ntbcsightings.posterous.com>

INDOOR MEETINGS

The next meeting will be, as usual, at Newcastle Falcons on Thursday 8th September at 7pm.

The first meeting will be - 'On Track in Tsavo and Sokoko – the specialty birds of Eastern Kenya'.

COMMITTEE NEWS**2007-2011 Bird Atlas Sponsorship**

Several great species are still available.

To secure your selection, e-mail Steve Lowe at zappa99@live.co.uk or phone 0191 2527438 for details.

COASTAL WeBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND

AC A. Craggs

RC R. Chilton

178

JAR J. Roper

LJM L. J. McDougall

TAC T. A. Cadwallender

DMT D. M. Turner

EC E. Cooke

PF P. Fletcher

MAY 2011

MHu

M. Hutcheson

TB T. Brewis

Site	TOTAL	Tweed Estuary	Tweed: A1 By-Pass to Horncliffe	Spittal - Cocklawburn	Lindisfarne NNR (including Budle Bay)	(Budle Bay)	Howick - Boulmer	Aln Estuary	Coquet Estuary	Newbiggin - Cambois	Blyth Estuary	Tyne North Pier - Fish Quay	Wallsend, (north bank only)	Redheugh - Scotswood Bridge, (north bank)	Scotswood - Newburn Bridge, (north bank)
Counter		MHu	TB	MHu	AC	AC	JAR	TAC	EC	RC	LJM	DMT	DMT	PF	PF
Date		13	15	12	15	15	17	18	15	15	13	16	15	15	15
Little Grebe	1							1							
Cormorant	52	8	1	10	13		8	1	1	8		2			
Shag	10	1		7	2										
Grey Heron	36	12	6	1	8	2	2	5	2						
Mute Swan	204	137	16		1			20	26		2		1		1
Pink-footed Goose	3	1			2										
Canada Goose	3		2					1							
Shelduck	195				125	85	15	5	6	3	35		1	4	1
Mallard	118	26	42	5	8	4		17	5		3		6		6
Tufted Duck	7	1		1	5										
Eider	412	11		59	203		23	6	87	22			1		
Common Scoter	113			48	65										
Red-breasted Merganser	1				1										
Goosander	59	5	51						3						
Moorhen	4							2	1		1				
Coot	1							1							
Oystercatcher	354	11	5	45	205	38	52	1	1	9	17	7		1	
Ringed Plover	1,154	24		76	815		6				233				
Grey Plover	572				572										
Lapwing	36				24			12							
Knot	550				550										
Sanderling	38				35		3								
Dunlin	2,575	2		9	2510		19				35				
Bar-tailed Godwit	21				21										
Whimbrel	15	1		2	7		5								
Curlew	180	5		1	165	1	2	1	2		3				1
Redshank	30				19			2		5	3			1	
Turnstone	27			2	15		10								
Black-headed Gull	221	3	1		7		28	95			35		44	5	3
Common Gull	20						2						18		
Lesser Black-backed Gull	67	9	1	1	5			1			5	3	1	38	3
Herring Gull	817	198	6	47	36		67				27	263	79	89	5
Great Black-backed Gull	26	2		1			2					14		7	
Kittiwake	1											1			
Sandwich Tern	298	12		142	139		5								
Common Tern	3											2	1		
Kingfisher	0														
ADDITIONAL SPECIES															
Fulmar	9	4					2			3					
Greylag Goose (domestic)	1							1							
TOTALS - WILDFOWL	1,219	202	118	131	433	91	48	59	131	33	41	2	9	4	8
- WADERS	5,552	43	5	135	4,938	39	97	16	3	14	291	7	0	2	1
- GULLS & TERNS	1,453	224	8	191	187	0	104	96	0	0	67	283	143	139	11

COASTAL WeBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND

JAR J. A. Roper

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JUNE 2011		MHu TB	M. Hutcheson T. Brewis		AC RP	A. Craggs R. Poyer	RC DMT	R. Chilton D. M. Turner P. Fletcher								
Site	TOTAL	Berwick North Shore	Berwick Little Beach	Tweed Estuary	Tweed: A1 By-Pass to Horncliffe	Spittal - Cocklawburn	Lindisfarne NNR (including Budle Bay)	Budle Bay	Budle Pt - Seahouses	Howick - Boulmer	Ahnmouth South	Newbiggin - Cambois	Tyne North Pier - Fish Quay	Wallsend, (north bank only)	Redheugh - Scotswood Bridge, (north bank)	Scotswood - Newburn Bridge, (north bank)
Counter		MHu	MHu	MHu	TB	MHu	AC	AC	RP	JAR	RP	RC	DMT	DMT	PF	PF
Date		9	9	10	15	8	12	12	12	15	12	13	13	18	12	12
Cormorant	94	4	3	8	6	6	31			4		14	6	12		
Shag	20		8			4			7		1					
Grey Heron	50	1		10	12	2	20	1	1	4						
Mute Swan	358			338	8		6		5							1
Greylag Goose	8				8											
Shelduck	282						243	162	2	14				1	3	19
Teal	3						3									
Mallard	190	3		52	32	4	39	8	9						21	30
Tufted Duck	13				1		8		4							
Eider	1,524	5	5			54	962	12	350	5	136	5	2			
Common Scoter	36					11					25					
Red-breasted Merganser	55			2			53									
Goosander	60	1		38	21											
Moorhen	4								4							
Coot	2								2							
Oystercatcher	338	10		5	8	48	235	15	9	11	2	5	1	2		2
Ringed Plover	39		10			2	24			2					1	
Grey Plover	1						1									
Lapwing	13						11									2
Knot	4						4									
Sanderling	20					18	2									
Dunlin	38					2	36									
Bar-tailed Godwit	30						30									
Whimbrel	6						6									
Curlew	438			1			426	2		8		1				2
Redshank	16						15								1	
Greenshank	1						1									
Common Sandpiper	1				1											
Turnstone	8						8									
Black-headed Gull	691	4	4	32	10	5	539	111	n/c	35				50	10	2
Common Gull	128		4				124									
Lesser Black-backed Gull	92			5	1	2	56		n/c					1	26	1
Herring Gull	954	35	18	78	15	88	294		n/c	60	n/c		276	55	35	
Great Black-backed Gull	73	3	1	4		1	4			5			51	2	2	
Kittiwake	104	12		64		7							20	1		
Sandwich Tern	114		4	8		24	72		n/c		n/c		6			
Roseate Tern	1												1			
Common Tern	9						6		n/c		n/c		1	2		
Arctic Tern	79						79		n/c		n/c					
Kingfisher	0															
ADDITIONAL SPECIES																
Fulmar	6											6				
TOTALS - WILDFOWL	2,699	14	16	448	88	81	1,365	183	384	27	162	19	8	13	24	50
- WADERS	953	10	10	6	9	70	799	17	9	21	2	6	1	2	2	6
- GULLS & TERNS	2,245	54	31	191	26	127	1,174	111	0	100	0	0	355	111	73	3

TD | Tim Daley |180[illegible]

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

<http://www.ntbc.org.uk/>

Bulletin 2011 No 7

MONTHLY SUMMARY – JULY

7th September 2011



HIGHLIGHTS

Scaup	One N with Common Scoter at Newbiggin on 26th.
Velvet Scoter	Up to 12 daily N at several coastal sites in last week.
Quail	Still singing at many sites in vintage year.
Sooty Shearwater	Up to nine daily N at several coastal sites in last week.
Balearic Shearwater	One past Newbiggin on 20th.
Storm Petrel	Unprecedented passage with county record of 121 past St Mary's on 26th.
Bittern	One throughout at Gosforth Park.
Little Egret	After a lean year suddenly many sightings.
Spoonbill	Singles still at several sites.
Avocet	Adult & the remaining juvenile present all month at Cresswell Pond.
Pectoral Sandpiper	One at Cresswell Pond on 20th & Lynemouth Flash on 22nd.
Little Gull	Up to 20 individuals in Druridge Bay area.
Hooded Crow	Summering bird in Budle Bay on 30th.
White-spotted Bluethroat	Male trapped at East Chevington on 27th not seen after release.

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Indoor Meetings start on Thursday 8th September with Golden Eagles
Atlas confessions
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Committee News
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Photographic Competition
CRC vacancy
Lindisfarne Brent geese survey
Club Subscriptions are due for 2011/2012



The ever-popular Puffin
Inner Farne
Tim Dean on 10th July

WEATHER

1st to 5th High pressure dominated the first few days with plenty of fine, settled weather. By the end of the period, cloud and rain started to spread in from the west, heralding a change to more changeable weather.

6th to 10th An area of low pressure gradually moved eastwards across the UK, introducing cooler and much more unsettled weather. Periods of persistent, heavy rain gave locally high totals.

11th to 15th There were some showers and rain during this period, but it was generally much drier than the previous few days.

16th to 23rd There was a return to unsettled weather associated with an unusually deep area of low pressure tracking eastwards across the UK. This brought strong winds, rain and thundery showers to many places. Towards the end of the period, the showers became more confined to the east with other areas seeing more sunshine. Northerly winds from 21st -23rd brought sea birds into the southern part of the North Sea.

24th to 31st A trend to more settled weather occurred during the last week.

CLASSIFIED LIST

The following account consists of unchecked reports. The species/subspecies marked * require descriptions.

A complete list of all sightings that need notes is included in the NTBC website www.ntbc.org.uk under the County Records Committee section and in Birds in Northumbria 2009 page 224.

The Inland and Coastal Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) tables are at the rear of the bulletin. These contain counts additional to those in the Classified List.

TARGET SPECIES

The target species for 2011 are Gadwall, Snipe and Stonechat.

Please report all records for these species.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

The largest gatherings were 385 in the Tweed Estuary on 14th (MHu), 160 at Killingworth Lake on 15th (LJM), 68 at Castle Island on 18th (CDH) and 53 at Ladyburn Lake on 21st (LJM). Further broods were noted at Belsay Hall (six young), Hauxley NR (three young), Holywell Pond (seven young), Ladyburn Lake (two broods 14 young), Linton Pond (five young), Merryshields Pond (Bywell) (six young), Rayburn Lake (five young) and Shield-on-the-Wall (four young). One to eight adults were noted from Broomlee Lough, Cresswell Pond, King Edward Bridge (Newcastle) and Leazes Park (Newcastle).

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Singles were at Cresswell Pond on 5th (CN) and in the Tweed Estuary on 14th (MHu).

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

A single was at Catcleugh Reservoir on 26th (PRM).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

The peak counts were 116 at Cresswell Pond on 23rd (STH/MHp), 115 at Hauxley NR on 19th (IF), 82 at Arcot Pond on 29th (LJM) and 40+ at East Chevington on 15th (MSH). 17 were at Woodhorn Flashes on 30th and one to three at Castle Island, Catcleugh Reservoir and Kielder Dam.

Additional breeding data are as follows:

Location	No. broods	of	No. young	of	Observer/Comments
Ladyburn Lake	1		3		LJM on 21st
Silver Link Biodiversity Park	1		1		CGK throughout the month

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Peak counts were 128 at Hauxley NR on 19th (IF), 117 at Castle Island on 18th (CDH), 85 at Killingworth Lake on 15th (LJM), 44 at Marden Quarry on 17th (MN), 42 at Cresswell Pond on 23rd, 27 at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 11th (DM) and 21 at Wansbeck Business Park (Ashington) on 21st (LJM). On 26th 19 were at Catcleugh Reservoir with 16 at Yarrow Slake on 29th and 14 at Backworth on 22nd. One to ten were at Beehive Flash (Earsdon), Kielder Dam, Linton Ponds, Stobswood, Swallow Pond, Tweedmouth Dock and Woodhorn Flashes.

Additional breeding data are as follows:

Location	No. broods	of	No. young	of	Observer/Comments
Woolsington Ponds	1		4		SRB on 28th

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

A summering bird was on Inner Farne on 9th (TRD).

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Budle Bay held 188 on 2nd before dropping to 18 by 29th (CGK), 28 at Cresswell Pond on 20th included 22 juveniles (PRM), nine (including large juveniles) were at Castle Island on 17th (DM/STH/PJA), three at Hauxley Reserve and one at West Ord. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Amble Braid	1	12	IFo. Female with half-grown young on 31st
Castle Island	1	9	DM/STH/PJA. Small young on 17th

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

A female was at Shittlehaugh (Redesdale) on 31st (TRD).

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

One flew N at St Mary's on 24th (CGK/SPP *et al.*). Grindon Lough held 19 on 7th (PRM) and 14 on 17th (MRS), 14 were at Cresswell Pond on 3rd (AA) and one to six there between 8th-20th (MSH/CGK/AJ), and two at Budle Bay on 13th (MSH).

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Peak counts were 16 at Cresswell Pond on 20th (PRM) and 12 at Castle Island on 17th (DM/STH/PJA *et al.*), and one was at Swallow Pond. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Ladyburn Lake	3	16 (9,5,2)	LJM on 21st. Included 2 large independent young
East Chevington south pool	1	7	STH/PJA. Medium-sized young on 11th (as June?)
Linton Ponds	1	5	STH. Large young on 24th
Hauxley Reserve	1	4	IF on 19th

Gadwall is a **target** species for 2011. Please report all records.

Teal *Anas crecca*

Two flew N at St Mary's on 27th (MSH/AC), and five S at Cocklawburn on 7th (MHu). Grindon Lough held 74 on 7th (PRM), 14 were at Derwent Reservoir on 21st (IFo), and four to six at Arcot and Holywell Ponds and Castle Island.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Peak counts were 107 at Killingworth Lake on 15th (LJM), 78 at Newcastle Leazes Park on 18th (DM), 68 at Arcot Pond on 13th (LJM), 40-60 at Castle Island, Derwent Reservoir, Grindon Lough, Haughton Strother GP, Holywell and Linton Ponds and West Ord, and 14-24 at Airy Holm Reservoir, Middle Ord Pond, Newcastle Civic Centre and Exhibition Park. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Killingworth Lake	3	18 (8,7,3)	LJM on 15th
Newcastle Leazes Park	3	5 (2,2,1)	DM on 5th (tiny young)
Jesmond Dene	2	15 (8,7)	MJCo on 3rd (includes brood from June?)
Swallow Pond	2	15 (9,6)	JPD on 10th-11th (new broods)
Grindon Lough	2	12 (7,5)	MRS on 17th including 5 well-grown young
Newcastle Exhibition Park	2	7 (5,2)	DM on 13th
Byker	1	10	DM on 4th (tiny young)
Cresswell Pond	1	8	STH on 9th (small young)
Castle Island	1	7	DM/STH/PJA on 17th (small young)
East Cramlington Pond NWT	1	6	STH/PJA on 10th (small young)
Hetherslaw Mill	1	6	MHu on 6th
Silverlink Biodiversity Park, North Shields	1	6	LJM on 8th
Swallow Pond	1	6	LJM on 27th. As June?
Oxford Pits	1	4	MHu on 1st
Chipchase E/Nunwick N	1	3	BNR on 10th
Hauxley Reserve	1	1	IF on 19th
QEII Lake	1	1	LJM on 13th

Pintail *Anas acuta*

Two were at Cresswell Pond on 21st (LJM) and one at Monk's House Pool on 8th (MSK/NEWT).

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Four were at Backworth on 19th (CGK), three at Grindon Lough on 7th (PRM), three (two drakes) at Swallow Pond on 3rd and 19th (JPD), and one at the Beehive Flash (Earsdon) on 20th (PRM).

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Bothal Pond held a peak of 12 on 5th and three to ten on several dates between 6th-19th (TB). Nine were at Holywell Pond on 20th (PRM) and six on 9th (CGK), seven (family party) at Druridge Pools on 22nd (PCF), six at Killingworth Lake on 9th (LJM), and three to four at Airy Holm Reservoir and Cresswell Pond. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Swallow Pond	3	8 (3,3,2)	JPD/SPP. First brood of 3 on 3rd and others on 10th
Killingworth Lake	1	6	CDB/LJM on 29th

A Pochard family
Killingworth Lake
Chris Barlow
29th July

**Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula*

Singles flew N at Newbiggin on 4th and 24th (AT) and St Mary's on 24th (JPD/MSH). Peak concentrations were 42 at Cresswell Pond on 28th (PRM), 35 at Killingworth Lake on 9th (LJM), 22 at Castle Island on 17th (DM/STH/PJA), and ten to 15 at Broomlee Lough, Holywell Pond, Ladyburn Lake, Newcastle Leazes Park and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. One to six were also at Airy Holm Reservoir, Arcot Pond, Grindon Lough, Hauxley Reserve, Jesmond Dene and Oxford Pits. More unusual were singles at the Tweed Estuary on 5th and Tweedmouth Dock on 14th (MHu). Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Newcastle Leazes Park	4	20 (9,6,3,2)	DM. New broods of 9, 6 and 2 on 11th and new brood of 3 on 18th
Woodhorn Flashes	3	19 (12,4,3)	STH. All new broods on 30th
Shasun Pharma, Dudley	3	14 (8,3, 3)	JA. Broods of 8 and 3 on 12th and new brood of 3 on 26th
Swallow Pond	4	22 (7,7,5,3)	JPD. All new broods between 3rd-26th
Wansbeck Business Park, Ashington	2	8 (7,1)	LJM on 21st
Haughton Strother GP	2	7	MR on 11th
Bothal Pond	1	6	TD per STH on 10th
Newcastle Exhibition Park	1	6	DM on 18th
Ladyburn Lake	1	5	LJM on 21st
West Ord	1	4	MHu on 19th
Killingworth Lake	1	3	LJM on 31st
Linton Ponds	1	2	CDH on 18th
Duke's Pond	1	1	JPD on 29th
Holywell Pond	1	1	CDH on 15th

Scaup *Aythya marila*

One flew N at Newbiggin on 26th (TRD). A juvenile was at East Chevington on 28th (NFO).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

150 were at Lynemouth on 18th (MSH) and 76 off nearby Snab Point on 9th (STH), 44 at Cheswick on 7th (MHu), 31 at Newbiggin and three at Marshall Meadows Bay.



A duck Eider on Inner Farne
10th July by Tim Dean

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

Monthly totals included at least 238 N and three S at Newbiggin, including 75 on 27th and 62 on 4th (AT/STH/TRD/TB), and 228 N at St Mary's, including 122 on 27th and 48 on 12th (MSH/AC/CGK *et al.*), with 45 N at Tynemouth on 26th (DRW). Lingered birds comprised 156 at Cheswick on 7th (MHu), 90 at Lynemouth on 18th (MSH), 31 at Newbiggin and 15 during a pelagic off Cullercoats.

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

At least 18 flew N at Newbiggin between 3rd-27th, including nine on 25th and six on 24th (ADM/AT/ASH *et al.*), ten moved N at St Mary's on 24th (CGK/SPP/MSH *et al.*) and one N on 27th (MSH/AC), and singles N at Tynemouth on 26th (DRW) and Snab Point on 28th (PRM).

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Four flew N at St Mary's on 1st (MSH).

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

One flew N at Newbiggin on 23rd (STH/MHp).

The Tweed Estuary held a peak of 112 on 27th and 38-54 on several dates between 5th-24th (MHu), 64 were at West Ord on 17th (MHu), 28 at Berwick Little Beach on 18th (MHu), five to seven at Catcleugh Reservoir and Cocklawburn, and two to three at Amble Braid, Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond and offshore at Cresswell. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Castron	1	8	PCF on 30th
Wylam	1	4	AA. Fledged young on 9th

Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis*

A pair was at Holywell Pond on 4th-5th (EG).

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

A two-hour TTV on 24th at Langleeford (Harthope Valley) recorded 95 birds (MJC). At Humble Dodd (Whitfield Moor) 12 adults with 29 young in five broods were noted, with further two broods hidden on 7th when a single was at Wolf Hills (Whitfield Moor) (BNR). Singles were at Allenheads, Sleafy Forest, Swinhope Moor and Wellhope Moor.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

The only report was of a single at Agarshill Fell (Whitfield Moor) on 7th (BNR).

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

At Rake House Farm two adults accompanied 15 young on 13th (MN), three adults were with ten young at Ellington on 22nd (TB), one adult was with ten young at Doddington on 21st (JD), a pair was observed with seven young near Highmoor on 28th (NFO) and two adults with six young at Carrshield on 11th (AJR). A covey of eight was seen at Middle Newham (Belsay) on 21st, where a local farmer had reported at least one family party with chicks (MRS). One to four were noted at Aid Crag, Arcot Pond, Backworth, Big Waters, Coanwood and Elford.

Quail *Coturnix coturnix*

The species still continued to be well reported. In the Waren Mill/Elford area eight to ten were singing intermittently throughout the month (CGK *et al*). Three were singing at Beukley (Bingfield) on 3rd, where a single was present on 30th (ALT). Singles were noted at Ord Moor on 1st, Matten GC on 4th/14th, Mootlaw Quarry (Ryal) on 4th/31st, Dancing Green Hill and Holburn Grange on 5th, Low Angerton on 7th, near Welton Reservoirs on 8th/15th/19th, Bellasis Bridge on 9th, Doddington, Gunnerton and Humbleton on 10th, South Hazlerigg on 12th, Grizzly Hill (Matten) on 14th, Aydon (Corbridge) on 14th/21st/28th, Causey Park Bridge (Morpeth) on 15th, Howick on 20th, Flodden Field on 26th and Great Whittington on 31st.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

Three adults including a female with ten chicks were at The Whiggs (Great Whittington) on 3rd (ALT), when a pair was in a Walbottle garden. A pair was also in an Old Hartley garden on 6th.

Diver species *Gavia sp.*

An unidentified diver (not Red-throated) flew N at Newbiggin on 20th (GMI).

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

At Newbiggin nine flew past from 21st-27th including four on 27th (AT), with a further seven recorded there on 26th (Bmo). Five flew S on 17th (DM/STH/PJA/ADM_c) and two passed on 13th (ASH). Two flew N at St Mary's Island on 24th and two on 25th (MSH/CGK/SPP *et al.*) and singles flew N at Wellhaugh Point (Amble) on 23rd (DWS) and Snab Point on 28th (PRM) and passed Newbiggin on 1st (ASH). Three were offshore at Lynemouth on 18th (PCF), with two offshore at East Chevington on 3rd (AA), St Mary's Island on 27th (MSH/AC) and singles were off St Mary's Island on 26th and noted from the *Northern Experience* pelagic trip from Tynemouth on 29th.

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

The peak passage was 68/hour at Newbiggin on 30th (ASH), where 22 flew N on 29th (AT) and three were noted on 26th (TRD). At Snab Point 18 flew N in 2 hours 30 minutes on 28th (PRM).

Sooty Shearwater *Puffinus griseus*

At Newbiggin at least seven flew N on 25th with five on 24th (ASH/ADM_c/AT). Singles also flew N here on 23rd (STH/MHp/ADM_c), 26th (TRD), 29th (TB) and 30th (ASH). At Coquet Island ten flew N in 2 hours on 27th (JPD). Counts of five N came from St Mary's Island on 24th (CGK/SPP/JPD) and 25th (MSH/AC) whilst five were noted from the *Northern Experience* pelagic trip from Cambois on 30th (MSK/NEWT). Two flew N at Spittal Bay on 25th and Berwick on 26th (MHu). Further singles were noted at St Mary's Island on 24th (MSH) and Sharpness Point (Tynemouth) on 26th (DRW).

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

At Newbiggin 207 flew N from 4th-30th with a peak count of 74 in 5 hours on 24th (AT), 26 were noted in one hour on 25th (ASH) and 12 flew N on 26th (TRD). At St Mary's Island 152+ flew N on 24th (CGK/SPP/MSH *et al.*), on 25th 123 flew N (MSH/AC) with 28N on 26th (MSH/AC), 15 N on 20th and 13 N on 7th (MSH). On 20th at Snab Point 20 flew N in 1 hour and ten flew N at Seaton Sluice in 30 minutes, whilst on 28th at Snab Point five flew N and one S in 2 hours 30 minutes (PRM). Two flew N at Newbiggin on 3rd/29th and singles flew N at St Mary's Island on 27th/28th. *Northern Experience* pelagic trips off Blyth produced three on 29th and two on 30th.

***Balearic Shearwater** *Puffinus mauritanicus*

Singles flew N at Newbiggin on 20th and 25th (AT/ADM_c).

Storm Petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus*

One of the largest-ever movements in the county occurred at the end of the month. The table below details the sightings from St Mary's Island.

Date	From	To	No.	Observers
24/07/2011	13:00	19:30	7	CGK/MPF/MK/JPD <i>et al.</i>
25/07/2011	07:15	08:45	15	MSH
25/07/11	15:40	18:40	52	MSH/AC
25/07/11	19:00	21:20	36	per RBA
26/07/2011	05:20	07:50	13	per RBA
26/07/11	11:50	19:00	121	SPP/MSH/AC <i>et al.</i>
26/07/11	19:30	21:00	9	per RBA
27/07/2011	06:40	07:40	16	MSH/AC
Total			269	

At Newbiggin 104 were recorded from 24th-27th, including 47 on 25th (ADMc/TRD/JGS) and 52 were recorded from 24th-29th including 23 on 24th (AT). At Sharpness Point (Tynemouth) 59 flew N on 26th, 52 of these in 2 hours (DRW). Sea watching at Berwick Pier produced four N in 1 hour on 24th and three N in one hour on 26th (MHu). Ten were noted at sea between Tynemouth-Newbiggin during the North East Cetacean Project Transect survey on 25th (MSK/SL/NECP) and two were noted from a pelagic trip to the Farne Deeps on 27th (MSK/NEWT). A single was seen between the shore at Amble and Coquet Island on 27th (STE).

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

On 24th 500/hour flew N at Berwick Pier (MHu). 200 flew N at Newbiggin on 26th (TRD) whilst at St Mary's Island 68 flew N in 1 hour on 20th and 25 flew N in 30 minutes on 12th (MSH).

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

At St Mary's Island 24 flew N and eight S in 1 hour on 24th. The peak roost count was 118 (a record for July) at Blyth South Harbour on 29th (STH/PJA) when 69 were at Castle Island (AT) and 27 were at East Chevington North Pool (TB). Counts of 14 came from Derwent Reservoir on 18th (IFo) and Cresswell Pond on 23rd (STH/MHp). A single was at Hauxley NR on 19th.



An iridescent Shag
Inner Farne
10th July by Tim Dean

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

The only record was of a juvenile in Blyth South Harbour on 29th (STH/PJA).

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

The single seen in June remained throughout July at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN).

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

More records were received this month than for the preceding six months. Three were in Budle Bay on 30th (CGK). Two were at East Chevington on 17th (MSK/NEWT), Holywell Pond on 19th (JPD/EG), Arcot Pond on 24th (LJM/DM) and Longhirst Flash on 31st (TB). A juvenile was at Arcot Pond from 1st-12th and observed again on 25th. Singles were noted at Cresswell Pond on 1st, East Chevington North Pool on 3rd, Alnmouth and in Budle Bay on 8th, Foxton, Long Nanny and Sleekburn on 10th, Hauxley NR on 13th, Tweed Estuary on 14th, East Chevington, Holy Island Causeway and Warkworth Gut on 17th, Bothal Pond on 20th and Longhirst Flash on 27th.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

The peak counts were 14 in the Tweed Estuary on 14th (MHu), nine at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 7th (MR), eight at Hauxley NR on 13th (PCF) six at Arcot Pond on 9th (DM), Haughton Strother GP on 17th (MR) and Linton Pond on 18th (CDH). Five were at Gosforth Park NR throughout the month, where at least two pairs raised young (NHSN). One to three were at Castle Island, Cresswell Pond, Hethpool, Holywell Dene (one juvenile), Holywell Pond, Muckle Moss, St Mary's Island, Sweethope Lough, Wark and Woodhorn South Flash.

Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

Birds remained in the county throughout the month, but only singles were noted. One was at Amble Braid on 1st (TB), an adult was at Castle Island on 3rd (AA/AT), whilst on 10th a 3rd-calendar-year colour-ringed bird was at Druridge Pools (MSH), and one flew over Seahouses Harbour at 08:05 and S over Longstone (Farne Islands) at 12:00 (MSK/NEWT/IF/DS/MJC/GB). At adult or at least 4th-calendar-year bird was at East Chevington North Pool on 11th (MSH/STH/PJA) where one was seen again on 17th (MSK/NEWT).

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

The highest counts were 17 at Holywell Pond on 17th (BMo) and 13 at Linton Ponds on 24th (STH/GB/IFo). Eight were at Bothal Pond on 22nd (AT). Five including juveniles were at Gosforth Park NR throughout the month (NHSN) and at Cresswell Pond on 9th (STH). Two, including a juvenile not bred there, were at Killingworth Lake on 15th (LJM), two juveniles were on mine-water treatment pools at Greenhead/Blenkinsopp Wyttee (BNR) and two were at Airy Holm Reservoir on 27th (IFo). Singles were at Arcot Pond, Banks Pond (Dinnington), Capheaton Lake and Rayburn Lake.

Additional breeding data are as follows:

Location	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/Comments
Linton Pond	4	8	STH <i>et al.</i> on 24th CDH on 18th
Woodhorn Flashes Gosforth Park NR	2	3	STH on 10th
Swallow Pond	1	2	JPD on 10th
Woolsington ponds	1	2	SRB on 28th: update from June

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Two adults flew N together at St Mary's Island on 24th (MSH). Seven were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 7th (MR). At Killingworth Lake a total of three adults and three juveniles were noted on 15th (LJM). A pair with three small young was at Bothal Pond from 19th onwards (TB). Two pairs were at Derwent Reservoir on 4th/28th and three were at Airy Holm Reservoir on 4th (IFo). Three juveniles were at Cresswell Pond on 25th, where a single juvenile had been noted from 3rd (TB). Two were on the sea at Hadston on 26th (EC/JSB). A single juvenile was on the Tweed below Horncliffe on 14th and a single was at Catcleugh Reservoir on 26th.

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

An adult in summer plumage was observed well inland on Derwent Reservoir on 18th (IFo).

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

The two pairs with respective broods of three and two young were still present at a regular breeding site on 3rd with one adult and two young still remaining on 31st. However another pair was observed again at another regular breeding site without young.

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Single birds were seen at Horsley (RMH/DWN) and Low Waskerley on 11th with another single seen at the latter site on 17th (IFo). Other birds were seen at Holywell Dene on 21st (RJP) and at East Chevington on 29th (DE *per* IF).

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

All records this month came from East Chevington, with two young fledged (IF *et al.*).

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

Three records again this month, with birds being noted at Grindon Lough on 1st (BNR), Great Bavington on 12th (AJR) and another bird flew past the observer at Doddington Bridge (JD) on 21st.

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Two birds were seen in an Old Hartley garden on most days (RJP) and a single was at Scotland Gate throughout the month (SLB/MSK). Three birds were at Swallow Pond (on 26th (JPD), two birds were at Warkworth on 4th (CN), Tynemouth on 26th (MN) and at Arcot Pond on 31st (LJM). Single birds were noted at 21 other sites including a female taking a Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto* from a garden at Netherton Park (Stannington) on 23rd (RWM/MIM).



Sparrowhawk in a Tynemouth garden
Colin Bradshaw on 23rd July

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Eight birds including two young were in three Atlas tetrads near Bellingham on 31st (ADM). Five birds were seen at Whickhope Nick on 9th (BNR), Hargill House on 19th (JSB/EC) and at Blagdon Hall Estate on 23rd (LJM). Four birds were noted at Greenhead, Stannington Station, West Woodburn and Whitechapel. One to three birds were seen at over 30 sites.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetuss*

Single birds were seen at Longwiton on 14th (MSK/NEWT), Rayburn Lake on 19th (ADMc) and at another site on several occasions (ADMc).



An Osprey at Kielder ringed by Martin Davidson in July
Photographs courtesy the Forestry Commission

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Three birds were noted at Ryal on 29th (PCF) and two birds were seen at Haughton Strother on 11th (MR), West Hartford on 17th (DM/STH/PJA) and at Sweethope Lough on 28th (PRM). Single bird records came from Holywell Dene, Holywell Pond, Seaton Sluice & Whitfield Moor.

A female Kestrel spying Peter Fletcher
Prestwick Carr on 25th July

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

A pair was alarm-calling at one site on 11th (AJR), and single birds were in suitable breeding habitats on 28th (ADMc) and on 31st (ASH).

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

On 3rd an adult was hunting along the dunes at East Chevington (TB) and another bird was seen hawking over ponds at Blagdon on 21st (per PCF). A single bird was seen at Gosforth Park NR throughout the month (NHSN/per SRB).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

A family party consisting of five birds was in Budle Bay throughout the month (CGK). Three birds, an adult and two juveniles, were at another site on 18th (TRD/JD). Single birds were noted at a further nine sites.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Birds were heard or seen throughout the month at Backworth (CGK *et al.*), Cresswell Pond (ADMc *et al.*) and Gosforth Park NR, with a belated record from there of a pair with young seen in June (NHSN). Other records came from East Chevington and at Arcot Pond where a juvenile was also seen (STH/PJA).

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Arcot Pond peaked at 15 birds on 31st (STH/PJA), while Wallington Hall had 11 birds from two broods on 5th (SRB) and Backworth Pond had ten birds from two broods on 22nd (JPD). One to six birds were at 11 further sites during the month.

Coot *Fulica atra*

The highest count this month was of 78 birds at Woodhorn Flash on 30th (STH) and 57 were at Bothal Pond on 22nd (AT). 55 were at Holywell Pond on 20th (PRM) and 40 birds were at Cresswell Pond on 20th (PRM). One to 16 birds were at thirteen further sites.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

The largest flock inland was of around 100 at Plenmeller Common on 19th (JSB/EC), 43 were at Derwent Reservoir on 8th (IFo) and 36 at Coanwood on 10th (AA). At the coast 77 were at Cresswell Pond on 13th (PCF), 68 at Cocklawburn on 7th (MHu), 64 at Berwick on 10th (MHu), 62 in Budle Bay on 29th (CGK) and 24-36 at Hauxley NR, Newbiggin and North Blyth. Smaller numbers were seen at another 12 sites including one breaking into a freshwater mussel exposed by low water at Arcot Pond on 10th (STH/PJA).

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

At Cresswell Pond one adult and a juvenile were present from at least 4th to 29th (TB *et al.*).

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

At a confidential site eight were still present on 4th with up to six regularly to 25th. At another a juvenile was noted on 17th then an adult and juvenile from 23rd and two adults and two juveniles on 31st. Up to three were seen at Holywell Pond during 9th to 20th (MSH *et al.*), three at Longhirst Flash on 17th (ADMc) and one or two regularly at Cresswell Pond from 4th to 29th. Singles appeared at Castle Island and Haughton Strother GP on 3rd and at Druridge Pools on 8th.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

A pair with two chicks was at Goswick Sands on 28th (MHu) and a pair seen late in the month (*per* RWM) in Corporation Street, Newcastle (site of the former Scottish & Newcastle Brewery) may well have nested there; two were at Derwent Reservoir on 4th. At St Mary's 12 were present on 31st (STE) with singles at Cresswell Pond on 8th, Farne Islands on 9th and Holywell Pond on 20th.

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

The number at St Mary's increased from 60 on 12th to 310 on 28th (MSH/ASJ), 157 were at Earsdon, Church Farm on 22nd and 145 at Newbiggin Beacon Point on 14th. Of 20 at Middlehope Moor on 11th (AJR) at least 12 were young; ten or less were at near Bamburgh, Cresswell Pond, Monk's House Pool and in two areas of Whitfield Moor.



Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Singles appeared at the Farne Islands on 7th, St Mary's on 25th and Tynemouth on 26th.

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

East Chevington held 750 on 27th (JPD) and the number at Derwent Reservoir rose from 124 on 4th to 700 on 28th (IFo); 358 were at Cresswell Pond on 20th and 337 in a newly sown grass field at Sleafy Hall on 15th. Several places had 120-215 at times: Earsdon, Elswick Wharf, Goswick Sands, St Mary's and Swallow Pond. Smaller counts were made at another nine locations.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

Oddly, most records occurred on two days: on 7th five at Seahouses, four at East Chevington and singles at Cresswell Pond and North Blyth; on 17th there were ten at Seaton Sluice (BMo), five at Newbiggin, three at East Chevington and one at Cresswell Pond. Two were at Hauxley NR on 24th.

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

St Mary's held 40-50 from 24th (CGK/SPP/STE), Newbiggin Beacon Point 23 on 14th, six were at Seaton Sluice on 20th and two at Warkworth Gut.

***Pectoral Sandpiper** *Calidris melanotos*

One was found at Cresswell Pond on 20th (IRD *et al.*) and one at Lynemouth Flash on 22nd (JSB/EC).

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

An adult was at Hauxley NR on 24th (TBr).

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

One was at Coquet Island on 5th (CN), three on the Farnes on 7th (MSK/NEWT) and one at Hadston on 29th (EC/JSB).

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Birds were present all month at Cresswell Pond with a peak of 29 on 17th (DM *et al.*); 11 were at St Mary's on 31st. One of five at Grindon Lough on 7th was a juvenile and four or fewer were noted at Arcot Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Hauxley NR and Newbiggin.

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Three were drumming at Dancing Green Hill on 5th and one was displaying at Rayburn Lake on 15th (TRD/JD); four were in two areas of Whitfield Moor on 7th (BNR). Elsewhere three were at Cresswell Pond on 31st, two at Prestwick Carr on 9th and singles at Arcot Pond and Castle Island.

Snipe is a **target** species for 2011. Please report all records.

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Four were roding in Harwood Forest, Tutehill Moss on 1st (TRD) and one or two were doing so at Matfen on 4th and 14th (ALT). One was flushed from the side of a track at Whickhope Byresfield on 9th (BNR).

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Two flew S at Cresswell Pond on 16th (ADM). Singles appeared at Budle Bay and Druridge Pools on 2nd, at Castle Island on 5th, Hauxley on 10th and Cresswell Pond on 30th/31st.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Two flew N at Tynemouth on 26th (DRW) and one did so at St Mary's on the same day. Singles were noted at East Chevington on 2nd, Hauxley on 3rd and 19th and Cocklawburn on 7th.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

S passage included 18 at Warkworth Gut on 31st (NFO), four at Newbiggin on 7th and five there on 8th. Five were in Budle Bay on 30th, two at Alnmouth GC on 8th and two at Newbiggin on 17th; singles were noted at the Blyth Estuary, Cresswell (three days), Hauxley, Holy Island causeway, Newbiggin (three dates), St Mary's and Seahouses.

A Curlew ignores Simon Elliott's sound recording
St. Mary's on 31st July

**Curlew** *Numenius arquata*

The larger counts were of 145 in Budle Bay on 2nd (CGK), 125 at Long Nanny on 10th (ASJ), 100 at St Mary's on 15th (ASJ) and 75 in the Tweed Estuary on 14th while 20-60 were found at Berwick, Cresswell Pond, Earsdon, Hauxley, Holywell Dene and Newbiggin. Small numbers occurred at seven other places.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Six were at Derwent Reservoir on 4th (IFo) and six on the North Tyne at Chipchase E/Nunwick N on 10th (BNR) with five at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 7th (MR). Two to four were found at Amble, Bywell, Castle Island, Holywell Pond, Hauxley, Killingworth Lake, Monk's House Pool, Swallow Pond and the Tweed with singles at another 12 places.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Three at Haughton Strother GP on 6th remained to the end of the month (MR) and two were at Caistron on 30th (PCF). Singles appeared at Arcot Pond on 15th/16th/31st, Druridge Pools on 20th/22nd, East Chevington on 29th and Bothal Pond and Castle Island on 30th.

An alert Green Sandpiper at
Holywell Pond
by Cain Scrimgeour

**Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*

There were three at Castle Island on 13th (AT), two of which remained on 15th then singles on 18th/21st/30th. Two were at Gosforth Park NR on 28th and two in Budle Bay on 29th with singles in Budle Bay on 2nd, Cresswell Pond on 17th/28th, Grindon Lough on 17th and Hauxley NR on 13th/30th.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Three were at Holywell Pond from 7th to 9th (ASJ *et al.*). Druridge Pools had one on 8th, two on 9th and one on 10th.

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

The peak in the Tweed Estuary was 112 on 24th (MHu), 79 were at North Blyth on 7th (AT) and 51 at Cresswell Pond on 24th (IRD). Budle Bay had 40 on 30th, 23 were at Hauxley NR on 19th, 18 at Elswick Wharf on 19th and small numbers at Arcot Pond, Berwick, Earsdon and Grindon Lough.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Seaton Sluice held 14 on 20th (PRM) and seven were at North Blyth on 7th; six or fewer were found at Hauxley, Newbiggin, St Mary's and the Tweed Estuary.



A Turnstone
Hadstone Carr
14th July
Chris Barlow

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

There were five reports of singles: near Coquet Island on 9th and 27th (MSK/NEWT/JPD), in Lynemouth Bay on 17th (MSK/NEWT), off Snab Point on 28th (PRM) and on a pelagic trip off St Mary's on 29th (MSK/NEWT).

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

Reported from coastal watch points almost throughout the month, the most on any particular day being nine at St Mary's on 20th (MSH), eight at Newbiggin on 24th (AT), seven at St Mary's on 12th and 24th (CGK/SPP *et al.*), six at Coquet Island on 9th and at St Mary's on 25th. Up to four/day were otherwise recorded regularly from these places and also from Amble, Cocklawburn, East Chevington, Druridge Pools, Farne Islands, Hadston, Lynemouth Bay, Seaton Sluice and Snab Point.

Three views of an Arctic Skua in late July
 Right harassing terns at Chevington Burn by John Clark
 Below a bird on patrol at Druridge by Chris Barlow

**Great Skua** *Stercorarius skua*

The majority occurred from 20th to the month end, including 11 off Newbiggin on 24th (AT) and four at St Mary's the same day. One to three were also off Berwick, Cambois, Snab Point and Tynemouth as well as at Newbiggin and St Mary's. Only two singles appeared earlier than this period; at St Mary's on 11th and at Newbiggin on 17th.

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

In the ideal northerly conditions in late July there was a noticeable passage N. At Berwick 780 per hour were estimated on 24th (Mhu) with 482 N at Snab Point on 28th (PRM) and 80 N at Newbiggin on 26th (TRD). A WeBS count in the Tweed Estuary on 14th revealed 144 present with 130 in the gull roost there on 5th (Mhu). Otherwise numbers were much lower with 11 on rocks at Newbiggin on 14th (STH) and six at Blyth Harbour on 29th (STH/PJA). Finally a single juvenile was noted at Elswick Wharf on 19th (DM) with an intriguing sighting of one flying around the terminal building at Newcastle Airport on 20th (IF).

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Several large concentrations were noted with 454 the peak at Castle Island on 13th (AT). Other large groups included at least 380 at Budle Bay on 29th (CGK), 348 at the Tweed Estuary on a WeBS count on 14th (Mhu), 329 at Elswick Wharf on 19th (DM) and 250 feeding over Gosforth on flying ants on 31st (STE). 65 were counted between the Metro and Redheugh bridges in Newcastle on 19th (DM). Otherwise up to 44 were found at several localities both coastal and inland.

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

A noticeable passage was obvious late in the month with up to three N between 21st and 26th at Newbiggin, St Mary's and Tynemouth. The only other movement noted was one N at St Mary's on 12th (CGK). The gathering of first-summers continued with a peak of 14 at Cresswell Pond on 1st (ADM) with 13 found there the next day plus a second-summer and an adult (MSH/TRC). Numbers slowly declined, though up to five adults were also found there during the month plus up to four second-summers. Occasionally the birds relocated to East Chevington with all the birds seen on 2nd turning up there with some remaining to 3rd when eight were present. There were also two first-summers at Holywell Pond on 25th (ASJ) with singles at Castle Island from 13th to 17th, Seaton Sluice on 17th (BMo) and St Mary's on 2nd (TS).

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

The peak count at Newbiggin was on 9th when 22 were present (STH) but only up to eight were noted there otherwise. Increasingly this year birds have moved to Cresswell Pond with a peak of 12 on 20th (ADMc) including one juvenile plus up to six on several other dates there. Elsewhere only single adults were noted with birds at Hadston Carrs on 4th (AT), Castle Island on 15th (AT), Swallow Pond on 22nd (SPP) and Lynemouth Flash on 23rd (STH/MHp/AT).



A Mediterranean Gull in summer plumage
10th July
Newbiggin beach
Peter Fletcher

Common Gull *Larus canus*

The two peak counts involved at least 160 at Budle Bay on 29th (CGK) and 130 at Houghton Strother GP on 24th (MR). Smaller groups noted involved 80 at Kearsley Fell on 29th (PCF), 30 adults W at Whitechapel/Lipwood on 23rd and 21 W at Greenhead also on 23rd (BNR). Otherwise up to eight at various localities.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

Surprisingly few reported with a peak of only 18 at Elswick Wharf on 19th (DM). Ten were noted at Northumberland Business Park in Cramlington on 27th with a pair feeding a newly fledged juvenile (LJM). Eight were also noted at Paddy Freeman's Pond in Jesmond Dene on 31st (MJCo). Another breeding record involved two broods at Bassington Industrial Estate in Cramlington. Otherwise up to four at various localities.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

A WeBS count in the Tweed Estuary showed 490 present on 14th (MHu) closely matched by at least 420 at Budle Bay on 30th (CGK). The only other flock reported was 160 at Backworth on 19th (CGK). A breeding record showed at least three broods present at Bassington Industrial Estate in Cramlington. Otherwise up to 14 at various localities.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

The main count noted was 253 at Newbiggin roosting on rocks on 30th (AT). Smaller groups involved 70 at Newbiggin on 17th (DM/STH/PJA) and 36 at Castle Island on 3rd (AT). The only other reports involved singles at Castle Island on 17th (DM/STH/PJA) and Lyne Hill on 4th (MJCo).

Little Tern *Sternula albifrons*

The only report received was of two at Warkworth on 4th which were seen 200 metres upstream of the castle (CN) !

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

An astonishing total of 463 were seen moving N off Snab Point on 28th (PRM) during a two-and-a-half-hour sea watch. At Saltpan Rocks at Cocklawburn 230 were roosting at high tide on 11th (MHu). Other large counts noted were 100 at Cambois on the River Blyth on 10th which included 45 juveniles (ASJ), 76 at Budle Pt which included 18 juveniles (CGK), 62 at the Blyth Estuary at a high tide roost on 10th (CGK/AJ) and at least 50 still on Inner Farne on 9th (TRD). 14 were found at the Tweed Estuary on 14th (MHu) and also 14 were at Cresswell Pond on 23rd (STH/MHp). Two were fishing at Yarrow Slake on the Tweed, well upstream from the estuary on 1st (MSH) and the first juvenile noted at East Chevington was on 2nd (MSH).



A Sandwich Tern with a Sand eel
Hadston Carr by Chris Barlow on 14th July

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

A remarkable 821 were seen moving N at Snab Point (Cresswell) on 28th (PRM) during a two-and-a-half-hour sea watch. Elsewhere numbers were much smaller with 71 found at Newbiggin on rocks on 14th (STH) and at least 30 at East Chevington on 15th before leaving high to SSW (MSH). Smaller groups noted were 22 at Swallow Pond on 3rd (JPD), 19 at Blyth Harbour on 29th (STH/PJA), 15 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 7th (MR) which included one juvenile and 13 at Killingworth Lake on 27th (Bmo). At Gosforth Park three pairs raised four young and three successfully fledged (NHSN). Successful breeding was also noted at Shasun Pharma (Dudley) near Arcot Pond where birds would often fish (LJM). Otherwise well reported with up to seven seen at Arcot Pond, Bothal Pond, Castle Island, Darras Hall, Derwent Reservoir, Elswick Wharf, Hauxley, Holywell Pond, Inner Farne, Newbiggin, Newcastle Quayside, Redheugh Bridge (Newcastle), Valley Park (Cramlington) and West Allotment Pond.

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*

Surprisingly few sightings with the most seen being four flying N at Hauxley on 14th (all with fish) (CDB). Three were near the harbour on Inner Farne on 10th (TRD) with two at Saltpan Rocks, Cocklawburn on 11th (MHu) and two at East Chevington on 23rd (DWS). Singles were noted at Newbiggin on several dates from 8th to 29th with further single adults at Cresswell Pond on 22nd (ADM), Wellhaugh Pt (Amble) on 23rd (DWS), Cullercoats on 24th (CGK) and East Chevington on 27th (JPD).

A Roseate Tern at Hadston
Carr on 14th July
Chris Barlow

**Arctic Tern** *Sterna paradisaea*

An impressive 214 were seen moving N at Snab Pt (Cresswell) on 28th (PRM) during a two-and-a-half-hour sea watch. Signs of an excellent breeding season on Inner Farne with juveniles littering the paths and adults still in close attendance with at least 500 adults still present on 9th and 10th (TRD). Elsewhere the only other passage reports were 20 N at Newbiggin on 26th (TRD) and 14 per hour at Berwick Pier on 24th (MHu). Nine were noted at Saltpan Rocks (Cocklawburn) on 11th at a high tide roost (Mhu).

Auk sp *Uria aalge* / *Alca Torda*

Daily movements were noted past St Mary's Island on 12th, 13th and 24th to 28th. The peak count was on the 26th with 255 N in just under three hours with 143 on 25th and 151 on 24th (MSH/AC).

Guillemot *Uria aalge*

The peak count was at Newbiggin with 300 seen moving N on 26th (TRD). At St Mary's up to 40 adults were on the sea with calling youngsters during the month. Also 18 were noted at North Blyth which included four adults with unfledged young on 31st (PCF). Numbers had dropped dramatically at Inner Farne with most adults having already left leaving only around 20 present on the cliffs on 9th and 10th (TRD).

Razorbill *Alca Torda*

At Newbiggin ten moved N on 26th (TRD) with one seen S at St Mary's Island on 15th (CDH). Three adults were seen with three flightless young on 18th at Lynemouth on 18th (MSH). At Inner Farne only five individuals were seen still on the cliffs on 9th and 10th (TRD).



A young Puffin on Inner Farne
by Tim Dean on 10th July

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

At St Mary's Island passage birds were noted on 12th, 13th, 15th and 25th to 28th with the peak count being 30 N on 12th with up to six on the other dates, all N except for one S on 15th (MSH/AC/CDH). At Newbiggin 12 moved N on 26th (TRD). Birds were slow to depart Inner Farne with large numbers still present on 9th and 10th estimated at 3,000 (TRD). Finally nine were on the sea off Cresswell Village on 15th (JSB/EC).

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Eleven including several juveniles was the only double-figure count at Redesmouth near Steel on 3rd (MJC/ADM). Four were at Slaley Hall on 12th with three there on 10th (RMH), three including a juvenile in a Walbottle garden on 3rd (KR/LR) and at Arcot Pond on the same date (LJM). One to two were at Bellasis Bridge, Cresswell Pond, Damdykes Farm (Cramlington), Gosforth Park N.R., Broom Farm (Ulgham) and West Brunton with singles seen at three locations in Jesmond Dene.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

Only four reports with a maximum of nine in Jesmond Dene on 10th (MJCo) and four including a juvenile in a Walbottle garden on the same date (KR/LR). Two young were in a nest at Kenton on 28th (MRS) and a single was at Snab Point (Cresswell) on 4th (MJCo).

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

One to four were in an Old Hartley Garden all month (RJP) with breeding confirmed by a pair with two eggs in a nest built on top of a back garden security light at Stonelaw (Cramlington) on 11th (DM). A single was at Cresswell on 4th and one was taken by a Sparrowhawk at Stanington on 23rd (RWM/MIM).

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

All reports were of singles with one flushed at Welton near Whittle Dene on 8th (SAS), a female at East Chevington and Druridge Pools on 10th (CDB/CGK/AJ), juveniles at Burnt Tom on 23rd and Rothbury on 29th (TRD) and one over Mootlaw Quarry Ryal on 31st (ALT).

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

A pair fledged at least two young from a tree hole nest at Middle Stobswood on 14th (MSH). Two were in the Chevington Pools area on 3rd (ADMc) with singles reported there on 7th and 8th. Singles were also at Eshott on 1st, Chatton on 10th, Holywell Pond on 19th and Hartley West Farm (Holywell Dene) on 14th / 31st.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Well reported with some good confirmed breeding records consisting of a pair and one juvenile at Ritton White House on 8th (TRD/JD), pair with two at Ovington, pair with three at Allendale on 28th (SAS) and one adult with two juveniles at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 31st (TB). Pairs also bred at Waren Mill Caravan Park near Bamburgh and Low Steads (Longhoughton). All other reports were of singles at Darras Hall, Doddington, Eschott, Great Whittington, Haughton Strother GP, Middle Stobswood, Longhoughton, Leazes Park (Newcastle), Ponteland, Rising Sun CP and at Backworth and Chugdon Wood all month.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

A single was perched at 08.30h in bright sunshine at Prestwick Carr on 2nd (PCF), calling at Wark (N Tyne) on 11th (MR), over a Walbottle garden on 24th (KR/LR) and over a road late morning near Derwent Reservoir on 25th (Ifo).



The Prestwick Carr Tawny Owl on 2nd July by Peter Fletcher

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

One was flushed by an Atlas surveyor at Milbourne on 2nd when he parked directly under it (MRS) and another was seen at QEII Country Park on 3rd (PRF) with the same bird at Pegswood Community Park on 4th (ADMc).

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

One was at Plenmeller Common on 19th (EC/JSB).

Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*

At least six were at Slaley Forest on 29th (AA) with two at Tutehill Moss (Harwood Forest) on 1st (TRD) and a single was there on 2nd (ADMc/AT).

Swift *Apus apus*

Some large gatherings with the peaks being 500 feeding at Holywell on 1st, 400 at Beehive Flash (Earsdon) on 20th, 120 at Druridge Pools on 10th (ASJ). Hundreds were moving over Cresswell Pond in heavy rain on 16th (ADMc) with 80+ at Berwick on 31st, 65 at Shiremoor on 7th and 50 at Mitford on 13th. 12-45 were at Alnwick, Backworth, Bellasis Bridge, Castle Island, Druridge Pools, Gunnerton, Heatherslaw Mill, Hexham and Wark (N Tyne). One to ten were reported from nine further widespread locations

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Three juveniles were together at the oxbow lake in Ponteland Park on 24th (PCF) with two juveniles seen at Gosforth Park NR all month (NHSN) and an adult with a juvenile at Haughton Strother GP on 19th (MR). All other reports were of single birds at Bywell Bridge, Farnley (Corbridge), Gosforth Park NR, Jesmond Dene, Highford and Stanners (Morpeth), River Ouseburn Newcastle Great Park, Tyne Riverside CP Newburn and Wark (N Tyne).

Juvenile Kingfishers
Ponteland Park
24th July
Peter Fletcher

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

A family party of four was feeding near Newcastle Airport on 7th (per PCF) with a single calling at Bywell on 11th (PCF), Kellas Plantation (Slaley) on 13th (RMH) and Farnley (Corbridge) on the same date (RB/MB).

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

The peak counts were seven from two tetrads at West Woodburn on 3rd (MJC/ADM) and five at Holywell Dene on 6th (LJM) both counts including two juveniles. Young birds were also found in an Old Hartley garden on 1st, a Walbottle garden all month, Valley Park (Cramlington) on 13th and Gosforth on 4th. Two were at Scotland Gate all month, Holywell Pond on 20th and Whitechapel/Lipwood on 23rd and 24th. Singles were seen or heard at a further 20 widespread localities.

**Magpie** *Pica pica*

Only one report of six at Jesmond Dene on 3rd (MJCo).

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Five was the maximum count at Choppington Woods during the month with two to three regularly (SLB/MSK). Four were at Black Burn on 18th (TRD) with three at Pegswood on the same date (TB), and two at Swallow Pond on 26th, Rothbury on 30th and Bellingham on 31st. Singles were at Castle Island, Chipchase E, Churnsike Lodge, Dinnington, Ellington Road Landfill, Felicia Crags, Jesmond Dene, Kirkwhelpington and Morpeth.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

The peak Atlas count was 65 at Redesmouth on 3rd (MJC/ADM) with 60 at Chipchase NE on 10th (BNR), 45 at Prestwick Carr on 23rd (PCF) and 40 at Marden Farm (Tynemouth) on 3rd (MN). Ten including four juveniles were in a Walbottle garden on 3rd (KR/LR) and eight at Paddy Freeman's Playing Field (Jesmond Dene) on 18th (MJCo).

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

There were only two reports. 455 were seen on an Atlas count at Redesmouth on 3rd (MJC/ADM) and 400 were feeding on insect hatch at Chipchase NE on 10th (BNR).

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

The peak count was 130+ at Budle Bay on 30th (CGK) with 75 at Yarrow Slake (Tweed Estuary) on 29th (MHu), ten at Greenhead E on 23rd (BNR) and four at Jesmond Dene on 10th (MJCo).

Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix*

The single bird was in Budle Bay on 30th (CGK).

Raven *Corvus corax*

At Lamb Hill in the Cheviots 22 were found around a carcass on the 22nd (IRD) with singles at Carrow Rigg and Landshot on 31st (TRD).

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Low numbers with four at Whickhope Jock's Pike on 9th being the peak count (BNR). Two juveniles were at the Milkhope Centre (Blagdon) on 23rd (LJM) and two were at Whitehope/Lipwood on 24th (BNR) with singles at Valley Park (Cramlington), three locations in Jesmond Dene and two further locations at Whickhope.

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

The peak count was 14 at Hindshield on 1st (BNR) with eleven the highest count for the month in a Walbottle garden on 10th (KR/LR). The only other reports were singles at Lyne Hill on 4th and in Jesmond Dene on 23rd.

Great Tit *Parus major*

There were only three records with a pair having a second brood of three young at Gosforth on 2nd (STE), two at Jesmond Dene on 31st and one at Cresswell on 9th (MJCo).

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

Seventeen including two family parties were at Haughton Strother GP on 11th (MR), with 13 at Greenhead E/Blenkinsopp Wrytree on 23rd and 12 at Whitechapel/Lipwood on 24th (BNR). Five were trapped and ringed at Bamburgh on 21st (BRS), two to three were in an Old Hartley garden during the month (RJP), two including a juvenile in a Walbottle garden on 3rd (KR/LR) and singles at three locations in Jesmond Dene on 10th (MJCo).

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

A family party of two adults and three juveniles was at Prestwick Carr on 23rd (ADMC) with one to two there on four other dates during the month and three including one juvenile were at Moot Law Quarry (Ryal) on 17th (ALT). Two were found in a mixed tit flock at Ellington on 8th with singles there on two other dates (TB). Two were also at Airy Holm Reservoir nr. Shotleyfield on 11th (IFo), West Forest on 15th (TRD) and Matfen on 31st (ALT). Singles at Eschott on 10th (MSH) and in a Walbottle garden on 31st (KR/LR) were the first records for these sites.

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

An adult with four well developed juveniles was found near Dalton on 28th (SAS). Singles were in a Linden Hall garden on four dates during the month (NFO), at Chipchase E / Nunwick N (BNR) and Featherstone on 10th (AA), Rothbury on 29th (JD) and near High Weldon on 30th (NFO).

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Only three reports with 20+ in the Glororum-Elford area near Bamburgh being the peak count on 2nd (CGK). Six were singing at St Mary's on 20th (ASJ) and two were at Seaton Delaval on 5th (EG).

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

An impressive 300+ were at Haughton Strother GP on 6th (MR) with 100+ at Druridge Pools on 18th (PCF) and 60+ there on 20th (MSH). Sixty was the Atlas total from two tetrads at West Woodburn on 3rd (MJC/ADM) which included two nesting colonies of 43 and five to six holes, 50 at a colony at Gunnerton/Barrasford W on 10th (BNR) and 30 at Castle Island on 17th (DM/STH/PJA). One to two were at three further locations.

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

The peak count was 124 at Waren Mill Caravan Park (Bamburgh) on 29th (CGK) with 80+ at Druridge on 29th including many juveniles (MSH). Sixty five were at Greenhead E / Blenkinsopp Wrytree, 40 at Whitechapel/Lipwood on 23rd, 34 at Hindshield on 1st, 32 at Chipchase NE on 10th, 23 at Grindon Lough on 1st, 20 at Gunnerton on 10th (BNR), 25 at Shildonhill on 29th (PCF) and three at Jesmond Dene on 23rd (MJCo). There were still eight AON at Belsay Hall on 21st (KR/LR) and at Holy Island Lough on 12th a bird was sitting on eggs in the Lough hide nest that seven days earlier had apparently been occupied by a Pied Wagtail (ADM).

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

Seventeen was the maximum at Greenhead E / Blenkinsopp Wrytree on 23rd (BNR) with counts at Holywell Dene rising from 5 on 9th to 15 on 22nd (RJP), 6 at Trowupburn on 2nd (JMA) and a single at Windmill Hill (Jesmond Dene) on 10th (MJCo). The largest nest count was 62 AON at Royal Border Bridge (R.Tweed) on 24th with 14 at Belsay Hall, 12 at Dodd's Well (Berwick) and Marshall Meadows Bay, four at Berwick Little Beach and Heatherslaw Mill (MHu). Breeding was noted at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 9th with four fledged young (DM) and five AON at Stannington was a poor year for this site with late breeding and only old nests being re-used (RWM/MIM).

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

The highest count was 18 at Spindlestone on 3rd (CGK), followed by 12 at Ellington on 6th (TB). Eight were reported from Prestwick Carr on 9th and family parties of four to six at Black Burn, Causey Park bridge, Kirkwhelpington, Leazes Park and Valley Park (Cramlington). One to two were reported from a further three localities.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

A total of 13 were noted in the Chipchase-Nunwick area on 10th (BNR). A family party of seven was at Haydon Bridge from 15th (PFS/MMS) and on 3rd singles were reported from five localities in Jesmond Dene (MJCo). One to three+ were noted at a further eight localities.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

The highest counts were 19 at Grindon Lough-Muckle Moss on 1st (BNR), 16 at Prestwick Carr on 2nd (PCF), a roving flock of 15 at Linton Pond Woods on 24th (IFo/GB/STH), ca.12 at West Woodburn on 31st (ADM) and ten at Thorngraston Common on 1st (BNR). One to eight were reported from a further 11 localities.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

On 3rd seven were at Steel (Redesmouth) and five at Morpeth Common (MJC/ADM/IRD). Three juveniles were reported from Wallsend Dene on 9th and three birds at Bamburgh on 13th and in Jesmond Dene on 10th. One to two were noted at a further six localities.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

Three were noted at Steel (Redesmouth) on 3rd, two at Morpeth Common on 3rd and singles at East Chevington, East Ord, Linden Hall, a Walbottle garden (31st) and West Woodburn.

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

An adult and four juveniles were at Swallow Pond on 13th (JPD) and an adult was feeding a juvenile at Hauxley NR on 22nd (EC). Two birds were at Arcot Pond on 9th (DM) and perhaps more unusual was a bird at Gunnerton (North Tyne) on 10th (BNR).



Warblers in the first half of July.

Top left: a successful hunt by a Whitethroat at Prestwick Carr and above: a reeling Grasshopper Warbler at Arcot Pond by Peter Fletcher.

Left: a Sedge Warbler at Hauxley NR on 14th July by Chris Barlow

**Whitethroat** *Sylvia communis*

Seven pairs were identified at Whittle Dene Reservoirs during the month (MR). Prestwick Carr held 12 on 9th (PCF). Family parties were reported from Arcot Pond, Aydon (Corbridge), Farnley (Corbridge) and Valley Park (Cramlington). On the coast at Bamburgh there were three+ on 21st and 4+ on 26th, while two were at Seaton Sluice on 20th. One to two were reported from a further six inland localities.

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

Well reported again with plenty of birds still 'reeling'. Five were found over 2km at Prestwick Carr on 9th (PCF) and three to four were 'reeling' at Arcot Pond until at least 24th (LJM *et al.*). Elsewhere one to two were reported from Backworth, Bamburgh, Beacon Lane (Cramlington), Bellasis Bridge, Debdon (Rothbury), East Chevington, Great Whittington, Greenhead, Gosforth Park NR, Harwood Forest, Housesteads, Linton Ponds, Little Dodd Hill, Mootlaw Quarry (Ryal), Seahouses, St Mary's Wetland, Tutehill Moss (Harwood Forest), Valley Park (Cramlington) and Great Whittington.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

28 birds were ringed at Gosforth Park NR during the month (NHSN) and 11 were reported from Prestwick Carr on 2nd (PCF). A strong showing on the coast at Bamburgh included four + on 13th, six + on 21st and 10+ on 26th (BRS). Five at St Mary's Wetland on 3rd included a pair feeding young in the nest (LJM). One to two were noted at a further six localities.

Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris*

A male was singing at a confidential site from 10th -13th.

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

At Gosforth Park NR 50 breeding birds and juveniles were reported during the month (NHSN). Up to three were singing at Cresswell Pond where breeding was confirmed on 6th with a bird carrying food (STH/PJA/IRD). Three were singing at Bates Minewater Treatment works on 13th (LJM) and up to two still singing at East Chevington to 15th (MSH). Breeding was also confirmed at Backworth with an adult feeding a juvenile on 11th (SPP) and singles were also noted on the coastal path at Bondicarr, at Druridge Pools, Holywell Pond and Ladyburn Lake.

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Successful breeding was reported from West Woodburn where seven included at least one juvenile (MJC/ADM), Chugdon Wood (Ellington) where a pair accompanied three juveniles (the first successful breeding here in 15 years - TB) and Gosforth Park NR where three included a single juvenile (NHSN). Juveniles were also found at East Ord (two with an adult), Milkhope Centre (Blagdon) and in a Walbottle garden. Three birds were at Steel (Redesmouth) on 3rd and one to two were also reported from Carrow Rigg, Coldside, Edge Hill, Eshott, Ford Castle, Gunnerton, Hebron, Hindshield, Jesmond Dene, Kirkwhelpington, Wark (North Tyne) and Warkworth.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

BTO Atlas counts produced ten at Steel (Redesmouth) and nine (including juveniles) at West Woodburn on 3rd (MJC/ADM). Four were at Gosforth Park NR during the month (NHSN) and three at Bellasis Bridge on 12th (PCF) with one to two reported from a further 12 localities.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

12 at Whitechapel/Lipwood (South Tyne) on 24th was a good count by recent standards (BNR). The only other reports were of four at Jesmond Dene on 3rd, an adult and two very recently fledged young at Netherton Park on 16th and one at Cresswell on 9th.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

258 at Newbiggin on 28th and 250 at St Mary's Island on 22nd were the highest counts (PCF/JPD). 200 juveniles were at Derwent Reservoir on 8th (IFo) and 12-50 birds at a further four localities.

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

In Jesmond Dene singles were reported from Extension Wood on 10th and Castle Farm Road Bridge on 31st (MJCo). The only other reports were again of singles at Bellister and Bywell Bridge.

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

There was only one report this month, a pair feeding at least one juvenile at Langleeford (Harthope Valley) on 24th (MJC).

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Ten were at Hindshield on 1st (BNR) and five in Jesmond Dene on 3rd. Elsewhere reports were of breeding birds at Kenton where two second or third broods were noted (MRS), Southfield Green (Cramlington) with a second brood and Gosforth (female and one juvenile).

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Singles were reported from three sites in Jesmond Dene on 3rd, Cresswell on 9th and Willington Gut (Wallsend) on 24th.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

The only flocks were 12 at Brada Quarry (Bamburgh) on 29th (CGK), and ten at Grindon Lough on 1st (BNR). Two were in Jesmond Dene on 13th and on Newcastle Town Moor on 29th.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

Breeding was confirmed at Eshott (pair with five young), Haydon Bridge (pair with four young), Hetherslaw Mill (visiting nest site), High Weldon (pair with two young), Linden Hall (six including two young) and Wydon Eals (pair with two young). A total of nine was found in three tetrads in the West Woodburn area on 3rd (MJC/ADM) and one to two at a further 11 localities. One BTO Atlas couple recorded the species at 20 localities during the month (115 sites during four years of Atlas work -TRD/JD).

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Recently fledged juveniles were in Netherton Park and Walbottle gardens during the month; three birds were found in Jesmond Dene on 31st and one at Cresswell on 9th.

*** Bluethroat** *Luscinia svecica cyanecula*

A male of the very rare 'White-spotted' race was trapped and ringed at East Chevington on 27th, but was not seen subsequently (IF).

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

One to three were reported from seven inland localities including one or more juveniles at Cowstand (Black Heddon) on 2nd, Haughton Strother (Humshaugh) on 19th, High Weldon on 30th and Whickhope Byresfield on 9th. A male at Swallow Pond on 13th was only the second record here for one observer in ten years.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

A four-hour walk at Clennell Street (Upper Coquetdale) produced a total of 12 on 31st (IRD). It appears to have been a very good breeding season in the Cheviot Hills where pairs with broods of at least four young were at Broadhope, Goldsleugh (Lamden Burn Valley), Happy Valley and Langleeford on 24th; another pair at Broadhope were feeding young in the nest. Elsewhere two birds were at Thorngraston Common on 1st and singles at East Chevington on 28th, Hareshaw Common (juv.) on 31st and Tutehill Moss (Harwood) on 1st.



A cock Stonechat at East Chevington
14th July by Chris Barlow

Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*

Breeding records were as follows:

Site	Date	Adults	Young	Notes	Observer
Coast:					
Cresswell Pond	31st			Family party of six	TB
Cheswick	11th	1	2		MHu
East Chevington	10th	1	4		CDB
Inland:					
Broadhope (Cheviots)	24th	2	3+	Pair feeding young	MJC
Thorneyburn Common	4th	2	4		SRB

In addition two were at Cocklawburn on 7th (MHu) and singles inland at Felicia Crags and Thorngrifton Common.

Stonechat is a **target** species for 2011. Please report all records.

Wheatear *Oenanthe Oenanthe*

18 (including 12 juveniles) were at Ship Crag (Rothbury) on 1st (MJC), five (three juveniles) in the Hareshaw Common area on 31st and three (one juvenile) at Birkyburn (Harwood) on 13th (TRD/JD). One to two were reported from a further five localities.

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

A family group of four, comprising two adults and two juveniles, was at Gosforth on 2nd (STE). The only other records were singles at two sites in Jesmond Dene and at Aydon, near Corbridge.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

90 were at Brunswick Village on 29th (SRB), 63 at Beacon Lane (Cramlington) on 17th (DM), 30 at Hindshield on 1st (BNR), 27 at Greenhead on 23rd (BNR) and 22 at Gunnerton on 7th (BNR). Other reports were of three visiting nest holes at Wallsend Bus Station and a leucistic bird seen at Fenham in North Northumberland.

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

Three counts at Haughton Strother GP recorded 75, 50 and 21 on 19th, 29th and 6th respectively (MR). Elsewhere 25, including many juveniles, were seen at Waren Mill Caravan Park during the month (CGK) and 20 at Cresswell Pond on 7th (CN). All other records were in single figures with six at Burton (nr. Bamburgh) on 2nd (CGK) and Flodden Field on 26th (TRD/JD), five at Hepscott on 21st (LJM), four at Chipchase on 10th (BNR), Earsdon West Farm on 15th (TRD), East Forest on 15th (TRD) and Doddington and Doddington Bridge on 27th (JD). One to three were recorded in 18 other widespread localities largely due to Atlas work in little-visited areas.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

A successful breeding season was evidenced by juvenile birds seen at 13 sites with breeding in a wheat field observed at Burton (near Bamburgh) on 2nd (CGK). A maximum count of 12 birds, including six juveniles from two broods, came from Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 7th (MR). Elsewhere were six, including two juveniles, by the River Tweed between Ord and the A1 on 14th (TBr), five, including two juveniles, at Haughton Strother GP on 17th (MR), four at Whiteadder Water on 13th (TBr) and four, including two juveniles, at Cresswell Pond on 31st (TB). One to three were recorded at 15 other widespread sites between the River Tweed and St Mary's with sightings on many dates at Cresswell Pond, East Chevington and Druridge Pools.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Six, including four juveniles, were in Holywell Dene on 22nd (JPD). Pairs were recorded at West Woodburn on 3rd (MJC/ADM) and at Elishaw on 31st (TRD) with one to two juvenile birds recorded from four other sites. One to two adult birds were at 15 mainly inland locations ranging from Kielder in the north-west to the Newcastle conurbation.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrellii*

The maximum count was 50 at Backworth on 10th (CGK) and Atlas work in the West Woodburn area on 29th produced 35 in four tetrads (ADM). A pre-roost gathering at the Waren Mill Caravan Park comprised 21 birds on 29th (CGK) and 11 were at Prestwick Carr on 20th (PCF). Six birds, including three juveniles, were at Hindshield on 1st (BNR) and a single was recorded from West Chevington on 13th.

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

Up to three birds were present all month at Matfen including one carrying food on 17th (ALT). The only other records were of singles at Tutehill Moss (Harwood Forest), Kellas Plantation, Slaley and at The Trinket.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Counts of 63 and 50 were recorded at Whickhope Nick and Humble Dodd (Whitfield Moor) on 9th and 7th respectively (BNR). Two tetrads in the Bellingham area, surveyed for the Atlas, contained 30 on 31st (ADM), 28 were at Prestwick Carr on 2nd (PCF) and ten at Newton Links on 7th (JMA). Elsewhere were 14 at Hindshield on 1st, 13 at Whickhope Byresfield on 9th, 11 at East Crindledykes/Thorngraston Common on 1st and 7 at Wolf Hills (Whitfield Moor) on 7th (all BNR). A single bird was at Southfield Green, Cramlington on 2nd.

A Meadow Pipit
Druridge Pool
28th July
Chris Barlow

**Rock Pipit** *Anthus petrosus*

At Seahouses six birds were present on 7th (MSK/NEWT). Two were on Coquet Island on 5th (CN) and singles were on Inner Farne and in Blyth Harbour on 10th and 29th respectively.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Groups of 14 and ten were at Greenhead East/Blenkinsop Wrytree and Grindon Lough on 23rd and 1st respectively (BNR). The only other records were one to two from four localities in the Jesmond Dene area.

Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*

A gathering of 18 in a Walbottle garden on 17th was the highest count (KR/LR), 15 were at Bamburgh on 26th (BRS) and ten were seen in the Greenhead/Blenkinsop Wrytree area on 23rd (BNR). One to two were reported from five locations in the Newcastle area.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

At Prestwick Carr 67 were counted on 23rd and at the same site 28 were present on 20th including two family parties (PCF). At least 60, including many juveniles, were at Swallow Pond on 22nd (JPD). A Walbottle garden held a family party of four on 3rd (KR/LR) and recently fledged young were reported from Kenton, Newcastle from where the observer (MRS) has noted a recent rapid expansion of the species. Elsewhere reports of two birds came from four widespread locations.

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

At Sweethope Lough 16 were counted on 28th (PRM) and in two tetrads at nearby West Woodburn 15, including several juveniles, were recorded on 3rd during an Atlas count (MJC/ADM). Also on 3rd 12 were seen at Steel, nr. Redesmouth (MJC/ADM). Elsewhere, nine were at Greenhead/Blenkinsop Wrytree on 23rd (BNR) and six at Grindon Lough on 1st (BNR). One to five were at 29 other widespread localities during the month (TRD/JD *et al.*).

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

Haughton Strother GP held 52 on 24th (MR), 28 were at Ellington on 26th (TB) and 11 at Prestwick Carr on 2nd included a family party (PCF).

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*

A single bird was recorded flying over Humble Dodd, Whitfield Moor on 7th (BNR).

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis cabaret*

Two pairs were in display flight at Thorngraston Common on 19th (JSB/EC) and display was also noted during an Atlas count which recorded nine birds at Steel, nr. Redesmouth on 3rd (MJC/ADM). The maximum count was 12 at Sweethope Lough on 28th (PRM) with five at Grindon Lough on 1st (BNR). One to nine were at 28 other localities during the month (TRD/JD *et al.*).

Common Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

Very well reported this month with 27 records submitted. Small family groups of up to 12 were seen in 27 localities during the month (TRD/JD). Other double-figure counts were 15 at Slaley Hall on 3rd (RMH) and at Sweethope Lough on 19th (ADM), 12 at Tutehill Moss, Harwood Forest on 1st (TRD), ten at Grindon Lough on 1st (BNR), at Whickhope Byresfield on 9th (BNR) and at Sweethope Lough on 28th (ADM). Up to nine birds were recorded regularly at Matfen throughout the month (ALT), eight at Whickhope Jock's Pike on 9th (BNR), seven at Crindledykes/Thorngraston Common on 1st (BNR), six at Wark on 10th (PRM), at Castle Island on 2nd (ADM), at Netherwitton on 4th (ADM) and five at Sweethope Lough on 28th (PRM). One to four were noted at 17 other sites including some obvious post-breeding movements and possible immigrant birds at Monkseaton and Eshott.

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Another well-reported species this month with 27 records submitted, three being the maximum number seen, at Walbottle on 3rd (KR/LR), at Whickhope Byresfield on 9th (BNR) and at Whitechapel/Lipwood on 24th (BNR). Elsewhere, at 23 very widespread localities, either one bird or mainly pairs were recorded. Recently fledged young were being fed at Darras Hall on 25th (MRS). A pair trapped and ringed at Bamburgh was an unusual record for this time of year (BRS).

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

In the Tranwell/Saltwick area a flock of 25 males was seen on 7th (ASJ) and 20 males were in the Ingoe/Black Heddon locality on 3rd (ASJ). Smaller gatherings were ten, including seven singing males, at Backworth on 9th (LJM), 10 singing at Beacon Hill, Longhorsley on 14th (ASJ), eight singing at Holywell Pond on 10th (ASJ) and eight singing at Beacon Hill/Lane, Cramlington on 17th (DM). Single birds were singing at four other sites.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Three pairs raised young at Gosforth Park NR where the maximum observed gathering was 13 birds (NHSN). Six were at Arcot Pond on 17th (DM) and elsewhere single singing males were at four localities namely Aydon, nr. Corbridge, Holywell Pond, Wallsend Dene and West Hartford.

ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN**Escapes****Black Swan** *Cygnus atratus*

Two were a novel addition to the WeBS count at Tweedmouth Dock on 14th (MHu).

Bar-headed Goose *Anser indicus*

The three from last month continued their tour of the county turning up at Cresswell Pond on 3rd where they happily remained all month. Although obviously escapes they were all in pristine condition.

Speckled Teal *Anas flavirostris*

The bird last seen at St Mary's & Marden Quarry in January turned up again at Swallow Pond with sightings on 10th & 13th with it then moving to nearby Duke's Pond on 31st (JPD).

Parakeet sp

One flew N at Cramlington on 28th calling loudly, appearing smaller than a Ring-necked Parakeet with a shorter tail and mostly grey (Gmi).

Hybrids**Canada Goose x Greylag Goose** *Branta canadensis x Anser anser*

A single hybrid was at Killingworth Lake on 15th (LJM).

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Bamburgh Ringing Station, Natural History Society of Northumbria, Northeast Cetacean Project, Northern Experience Wildlife Tours.

Those observers marked with an asterisk after their name(s) have submitted records online using the club spreadsheet, copies are available by emailing Dick Myatt at dick@dickmyatt.co.uk

Apologies for any accidental omissions

BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION

This bulletin was compiled by Lindsay McDougall (Mute Swan to Egyptian Goose, Red Grouse to Black-necked Grebe), Graeme Bowman (Ruddy Shelduck to Ruddy Duck), Trevor Blake (Honey Buzzard to Crane), Ian Forsyth (Oystercatcher to Skua), Tim Dean (Ivory Gull to Puffin, Escapes, Hybrids and Unknown Origin, List of Contributors, Highlights), Peter Fletcher (Feral Pigeon to Red-rumped Swallow), Mike Richardson (Cetti's Warbler to Pied Flycatcher), Eddie Crabtree (Dunnock to Corn Bunting), Julie Roper/Dan Turner (WeBS Coastal Counts) and Steve Holliday (WeBS Inland Counts). Thanks again to Ann McKeown for typing the section Dunnock to Corn Bunting. Thanks to Barbara Welch of NNBC for providing data. Proof reading was by Mike Smith.

Edited by Steve Barrett Sscmagpie@aol.com

Distributed by Alan Watson apusx@blueyonder.co.uk

BULLETIN SECTION WRITER

Bulletin writers required. Please send an email to Steve Barrett Sscmagpie@aol.com to volunteer or for more information.

RECORD SUBMISSION

Please send all record cards to Tim Dean, 2 Knocklaw Park, Rothbury NE65 7PW, to arrive on, or preferably before, the 8th of the month following that in which the records were collected. Please write cards legibly to ensure that your sightings are correctly recorded.

Email: Members are encouraged to email their records on an Excel-style spreadsheet. Please email Dick Myatt at dick@dickmyatt.co.uk for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and Grid references: The use of standard location names and the inclusion of grid references greatly increases the value of records in subsequent analyses. A 1km square grid reference is the ideal e.g. NY8067 for Grindon Lough, but 2km square references (tetrads) are also acceptable e.g. NY86D in this case. A list of localities and their tetrad grid references (tetrad/Locality List) can be downloaded from the 'Resources & Downloads' section of the Club website at <http://www.ntbc.org.uk> – the use of these names, wherever possible, would be highly appreciated.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Please keep submitting your articles, photographs, sketches and illustrations for the bulletin. Thanks again to those who have supplied the excellent photographs. Please send to Steve Barrett at Sscmagpie@aol.com

ELECTRONIC BULLETIN

The NTBC bulletin can be received electronically or as hard copy. The electronic bulletin arrives earlier than the printed version, it is in colour and we save the cost of printing and stamps. Ask for an e-mailed bulletin from; jo.bentley@waitrose.com.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS 2011

Club annual subscriptions are now due for 2011/2012. Annual subscription is a bargain £23.

For membership enquiries please contact jo.bentley@waitrose.com.

NTBC WEB SITE

The Club website is an excellent resource for all interested in birds in the north east. There are numerous interesting sections, including a photograph gallery, site information and trip reports together with extensive reference information for birding in our area. The site is at www.ntbc.org.uk

If you have any ideas or things you would like to see or hear about on the site please let Chris know on 0751 582 5024 or email christopher.knox@o2.co.uk

NTBC SIGHTINGS PAGE

The club sightings web page gives listings of birds seen locally. Adding a sighting is simple. A short email is all that is needed. If anyone would like to be added as a contributor please contact Alan Tilmouth at ntbcorg@gmail.com. The sightings page can be found at <http://ntbcsightings.posterous.com>

INDOOR MEETINGS

The start of the Winter indoor meetings will be at Newcastle Falcons on Thursday 8th September at 7pm.

GOLDEN EAGLES IN SCOTLAND by Dave Dick

Dave Dick worked for RSPB surveying Golden Eagles and Peregrines in Perthshire, Argyll and Lewis and Harris in the early 1980s. He then became the RSPB's Species Protection and Investigations Officer from 1984 until retirement in 2006. In addition to working with wild birds he also took part in investigation work in the Far East, India and mainland Europe.

He now lives in Dumfriesshire working as a professional musician, author and obsessive trout fisherman.

NTBC CONSTITUTION

The Committee and several members have pointed out that the current NTBC Constitution is outdated. The Committee are drafting a revised, shorter version for discussion.

COMMITTEE NEWS

Charity Commission, Constitution and Annual Report

The committee has begun a review of these following recent changes in Charity Commission requirements. Further details will be published and reported back to members once the review and any suggested changes are available.

2012 Surveys

The committee will shortly be reviewing options for surveys in 2012 now that fieldwork for the Atlas Project is complete. Any proposals will be communicated to members via the website and bulletin.

New Committee Member

Former Chairman Paul Stewart has rejoined the committee and will assume responsibility for Indoor Meetings.

Northumberland Biodiversity Partnership

After a brief overview from Steve Lowe about this worthwhile 'umbrella' group, agreement was reached to support the project in the future. NTBC will therefore be listed as a partner organisation on the NBP website at www.northumberlandbiodiversity.org.uk

AGM and COMMITTEE NOMINATIONS

The Annual General Meeting of Northumberland & Tyneside Bird Club will take place on 13th October 2011. Nominations for election to the Committee should be made in writing to the Club Secretary Alan Tilmouth, 12 Stowe Gardens, Pegswood, Morpeth, NE61 6TH, Email: ntbcorg@gmail.com

Nominations should be proposed and seconded by club members and submitted no later than 21 days prior to the AGM (22nd September).

Alan Tilmouth
Honorary Secretary

FIELD TRIP

The next fields trip is:

Saltholme Pools and Teeside

Sunday 4th September 2011

Please contact Trevor Blake direct for more information at trevor.1958@live.co.uk

ATLAS NEWS

Sponsorship of species in aid of the Atlas publication is progressing well. So if you want to 'own' your favourite bird contact Steve Lowe at zappa99@live.co.uk

PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

Last year's winner Peter Fletcher will be judging the Bulletin photographic competition. The winner will be announced at the October indoor meeting.

CONFESSIONS OF A MAD ATLAS WORKER

Sometimes you just get carried away!

The BTO Atlas has just completed its four year survey of the breeding and wintering birds in the UK. As part of the project a local Atlas Sub-committee was set up to organise a local atlas in Northumberland. It is very pleasing to report that the entire county (all 1440 tetrads) has been surveyed both winter and summer on a tetrad basis (2km x 2km square). Many people from the Bird Club have helped in the survey work and this is a good opportunity to thank everyone for their contributions. In a wild county such as Northumberland it is to everyone's credit that the county has been covered so well. This is in no small part due to the efforts of our BTO representatives Tom and Muriel Cadwallender who co-ordinated the timed visits so efficiently. It also means that the National Atlas picture for Northumberland will match the local Atlas as the fieldwork was completed in the four year survey period (unlike some other counties I could mention!).

On a personal basis and touching 60 I thought this was bound to be my last opportunity to get fully involved in a County Atlas as I cannot see me covering the ground very well in 2031 ! Hence Janet and I threw ourselves into the survey work with some gusto. Looking back on four years of mad Atlasing I thought a few personal highlights might be worth sharing.

The first target was to set foot in all 75 10km squares in the county which only took two years as I thought it important to understand the habitat mix for all parts of the county. Somehow I do not feel the BTO will be paying my petrol expenses.

Secondly I was interested in ensuring that all tetrads were covered equally and therefore in the latter years we spent many hours bolstering up species totals in poorly visited areas. In a number of cases the timed visits had not managed to show all the expected species present. This became a hobby of 'Ripening Peaches'! To reveal the logic behind this statement you need to visit the superb Atlas website www.birdatlas.net (Registering is easy). Click on 'Latest Results' then 'Highlights' and scroll down to the Combined Results section where you can find a map and click on Northumberland. Then the Tetrad Species Richness map for the county can be seen in all its glory. Note that every tetrad has at least one species. The key shows those tetrads which are designated as having 20-34 species present are marked as orange. Well not on my laptop they aren't! Looks like a peach colour to me hence our hobby. It seemed to me realistic that all lowland areas should have at least 35 species breeding so once the yellow tetrads (10-20 species) had been conquered we went in search of the peaches and made efforts to turn them red i.e. 35 to 49 species.

As I said in my opening statement, sometimes you can just get carried away. However our hard work and every other surveyor's should be worthwhile as I believe the species maps in the local atlas will be very accurate. In fact it is the gaps that are as interesting as the dots as many declining species could not be found however much effort was expended.

Just to show how insane it can all get, I had been noticing that our tetrad total for the breeding season was rapidly moving through the 900s as we covered more and more out-of-the-way areas. Hence at dawn on 31st July we stood at 986 tetrads visited (only 90% of those in Northumberland I might add). Well a challenge is a challenge as they say – it shouldn't be difficult to traverse another 14. I had earmarked this last day as a final opportunity to visit the Otterburn Training area on one of the rare non-firing days. So a foray in some of NY89 followed with success as the tally mounted. However there are always unforeseen problems and a car rally in the Training Area was not quite the ticket! Whilst spectators were busy watching beaten-up jalopies careering around the normally vacant roads I was busy getting to grips with tetrad number 1,000 i.e. NY99J which involved looking both ways and trying to stay in one piece.

So yes Atlasing can take you over and I can now humbly apologise to my wife for the crazy obsessiveness that she has had to cope with. However I do feel Atlasing makes you a better birder as every little squeak can mean another dot on the map and you tend to follow up any unknown utterance. Hopefully I can encourage everyone to delve into the website and use the 'Any Square Summary' option to see the species lists for any tetrad. It is still possible to input any records up until the end of the year and I am sure many more gaps could be filled by people adding roving records from their notebooks (I have evidence that these still exist!).

Finally if anyone wants to volunteer to push me around in my bath chair in 2031 please feel free to step forward now.

Tim Dean (Mad Atlas Man)

Editor Note: A blessing with the end of the Atlas is that the avalanche of obscure place names should now end. AUTUMN

MIGRATION OF LINDISFARNE BRENT GEESE

Since early May 2011 we have followed Pale-bellied Brent Geese caught in Denmark with satellite transmitters. We still have contact to six of eight marked birds, and expect that some will migrate down to Lindisfarne National Nature Reserve to winter, whereas others would fly to Danish autumn staging areas. We are in the progress of preparing an in-depth analysis of autumn migration data for birds from this flyway-population, and in this respect relies heavily on volunteer observers who record flocks migrating along the east coasts of England and Scotland and the west coasts of Norway and Denmark. With this notice we would ask all who observe flocks of Pale-bellied Brent Geese migrating along the Northumberland and Tyneside coastline to note down detailed information about individual flocks, i.e. flight directions and time, and to report their observations in the usual way to NTBC, who will pass them on to us. Thanks in advance: Preben Clausen & Marie Silberling Vissing, Department of Bioscience, Aarhus University, Denmark. Enquiries: pc@dmu.dk

The satellite tracked birds can be followed on The Brent Goose Blog at <http://brentgoose.blogspot.com>

COUNTY RECORDS COMMITTEE

On 9th July the CRC met to discuss the record descriptions submitted during the last three months. In a departure from the normal evening meeting we were keen to take up David Steel's offer of an overnight stay on Inner Farne. Arriving late morning, the five of us (Tim Dean, Mike Carr, Ian Fisher, Graeme Bowman and David Steel) managed to avoid the afternoon visitors by buckling down to record descriptions for five hours! Of the 83 reports submitted only eight were deemed to have insufficient detail to accept, the normal cause for sightings to be deemed 'Not Proven'. It may not be generally appreciated by everyone that the spreadsheets used are accessible via the NTBC website www.ntbc.org.uk under the County Records Committee section. By paging down half way a section called 'Reports on Progress of Rare & Scarce Species' gives three links to PDF versions showing all claimed rare and scarce sightings in the county for 2009, 2010 and 2011 and whether the sighting was accepted. I would also make a last plea here for sightings in 2010 showing 'Awaiting Description' as these will not be included in the Annual Report 'Birds in Northumbria 2010' unless documentation is forwarded quickly to the County Recorder, preferably via the Rare / Scarce Bird Report Form available on the website under 'Resources & Downloads'.

As for the rest of the stay on Inner Farne we were very well fed and thoroughly enjoyed the excellent weather and opportunity to see the island at its best i.e. with hardly anyone on it! Many thanks to David Steel and the other wardens for their hospitality and a note to future CRC applicants that there are benefits from joining the committee, at least occasionally!

Tim Dean kept his hand in during the CRC trip to Inner Farne. Here are photographs of a Puffin in flight, a juvenile Arctic Tern and Kittiwakes.
All 10th July

COUNTY RECORDS COMMITTEE

Graeme Bowman will complete his four year spell on the committee in December 2011. Hence there will be a vacancy on the CRC to be filled. Please could anyone wishing to apply to join the committee let the County Recorder Tim Dean know, either by email or letter. Applicants need to have a comprehensive knowledge of Northumberland's birdlife and will be required to attend four meetings a year to verify sightings in the county. It is envisaged that applicants will need to access online documents and have email access. A brief resume of birding credentials and experience should be forwarded when applying. This year there will be a cut off date for applications of 15th November.

GREAT GREY SHRIKE

It was agreed at the County Records Committee meeting on 9th July that Great Grey Shrike would be removed from the Brief Notes section Category B and hence not in future need descriptive notes for inclusion in the Annual Report 'Birds in Northumbria'. It still has to be borne in mind that late Spring and late Autumn could see confusion with potential Lesser Grey Shrike *Lanius minor* and Southern Grey Shrike *Lanius meridionalis* so some individuals in these passage periods may need clarification.

The CRC would always welcome comments regarding species in Category A, B and C and whether it is still necessary to request descriptions. The species lists are on the County Records Committee section on the NTBC website and also in the Annual Report under the County Recorder section Tim Dean

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Rothbury

NE65 7PW

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COASTAL WeBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND

TAC T. A. Cadwallender

LJM L. J. McDougall

DMT D. M. Turner

PF P. Fletcher

209

JULY 2011

MHu
TBM. Hutcheson
T. BrewisRP
JARR. Poyer
J. A. Roper

Site	TOTAL	Berwick North Shore (excluding Little Beach)	Berwick Little Beach	Tweed Estuary	Tweed: A1 By-Pass to Horncliffe	Spittal - Cocklawburn	Budle Pt. - Seahouses	Howick - Boulmer	AIn Estuary	Alnmouth South	Blyth Estuary	Tyne North Pier - Fish Quay	Wallsend, (north bank only)	Redheugh.- Scotswood Bridge. (north bank)	Scotswood - Newburn Bridge. (north bank)
Counter		MHu	MHu	MHu	TB	MHu	RP	JAR	TAC	RP	LJM	DMT	DMT	PF	PF
Date		17	17	14	14	13	17	25	12	17	13	23	27	17	17
Great Crested Grebe	1				1										
Cormorant	87	4	9	10	2	2		7			24	17	11	1	
Shag	21		7				11			3					
Grey Heron	60	3		14	12	2		6	8		11		4		
Mute Swan	284			265	6				11		2				
Whooper Swan	1			1											
Canada Goose	10			3					7						
Shelduck	30							5	2					23	
Mallard	153			15	48		12		20					27	31
Tufted Duck	3			1	2										
Eider	342	10	6	2		44	136	24	2	115		3			
Common Scoter	44					8		25		11					
Goosander	230	15	29	54	109	5		12	6						
Moorhen	3						2				1				
Coot	3						2		1						
Oystercatcher	204	30	12	6	11	54	21	27	14	9	5	15			
Ringed Plover	3					2					1				
Golden Plover	19						4	15							
Lapwing	203	1		21		15	93		25					4	44
Dunlin	31						26	5							
Whimbrel	1										1				
Curlew	280	34	18	75		7		42	47	2	49	4	1	1	
Redshank	323	25	7	53		1	1	16	39		136	7	7	29	2
Greenshank	2								2						
Common Sandpiper	12			1			1		6						4
Turnstone	5											5			
Black-headed Gull	1,553	104	74	348	30	65	nc	48	156	nc	275		161	202	90
Common Gull	22	4	3	4	2	3		1	5						
Lesser Black-backed Gull	70			9		1					10		1	48	1
Herring Gull	1,116	13	2	490	2	215	nc	33	4	nc	79	190	9	78	1
Great Black-backed Gull	113	1	1	16		3		32			1	58		1	
Kittiwake	178	2	2	144		23		4				2	1		
Sandwich Tern	273	3	5	14		230	nc	12		nc	8	1			
Roseate Tern	4					2			2						
Common Tern	5						nc			nc	1	1	1	1	1
Arctic Tern	64					8	nc	55	1	nc					
Kingfisher	0														
ADDITIONAL SPECIES															
Fulmar	2			2											
Little Egret	2			1					1						
Black Swan	2			2											
TOTALS - WILDFOWL	1,272	32	51	365	180	61	163	79	57	129	38	20	15	51	31
- WADERS	1,083	90	37	156	11	79	146	105	133	11	192	31	8	34	50
- GULLS & TERNS	3,398	127	87	1,025	34	550	0	185	168	0	374	252	173	330	93

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

<http://www.ntbc.org.uk/>

Bulletin 2011 No 8

MONTHLY SUMMARY – AUGUST

4th October 2011



HIGHLIGHTS

Balearic Shearwater
Bittern
Little Egret
Great White Egret
Spoonbill
Black-necked Grebe
Honey-buzzard
Hobby
American Golden Plover
Dowitcher sp
Long-tailed Skua
Sabine's Gull
Mediterranean Gull
Yellow-legged Gull
Wryneck
Barred Warbler
Greenish Warbler
Common Rosefinch

Single off Holy Island on 31st.
Single at Cresswell Pond from 17th.
County record total of seven at Budle Bay on 27th. Many other reports.
Single S at East Chevington on 14th.
One or two still at several sites.
Singles at Cresswell Pond and Holywell Pond.
One over Cresswell on 31st.
Several reports of migrants
One at Black Law between Ross Point and Holy Island on 20th.
One at Emmanuel Head on Holy Island on 24th.
Several moving N at end of month
One off Newbiggin on 8th.
New county record total of 68 at Newbiggin on 20th.
A juvenile at Newbiggin from 4th to 10th.
One on Farne Islands on 26th.
Single at Newbiggin on 19th.
One at Newbiggin on 23rd and 24th.
One on Brownsman at the Farnes on 23rd.

CONTENTS

Indoor meeting 13th August
with Brains Trust
and AGM



Knots at Hauxley
Simon Elliott
24th August

WEATHER

August was a predominantly unsettled month, with plenty of showery days and more persistent rain at times. Rainfall amounts were very variable. Over twice the normal amount fell across parts of north-east England. It was a rather dull month, with about 80% of the normal sunshine.

1st to 3rd It was a rather humid start to the month, with showers and longer spells of rain at times. Although it was generally rather cloudy, there were some sunny spells.

4th to 8th Weather fronts moved in from the west during 4th, bringing rain. This heralded an unsettled period, with showers across much of England, which turned heavy, thundery and prolonged at times, giving some high accumulations in places. On 6th over 25 mm was recorded across Northumberland and Durham, with 39.6 mm at Wallington.

9th to 17th A drier and more settled day on 9th, although this was short-lived. It turned unsettled again from 10th, although this time rain tended to move across in bands, turning heavy in places. In the 24 hours to 0900 on 11th, well over 25 mm fell across much of north-west England and the Pennines. There were plenty of drier, sunny periods too, although occasional showers still developed at times. Temperatures were generally around or just above average.

18th to 27th It remained unsettled through this period, although rain became generally more showery again, with occasional prolonged spells of rain. On 18th, heavy rain spread north-eastward. Through the rest of the period, there were scattered, heavy showers, thundery at times, but also some sunny spells. Temperatures were generally around normal or a little below in spells of rain.

28th to 31st High pressure began to build from the south-west late on 28th, bringing more settled and mainly dry weather. It was generally rather cloudy at first, with a few light, isolated showers in northern parts, although more sunny spells developed. Temperatures were generally rather below normal for the time of year.

CLASSIFIED LIST

The following account consists of unchecked reports. The species/subspecies marked * require descriptions.

A complete list of all sightings that need notes is included in the NTBC website www.ntbc.org.uk under the County Records Committee section and in Birds in Northumbria 2009 page 224.

The Inland and Coastal Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) tables are at the rear of the bulletin. These contain counts additional to those in the Classified List.

TARGET SPECIES

The target species for 2011 are Gadwall, Snipe and Stonechat

Please report all records for these species.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

The largest gatherings were 390 in the Tweed estuary on 12th (MHu), 157 at Killingworth Lake on 10th (PCF), 30 at West Ord on 18th (MHu), 25 at Holy Island causeway on 24th/30th (PRM), 14 at Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 21st (MHu) and 12 at Cresswell Pond on 29th (STH/PJA). Further broods were noted at Crag Lough (four young), Rayburn Lake (five young) and Summerhouse Lane Pond (Newbiggin) (six young). One to eight including previously reported broods were noted at Arcot Pond, Budle Bay, Druridge Pools, Exhibition and Leazes Parks (Newcastle), Greenlee Lough, Hauxley NR, Holy Island Harbour pools, Holy Island Lough (where three of the six surviving cygnets were killed by a fox), Linton Ponds, Little Waters (Seaton Burn), Shield-on-the-Wall, Warkworth Weir and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

A single was still present in the Tweed Estuary on 12th MHu).

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Two were at East Chevington on 30th (MSH) and one at Derwent Reservoir on 31st (IFo).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

At dusk on 3rd 28 flew W at Southfield Green (Cramlington) (DM). The peak counts were 355 in the Breamish Valley on 28th (DHH), 198 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 17th (MR), 197 at East Chevington on 30th (MSH), 184 at Derwent Reservoir on 5th (PRM), 86 at Newton Flash on 29th (DHH), 63 at Grindon Lough on 14th (MRS) and 61 at West Hartford on 21st (STH/PJA). Elsewhere 54 were at Backworth on 29th, 48 at Hauxley NR on 15th and 12 at New Water Haugh (River Tweed).

*Snow Goose *Anser caerulescens*

Four, thought to be Lesser Snow Goose, were at Hauxley NR from 24th-31st (HRS/STE).

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Movement was noted during the month with 125 S at Ellington on 14th (TB), 114 N over Druridge Pools on 29th (SW), 18 E at Linton Ponds on 29th (CDH) and 11 S at Budle Bay on 28th (CGK). Peak counts were 578 at Grindon Lough on 14th (MRS), 217 at Derwent Reservoir on 5th (PRM), 207 at Haughton Strother GP on 9th (MR), 170 at Hauxley NR on 15th (HRS) and 134 at Cresswell Pond on 18th (TB). Elsewhere 58 were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 27th, 42 in the Breamish Valley on 28th, 17 at Leazes Park Lake (Newcastle) on 3rd and Arcot Pond on 27th 15 at New Water Haugh (River Tweed) on 24th and 11 in the Tweed Estuary on 12th. The regular leucistic bird was again at Castron on 23rd (TRD/JD).

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Singles were at Grindon Lough on 14th (MRS) and Derwent Reservoir on 25th (IFo).

Pale-bellied Brent Goose *Branta bernicla hrota*

Approximately 25 were present at Lindisfarne NNR by the end of the month (IK). Seven were on Holy Island on 31st (RA) and five at Fenham Flats on 30th (MSK/NEWT).

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

The only report was of 12 at Boulmer on 29th (AJ).

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

Two drakes and a duck were at Bakethin Reservoir on 17th (MSK/NEWT), and a duck was at Haughton Strother GP on 9th, 26th and 28th (MR). An adult female with a single juvenile (about seven days old) was at Bakethin Reservoir on 17th and two juveniles were noted there on 23rd (MD).

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

Grindon Lough held a peak of 30 on 9th and 22-25 on several dates between 5th-25th (PRM). Other peak counts elsewhere were 25 at Derwent Reservoir on 31st (IFo), 15 at Cresswell Pond on 30th (TRD/JD), ten at East Chevington on 30th (MSH), eight at Budle Bay on 28th (CGK), four at Shield on the Wall, and singles at Holywell Pond and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

East Chevington held 70 on 29th (SW), 30 were at Linton Ponds on 29th (CDH), 13 at Druridge Pools on 10th (PRM), 11 at Holywell Pond on 8th (BMo), six at Cresswell Pond, twos at Bothal Pond and Hauxley Reserve, and singles at Caistron and Grindon Lough. A pair with two young were at Hauxley Reserve on 15th (HRS).

Gadwall is a target species for 2011. Please report all records.

Teal *Anas crecca*

Two flocks totalling 380 birds flew W at Fenham-le-Moor on 27th (NMo), and 18 flew N at Spittal Bay (MHu) and five N at Newbiggin (PRM) on 19th. Numbers at Grindon Lough rose from 30 on 5th to 77 by 14th and 178 on 25th (PRM/MRS), 111 were at Druridge Pools on 14th (IF), 31-48 at Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond, Derwent and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, West Hartford, and 12-24 at Arcot Pond, the Beehive Flash (Earsdon), Holy Island, Monk's House Pools. One to eight were at six further sites, including four juveniles at Bakethin Reservoir on 7th (MD).

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Peak counts were 200 at Budle Bay on 23rd (MSH), 200 at East Chevington on 30th (MSH), 182 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 17th (MR), 100 at Paddy Freeman's Lake, Jesmond Dene (JMA), 63-98 at Arcot Pond, Bakethin and Derwent Reservoirs, Haughton Strother GP, Newton Pool, and 20-42 at the Blyth Estuary, Cresswell, Holywell and Linton Ponds, Hauxley Reserve, Heighley Gate, Holystone, Newcastle Leazes Park, Richardson Dees Park (Wallsend), Walltown Quarry. Nine to 18 were also at Catcleugh and Derwent Reservoirs, Greenlee and Grindon Loughs, Newcastle Exhibition Park and Prestwick Carr.



A Mallard has a stretch
Reeth Pond (Newburn)
12th August by Peter Fletcher

Further breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Bakethin Reservoir	2	10 (6,4)	MD. On 7th
Newsham Pond, Blyth	1	1	LJM. On 3rd

Pintail *Anas acuta*

Twos were at Budle Bay on 31st (PRM) and Cresswell Pond on 21st (TB), and singles at Budle Bay on 27th (CGK), Cresswell Pond between 24th-31st (TB/TRD/JD et al.) and Grindon Lough on 14th (MRS).

Garganey *Anas querquedula*

A drake in eclipse plumage was at Druridge Pools on 24th (TRD/JD).

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Three flew S at the Farne Islands on 24th (CH et al.). Numbers were generally low, with peaks of only six at Swallow Pond on 21st (PJA/STH), four at West Hartford on 20th (PJA/STH), and three at Cresswell Pond on 24th (TRD/JD). Twos were at Grindon Lough, Newton Pool and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, and singles at Arcot Pond and Monk's House Pool.

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Holywell Pond held ten on 21st (STH/PJA) and seven on 30th (STH), six were at Bothal Pond on 15th (TRD), and two at Cresswell Pond.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

The largest concentrations were 53 at Killingworth Lake on 18th (LJM), 32 at Cresswell Pond on 10th (PRM), 26 at Bothal Pond on 29th (TD), 21 at Druridge Pools and Haughton Strother GP, and ten to 14 at Airy Holm and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, Bothal and Linton Ponds, Grindon Lough and West Ord. One to six were also at Branton GP, Caistron, Hauxley Reserve, Holywell Pond, Jesmond Dene, Newcastle Exhibition and Leazes Parks, Shield on the Wall, and more unusually one on the sea off Newbiggin on 14th (STH).

Further breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Caistron	2	6 (4,2)	TRD/JD. On 23rd
Summerhouse Lane, Newbiggin	1	7	STH/PJA. On 20th (additional to Woodhorn Flashes)
Capheaton Lake	1	6	TRD. On 15th
Hauxley Reserve	1	5	MSH. On 1st
Branton GP	1	3	TD. On 14th
Cresswell Pond	1	2	TRD/JD. On 8th

Scaup *Aythya marila*

Two were at Cresswell Pond on 25th (IRD) and one there regularly between 8th-23rd (ADM/PJA/TRD et al.). Single juveniles were at Bothal Pond on three dates between 22nd-29th (IRD/TRD/JD) and at East Chevington on 27th (TRD/JD).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

228 were counted at Coquet Sound on 27th (HRS), 226 were in Druridge Bay on 31st (PCF), 150 off Hauxley on 7th (HRS), 32 at Cocklawburn on 17th (MHu), and threes at Newbiggin and the Tyne Estuary to North Shields Fish Quay but none were recorded in Blyth Harbour (DMT). Two were on the River Coquet at Warkworth weir on 29th (DM).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

A total of 110 flew N at Newbiggin on three dates between 12th-19th, including 43 on both 12th and 13th (AT/PRM, and six flew S at St Mary's on 25th(JL). 128 were at Cocklawburn on 1st (MHu), 86 at Cheswick on 5th (MHu), about 50 at St Mary's on 4th (JL), 12-20 off Hauxley and Newbiggin, and one to three off Cresswell and Druridge. A duck was at East Chevington north pool on 13th (ASH/TB) and a drake was well inland at Colt Crag Reservoir on 12th (JWP/RC).

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

One flew S at Holy Island on 31st (RA), and a drake was with Common Scoters at Cheswick on 5th (MHu).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Three were at Druridge Pools on 8th (TRD/JD) and two on 13th (ADM). Two were at the breeding site on 18th.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Three flew N at Newbiggin on 19th (PRM), and two S at Beadnell on 25th (DHH). Three were at Druridge on 8th (TRD/JD), and singles at Cocklawburn, Newbiggin, Snab Point and Stag Rocks. Two were at Cresswell Pond on 13th (ASH) and one between 10th-15th.

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

Eight flew N at Newbiggin on 31st (STH/PJA) and seven N at St Mary's on 12th (MSH/AC). Peak gatherings were 106 at the Tweed Estuary on 12th (MHu), 97 at Cheswick on 22nd (NMo), 80 at New Water Haugh, River Tweed on 24th (MHu), and 48 at West Ord on 21st (MHu). Eight were at the Breamish Valley, three to six at Amble, Cresswell Pond, Dumb hope Law, Holy Island, Meadow Haven, Newton Haven and Wark, and one to two at Beanley, the Blyth Estuary, Branton GP, Caistron, Cocklawburn, Derwent Reservoir and the Long Nanny Estuary.

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

A large count of 150+, in groups of up to 30, was seen in the Cuning Craggs, Dun moor Hill and Hedgehope area of the Cheviots on 28th (MJC). 20+ were on Bulbeck Common on 21st (JL) and 20 on Cheviot on 31st MD/AM). On 21st 15+ were on Lilswood Moor and five at Blanchland Moor (JL). Two were at Slaley Forest on 9th.

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

Three were seen in flight at Plenmeller on 3rd (AA).

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

Counts of four came from Mootlaw Quarry (Ryal) and Halton Red House on 13th (ALT) and on the same date at Seaton Delaval (pair with two young) (EG) Three were at Haughton Strother GP on 17th (MR).

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

A covey of 19 were in a stubble field near Milbourn on 31st (EC), 15 (pair with 13 young) were at Ellington on 6th where 14 were noted on 29th (TB). A covey of 14 was at Dam Dykes Farm (Cramlington) on 2nd (DM) and at Beal on 30th (PRM). Ten (nine juveniles) were at Holywell Pond on 28th (PG) and nine were at Middle Ord on 21st (MHu). A pair with two juveniles was at St Mary's Island on 4th (JL) and a pair at Marshall Meadows on 3rd.

Quail *Coturnix coturnix*

Two were calling near Welton on 17th (SAS). Singles were heard at Ellington on 5th (TB), in a barley field between Big Waters and Dinnington on 20th (AJN) and Halton Red House on 21st (ALT).

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

A juvenile was flushed at Arcot Pond on 21st (STH/PJA).

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

Light passage was noted with three N at Stag Rocks on 31st and one S at Beadnell on 25th (DHH). The highest count was 11 at Druridge on 24th (TRD/JD). Two were noted at Newbiggin on 5th (TB), East Chevington on 27th (TRD/JD) and two birds in summer plumage in Druridge Bay on 29th (SW). During the month singles were noted offshore at Cocklawburn, Druridge, Hauxley and Newbiggin on five further dates.

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

Very few were reported during the month with a peak of six N at Hauxley on 27th (HRS). Five were at Long Nanny on 9th (TRD/JD), two at Snab Point on 27th and a single at Berwick Little Beach on 31st.

Sooty Shearwater *Puffinus griseus*

Light N passage was noted with peak counts at the Farne Islands of 23 on 29th and 18 on 30th (FIW). 11 passed at Newbiggin on 29th (ASH/AT/TRC/STH/PJA). At Beadnell three flew N on 27th/29th/31st and two flew N on 28th (DHH). Singles passed Newbiggin on 23rd and Hartley Cliffs, Newbiggin and Snab Point on 27th.

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

N passage was heaviest at the end of the month. On 29th 357 passed the Farne Islands (FIW) 238 passed Newbiggin Church Point (AT/ASH/TRC/STH/PJA) and 35 passed Beadnell, where 16 also passed on 31st (DHH). One to two were noted flying N at Beadnell, Berwick Little Beach and Pier, Cresswell and on six further dates.

***Balearic Shearwater** *Puffinus mauritanicus*

On 31st a single flew N at Newbiggin (ASH/GB) and one fed offshore at Holy Island (RA).

Storm Petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus*

After the highlights of last month a return to the norm! At the Farne Island two flew N at Brownsman on 29th with singles there on 9th and in Staple Sound on 11th (FIW). A single also flew N at Newbiggin on 29th (AT/TRC).

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

The most significant movements were 1,320/h N at Berwick Pier on 7th (MHu) and at Beadnell where 1,563 flew N and 49 S in two 1 hour periods of sea-watching on 29th, 934 flew N and eight S in one hour on 30th, 318 flew N and 57 S in 30 minutes on 27th, 222 flew N and 69 S in 30 minutes on 28th, 209 flew N and 23 S in 1 hour on 31st, 206 flew N and 84 S in 1 hour on 26th and 87 flew N and 50 S in 1 hour on 25th (DHH). At Long Nanny 80 flew N on 9th (TRD/JD). Counts of 20 came from Berwick Little Beach and Cocklawburn on 31st (MHu). Elsewhere two to 15 were noted from Cresswell, Druridge, East Chevington and Hauxley.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

The peak counts were 170 in Blyth South Harbour on 21st (STH/PJA), 68 at Castle Island on 9th (TB), 48 at North Shields Fish Quay on 27th (DMT), 29 at Derwent Reservoir on 9th (IFo), 16 at Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 22nd (MHu), 12 at Bakethin Reservoir on 23rd (MD) and 11 at Newbiggin Breakwater on 31st (STH/PJA). Nine were at Cresswell Pond on 29th and singles at Druridge Pools, Shield-on-the-Wall, Wark and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

***Continental Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis*

A juvenile was at Cresswell Pond on 29th (MSH).

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

The high tide roost at Bucket Rocks, Berwick Little Beach held 32 on 23rd, whilst 24 roosted at nearby Meadow Haven on 21st. Seven were at Cocklawburn on 17th, two at Druridge on 8th and a single at Long Nanny on 9th.

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

A single was noted at Cresswell Pond on ten dates from 14th-28th (ASH/ADMc/TB/ *et al*).

The Cresswell Pond Bittern
17th August
Peter Fletcher

**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*

Numbers continued to increase with a peak of seven (six adults) in Budle Bay on 27th (CGK). Up to three were seen in the Budle Bay/Holy Island area on ten further dates during the month. Elsewhere two were noted at Longhirst Flash on 1st/5th /7th(TB/JSB/AT), Blyth Estuary on 2nd (LJM), Yarrow Slake (Tweed Estuary) on 8th/26th (BWG), Bothal Pond on 9th/10th (ADMc) and Warkworth Gut on 27th (NFO). A further 33 records were received on singles at Blyth Estuary, Bothal Pond, Caistron, Cresswell Pond, Hauxley shore, Longhirst Flash and Wansbeck Estuary on 19 dates and what was only the third record for the Farne Islands at Longstone on 25th/26th. Many of these records probably relate to the same bird/birds.

***Great White Egret** *Ardea alba*

A single flew S at 06:20h on 14th at East Chevington (IF).

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

The peak counts were nine at Castle Island on 4th (AT) and in the Tweed Estuary on 12th (MHu), seven at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 27th (MR) and in the Breamish Valley on 28th (DHH) and six at six at Arcot Pond on 4th (STH) and Hauxley NR on 28th (HRS). Five were at Haughton Strother GP on 9th (MR) and four at Beacon Point Newbiggin on 23rd (STH). One to three were noted at Budle Bay, Catcleugh Reservoir, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Grindon Lough, Holywell Dene, Linton Ponds, Old Hartley shore and flying in off the sea at Spittal Bay (Berwick).



Grey Heron at Cresswell Pond
by Peter Fletcher on 22nd August

Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

Two flew off N at East Chevington at 07:50h on 5th (IF/ADMc). An adult was at Castle Island on 1st/2nd (MSH/ADMc/AT) and a juvenile at Holywell Pond on 27th (EG).



Juvenile Little Grebe at Holywell Pond
by Colin Bradshaw

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

The highest counts were 28 at Holywell Pond, which included 10+ juveniles in five broods on 9th (LJM/PJA), 13 including six well grown juveniles at Linton Pond on 29th (CDH), 11 at Cresswell Pond on 10th (PRM), ten adults at Bothal Pond on 19th (AT) and six at Airy Holm Reservoir on 31st (IFo). Four were at Woodhorn Flashes and three at Caistron, Grindon Lough. Two unaccompanied juveniles were at Swinhoe Lake on 23rd and singles at Bank's Pond (Dinnington), Capheaton Lake, Haughton Castle, Hauxley, Heighley Gate Garden Centre Pond and Rayburn Lake.

Additional breeding data is as follows:

Location	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/Comments
Bothal Pond	1	4	AT on 19th
Druridge Pools	1	3	PRM on 10th
Shield-on-the-Wall	1	1	MRS on 14th

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

A single flew N at the Farne Islands on 29th (FIW). Nine, including a juvenile possibly bred on site, were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 17th (MH). The family party of five continued to be seen throughout the month at Bothal Pond (TB *et al.*). Three were at Derwent Reservoir on 1st and 31st (IFo). Two were at Branton GP on 18th and on the sea with Eider at East Chevington on 27th (TRD/JD). An adult and a juvenile were at Cresswell Pond from 18th-30th (TB *et al.*). Two juveniles were at East Chevington on 30th (MSH with a single there on 15th (TD). A single was at West Ord on 9th.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

A single flew N at the Farne Islands on 30th (FIW).

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

Two juveniles were at Holywell Pond from 8th-11th with a single still present on 15th. A juvenile was on Cresswell Pond on 8th.

Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus*

On the 31st a single bird was seen flying out of Cresswell Hall Woods. It then flew behind Cresswell Pond mobbed by corvids and it appeared to go into trees in Warkworth Lane at 17:40h (TB).

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Only one record this month of a single bird at Whittle Wood (Horsley) (DWN).

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

The majority of records this month came from the Druridge Bay area, with a male, a female and a juvenile noted at Druridge Pools on 10th (PRM) and three juveniles there on 13th (CB). Other single birds were noted at Caistron, Grindon Lough, and Holy Island and at two moor land sites.

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

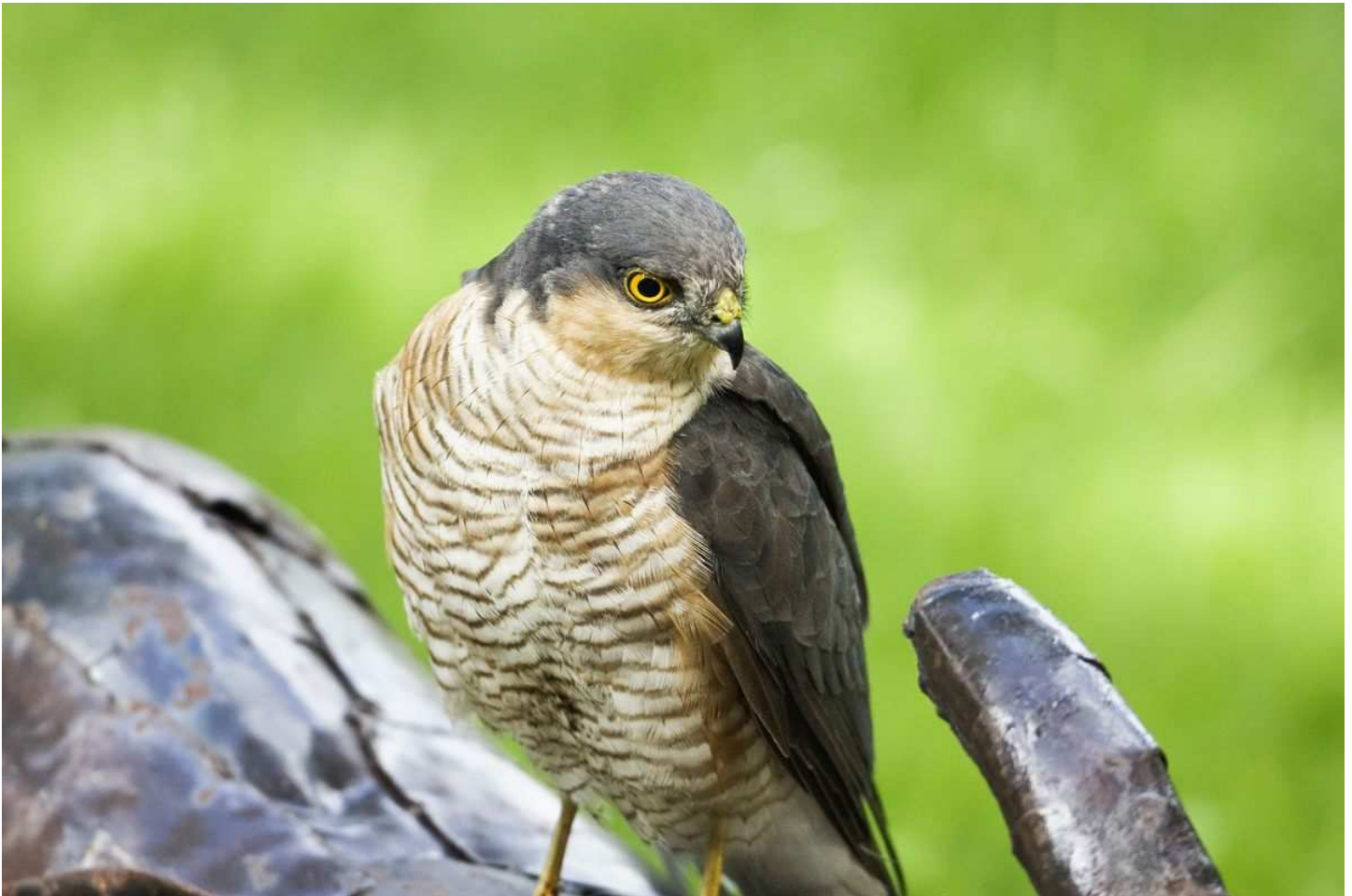
Two records were received of single ring-tail at one site on 23rd (LMo/IWa) and a juvenile was at another site on 29th (NO).

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

Single birds were seen at one site on 2nd (JD) and a juvenile was at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 27th (MR).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Two adults and two juveniles were at Jesmond Old Cemetery (Newcastle) on 5th (MNC) and three birds were at Druridge Pools on 13th (CB/BR/MBr). Two birds were seen in an Old Hartley garden on most days (RJP) and at Scotland Gate throughout the month (SLB/MSK). Two were noted at Backworth on 20th (CGK) and at Hauxley on 24th (HRS). 38 records of single birds were received for August.



Sparrowhawk
Tynemouth
by Colin Bradshaw

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Eight birds including a family party of four were at Haughton Strother GPs on 22nd (MR) and six birds were noted at Foxton Bends (Alnmouth) on 18th (AJ) and Prestwick Carr on 19th (MRS). Five were noted at Horsley Wood and West Hartford on 5th (IK/JSB/EC), Stamfordham on 22nd (EC) and at Haggerston Castle on 25th (NMo). One to four birds were seen at over 25 sites.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetuss*

Three birds were seen at the same time at Fenham-le-Moor on 20th (NMo), and single birds were at Holy Island on 20th (RA), Cocklawburn on 25th (BWG), Tynemouth on 28th (DRW) and at two inland sites (TRD/JD/IRD).



An Osprey shows a surprised fisherman how to do it.
Derwent Reservoir on 4th September by Eddie Douglas

Kestrel *Falco tinninculus*

Five birds were at Grindon Lough on 18th and 25th (PRM) and four were at Prestwick Carr on 31st (PCF). Three birds were noted at Backworth, Derwent Reservoir, Foxton (Alnmouth), Longwitton and Sweethope Lough. Two birds were seen at Albermarle and Woodhorn Flash, single bird records came from 15 further sites.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Single birds were seen inland at Shildon (Blanchland) and Haughton Strother on 1st (JMA/MR), West Hartford on 2nd and 8th (LJM *et al*), Derwent Reservoir on 5th (PRM). On the coast singles were at Cresswell Pond, the Farne Islands, and Hauxley and Holy Island on several dates and at St Mary's Island on 12th (MSH/BL *et al*).

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

Two birds, an adult and a juvenile, were noted at one site on 25th (MJC). Single bird sightings came from St Mary's Wetland on 9th (ASJ), Hauxley NR on 17th, Grindon Lough and Fenham-le-Moor on 25th (PRM/NMo), Ellington and Druridge Pools on 29th (TB/AA) and at Druridge Links on 31st (STE).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Four birds were in Budle Bay on 27th (CGK) three juveniles were at an inland site on 23rd (LMo/IWa) and two birds were at another site on 13th (ALT) and at Cresswell Pond on 26th (BDK). Single birds were noted at a further ten sites.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

A bird was heard on a handful of dates throughout the month at Backworth (CGK); other singles were seen or heard at Arcot Pond on 6th (DM), Swallow Pond on 19th and 21st (JPD/PJA *et al*), and at Cresswell Pond on 25th (IRD).

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

24 birds at Druridge Pools on 10th was the biggest count this month (PRM). 16 were at Arcot Pond on 4th (STH), ten were at Haughton Strother GPs on 17th (MR). One to nine birds were at nine further sites.

Coot *Fulica atra*

Killingworth Lake had the highest count this month with 107 birds on 12th (LJM), 66 were at Bothal Pond on 14th (TD), on 13th at Woodhorn Flash 61 were present (STH) and 56 were at Cresswell Pond on 1st (IRD). One to thirteen birds were at seven other sites.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

On the Farne Islands 284 were present on 14th (DS) and there were several large gatherings along the coast: 180 at Berwick, Little Beach on 23rd (MHu), 150+ in Budle Bay also on 23rd (MSH), 139 at Beacon Point, Newbiggin on 25th (AT), 104 at Cocklawburn on 9th (MHu), 82 at North Blyth staithes on 2nd, and 60 at Hauxley NR on 12th. Few remained inland: up to five in the Cramlington area, four at Derwent Reservoir on 9th and two at Wark (North Tyne) on 8th.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

One site held two juveniles on 2nd, one on 5th and 22nd and two on 29th and three on 31st. Another site had two juveniles on 5th. Two were at Cresswell Pond on 3rd then singles on 5th/9th/12th/18th; an adult and juvenile were at Bothal Pond on 4th.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

At least 450 were in view from Holy Island causeway on 24th (PRM) and the peak at Berwick, Little Beach was 230 on 23rd (MHu); 14-64 were found at Blyth Harbour, Boulmer, Cheswick Black Rocks, Cresswell, Hauxley, Newbiggin, St Mary's and the Tweed estuary. Small numbers were seen at five other places, including two at Derwent Reservoir on 5th and one at Bothal pond on 29th.

***American Golden Plover** *Pluvialis dominica*

One described as a juvenile/1st summer was at Ross, Black Law on 20th (RA).

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

It was present all month on the Farne Islands with a peak of 1179 on 31st (FIW); 1000 were at St Mary's on 27th (ASJ) and around 800 at Holy Island on 26th (DHH). The peak at Newbiggin, Beacon Point was 305 on 25th (AT) and at Cullercoats Bay it was 250 on 30th (MN). Cresswell Pond regularly had up to 50 and 46 were at Coanwood on 3rd.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Budle Bay held 150+ on 30th (MSK/NEWT), 76 were seen from the Holy Island causeway on 31st and two at Newbiggin on 19th.

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

East Chevington, north pool held 2000 (+/- 200) on 26th (EC/JSB) but precisely 1017 were counted at Derwent Reservoir on 5th (PRM). Bothal Pond, Cresswell Pond, Earsdon, Grindon Lough, Holywell Pond, Monks' House Pool, St Mary's, Shiremoor, the Tweed estuary and Whittle Dene Reservoirs all held 210-540 at times with 42-105 at another seven locations.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

The peak count at the Farne Islands was 232 on 4th (DS *et al*). Most of 200 at Beal Point, Lindisfarne NNR on 14th (IK) were in breeding plumage and around 120 were at Stag Rocks on 27th (DHH); 50-105 were noted at Budle Bay, Cheswick Black Rocks, Hauxley, Holy Island and Newbiggin. Small numbers were seen at a further seven typical coastal sites.

A Knot in near summer plumage
Stag Rocks
19th August
Eddie Douglas

**Sanderling** *Calidris alba*

The most were 110 at Cheswick Black Rocks on 26th (MHu) and 80 at St Mary's on 16th (ASJ) with 61 at Newbiggin on 26th and 55 at Berwick on 23rd. There were 41 at Hauxley on 21st and small numbers at Cresswell, Druridge, Holy Island and the Tweed estuary.

***Pectoral Sandpiper** *Calidris melanotos*

An adult was at Haughton Strother GP on 1st (MR).

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

After one at Holy Island on 20th and one at Berwick on 23rd there was a small influx from 26th involving singles at Cresswell Pond to 28th, at Holy Island on 26th, two at Boulmer on 29th (AJ) and singles at Holy Island and Newbiggin on 31st.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

It was present all month on the Farne Islands with a peak of 156 on 14th (DS *et al*). One was at St Cuthbert's Island on 24th.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

At Fenham-le-Moor a count was made from the hide of 687 on 23rd (NMo) and 120 were at Berwick, Little Beach the same day (MHu). Boulmer, Budle Bay, Cheswick, Hauxley, Newbiggin and the Tweed estuary had 12-55 at times and ten or less appeared at another six places.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

Singles arrived at Cresswell Pond and Castle Island on 4th. By 15th there were 12 at Cresswell Pond, increasing to 20 on 29th (AA), 34 on 30th (TB) and 25 on 31st (TB). The other most favoured location was Prestwick Carr with ten on 8th, 18 on 9th and 14 on 14th (PCF). Also 13 were at Bothal Pond on 12th (IRD) and 12 in Budle Bay on 27th (CGK). Whittle Dene Reservoirs had five on 27th and Boulmer, East Chevington, Hauxley, Newbiggin and the Tweed estuary all had three at times. One or two appeared occasionally at Backworth, Druridge Pools, Earsdon, East Chevington, Farne Islands, Holy Island, Holywell Pond, Grindon Lough and Lynemouth Flash.



Left Ruff at Prestwick Carr by Peter Fletcher and right a Common Snipe at Druridge by Colin Bradshaw

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

It was present at Prestwick Carr from 8th with a peak of 16 on that date (PCF) and 16 were at Grindon Lough on 25th (PRM). Bothal Pond had 11 on 22nd, the most at Cresswell Pond was ten on 26th and six or less were at Druridge Pools, Haughton Strother GP, Hauxley, Holy Island and Holywell Pond.

Snipe is a target species for 2011. Please report all records.

***Dowitcher sp.** *Limnodromus sp.*

One was at Holy Island, Emmanuel Head on 24th (CWA).

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Cresswell Pond attracted up to four regularly from 4th and also nine on 15th (TRD). Four were at Boulmer on 29th and four flew SW at the Farne Islands on 16th, two at East Chevington on 7th and singles at Earsdon, Lynemouth Flash and West Hartford.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

At Holy Island 360+ were off Chare Ends on 24th (PRM). Boulmer had 23 on 31st (PCF) and it was present all month on the Farne Islands with a peak of 22 on 23rd (FIW). At Seaton Sluice 12 flew N on 30th and 13 were in Budle Bay on 27th with single figure counts at another seven coastal places.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

S passage was evident on several dates: four at Cheswick on 1st, 21 at Newbiggin on 2nd (TB), seven at Berwick on 3rd, six at Bamburgh on 6th, eight at Cresswell Pond on 18th, seven at East Chevington on 26th and one or two at these and several other places on various dates. Also nine flew W over the ash lagoons at Newbiggin on 24th. Cresswell Pond held 28 on 17th (TB) with occasionally up to eight there at other times and 18 were at Ross on 13th (NFO). Four were at Coquet Island on 14th and four at Fenham-le-Moor on 21st; one or two were noted at a further nine locations.



Above a Whimbrel and below a Curlew
both at Druridge Pools by Colin Bradshaw

**Curlew** *Numenius arquata*

The high tide roost at Hauxley NR contained 157 on 12th (JSB) and 132 on 25th (HRS). The peak at Holywell Dene, Hartley West Farm was 129 on 13th (RJP) and it was also present all month on the Farne Islands with a peak of 110 on 18th (FIW). The Tweed estuary held 82 on 12th and the most at Cresswell Pond was 64-65 on 14th and 29th; 36-49 were at Amble Braid, Newbiggin and St Mary's. Inland five were at Prestwick Carr on 14th, four at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd, three over Capheaton on 3rd and three at Grindon Lough on 18th.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Passage was noted throughout with the most being four at Alnmouth on 14th (CB/OBr/MBr), at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 17th (MR) and at Hauxley NR on 21st (HRS), with regularly up to three at the latter site. Three were also found at Arcot Pond, Budle Bay, Castle Island, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools and St Mary's and two at Foxton bends, Lemington Gut and Tynemouth. Singles were present at another eight places.



Common Sandpiper at Druridge Pools
by Colin Bradshaw

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

At Haughton Strother GP there were four on 1st, three on 6th, two on 13th and one remained to the end of the month (MR). Three were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 17th (MR), two at West Hartford on 19th (PJA) and two in Budle Bay on 27th (CGK). Singles were noted on four dates at Bothal Pond, twice at Earsdon, Beehive Flash and once at Alnmouth, Arcot pond, Caistrion, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Holywell Pond, Monks' House Pool and Ogle Bridge. One flew W at the Farne Islands on 11th.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

Two juveniles were at Druridge Pools on 11th to 14th and another flew over there calling on 13th (AT/CB); three adults were at Hauxley NR on 26th (EC/JSB) and three juveniles at Budle Bay on 27th (CGK). Two adults were noted at East Chevington on 23rd (EC/JSB). One flew S at East Chevington on 5th and singles were seen in flight at Holy Island on 13th/20th/26th. Other singles appeared at Holywell Pond on 4th/5th, Earsdon on 5th/8th, Druridge Pools on 8th, Cresswell Pond on 16th, Budle Bay on 24th, Fenham Flats on 26th and Warkworth Gut on 27th.



Spotted Redshank, a much
photographed species at Druridge
this August.
By Tim Dean on 8th

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

The North Shore roost at Budle Bay held 17 on 27th (CGK) and up to six were noted in the area from 18th to 30th and seven from Beal Point to Longbridge End sluice on 14th (IK). A remarkable 13 were at Druridge Pools on 5th (JSB/EC) with seven at Cresswell Pond the same day (ADM), possibly involving some of those; up to four were at Cresswell Pond on several other days. Four were at West Hartford on 16th and three at Bothal Pond on 5th, at East Chevington on 5th, at the Farne Islands on 25th, at Foxton Bends on 18th and from Holy Island causeway on 30th. Alnmouth, Derwent Reservoir, Dinnington, Holywell Pond, Longhirst Flash and Warkworth Gut all had two at times and singles were found at another four places.



Two Greenshank and a Spotted Redshank
Druridge Pools
5th August
by John Clark

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

One flew W at Inner Farne on 13th (DS *et al*) and two were found at Monks' House Pool the same day (MSH). Singles showed at Cresswell Pond on 14th, Holywell Pond on 17th, Prestwick Carr on 24th, Holy Island on 26th and East Chevington on 27th.

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

The highest totals were 352 at the North Blyth roost on 7th (AT), 186 in the Tweed estuary on 12th (MHu), 163 at Amble Braid on 1st (MSH) and 134 in Budle Bay on 27th (CGK). Counts of 16-48 were made at Boulmer, Cullercoats Bay, Elswick Wharf, the Farne Islands and Hauxley NR. One was at Grindon Lough on 9th.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

It was present all month at the Farne Islands with a peak of 716 on 14th (DS *et al*). Counts on the mainland rather pale in comparison: maxima of 46 at North Blyth on 7th, 40 at Hauxley NR on 12th, 26 at Newbiggin on 20th, 21 at Craster on 25th and 20 in Cullercoats Bay on 13th. Small numbers were at Berwick, Cheswick, Cresswell and Stag Rocks.

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

Three were one mile off Dunstanburgh Castle on a pelagic trip on 16th (MSK/NEWT). An adult flew S at Hauxley on 7th (HRS), an immature was off Newbiggin on 23rd (ASH) and singles flew N at Beadnell on 29th (DHH) and at Holy Island on 31st (RA).

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

The bulk of passage occurred late in the month, 15 S at the Farne Islands on 29th with six N next day (DS *et al*), seven off Newbiggin on 29th (AT) and up to six daily off Beadnell from 25th-31st (DHH). Earlier six were offshore around Coquet Island on 7th, five flew S at Spittal Bay on 8th and one to three were noted at Berwick Pier, Cocklawburn, Cresswell, Hartley Cliffs, Holy Island, Newbiggin, St Mary's and Seaton Sluice.

Long-tailed Skua *Stercorarius longicaudus*

Three adults flew N at Newbiggin on 29th (TRC/ASH/AT) and a juvenile went N at Holy Island on 31st (RA).

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

Most passage was witnessed late in the month. At the Farne Islands 15 flew N and nine S on 29th and eight N on 30th (DS *et al*), five N at Newbiggin on 29th (ASH/AT) and four N at Beadnell on 29th (DHH). One or two were seen off Newbiggin on five other dates and singles were at Hauxley on 11th and 30th.

*** Sabine's Gull** *Xema sabini*

An adult moved slowly N at Newbiggin on 8th amongst a group of terns and kittiwakes (GMi).

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

Large numbers were present in Newbiggin Bay from 19th to 23rd with peaks of 1500 on 20th and 1160 on 19th (STH/PJA/PRM/EAW). The only other large groups noted were around 200 at Snab Point, Cresswell on 27th (BDK), 124 at Blyth South Harbour on 16th (DMT) and 58 at the Tweed Estuary on a WEBS count on 12th (MHu). The Tyne Estuary nesting colony was still active on 1st with around 30% of nests still occupied with young and at least 50 juveniles in the river (DM). Single figure counts were noted at a few other coastal localities. A ringed bird was noted at Blyth South Harbour on 8th which was found to have been ringed at Coquet island in June 2004.

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Large concentrations had built up at several locations. The peak was 1100 at Budle Point on 26th (CGK) with 970 counted at the Tweed Estuary on 12th (MHu). Other groups involved 463 in Newcastle between the Metro bridge and Elswick Wharf on 2nd (DM) with 400 in flooded fields at Prestwick Carr on 7th (IK). 171 were noted at Blyth South Harbour on 16th and 93 at the Tyne Estuary up to North Shields Fish Quay on 20th (DMT). Further groups of 150 at Hauxley on 28th (HRS), 128 at West Hartford on 12th and 68 at Arcot Pond on 21st (DM) were noted. Up to 14 were also noted elsewhere.

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

After last month's influx there were very few sightings this month. Two adults were at Bothal Pond on 14th (TD) with another two adults at Newbiggin Point on 23rd (ASH). A single juvenile was found in amongst a party of Kittiwakes, Terns and Auks at Emmanuel Head, Holy Island on 13th (IK). Further singles were noted at Killingworth Lake on 8th (BMo) and West Hartford on 21st where it flew east with a Common Tern in the evening (STH/PJA).

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

An influx of birds into Newbiggin (where else!) gave rise to a county record gathering of 68 individuals on 20th with 31 adults, 14 second-summers, ten first-summers and 13 juveniles present (STH/PRM/EAW). Numbers had built up during the month with 12 on 2nd (TB) and at least 35 on 12th (MSH). Elsewhere an adult and a first-summer were at Snab Pt, Cresswell on 25th (BDK) with the same combination at Chare Ends, Holy Island on 31st (PRM). Otherwise single adults were at Holy Island all month, Cresswell Pond on 7th (ASH), Amble on 14th (CB/OBr/MB) and Budle Bay on 27th (CGK). The only second-winter away from Newbiggin was at East Chevington on 27th (BDK). Single first-winters were found at Budle Bay on 27th (CGK), Snab Pt on 29th (PRF) and the Farne Islands on 26th (DS). Finally single juveniles were located at Holywell Pond on 5th & 29th (BMo/CGK), West Hartford on 9th (LJM/PJA) and Blyth South Beach on 16th (DMT).



A Mediterranean Gull
Amble
by Colin Bradshaw

Common Gull *Larus canus*

An enormous roost of 7000 birds was found at Budle Bay on 26th with approximately 85% being adults (CGK). The only other groups noted were 170 at the Tweed Estuary on 12th (MHu) and 170 at Fulbeck, Morpeth on 27th (TD). Elsewhere the only reports concerned up to five at various localities.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

A large concentration of 328 adults roosted at Budle Point on 26th (CGK). The only other large count reported was 43 at Elswick Wharf in Newcastle on 2nd (DM). Otherwise up to 15 were noted at a number of localities both coastal and inland.



A Lesser Black-backed Gull
Amble
by Colin Bradshaw

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

The peak count was noted at the Tweed Estuary with 1086 present on 12th (MHu). Other concentrations included 297 at the Tyne Estuary up to North Shields Fish Quay on 26th (DMT), 274 at Blyth South Harbour on 16th (DMT) and 150 at Budle Bay on 13th (MSH). Smaller groups noted were 83 in Newcastle between the Metro Bridge and Elswick Wharf on 2nd and 72 at West Hartford on 12th (DM). Up to seven were found at a number of other localities. One at North Shields Fish Quay on 6th was found to have an abnormal bill with the upper mandible extending up to four centimetres longer in a descending curve (DMT).

Yellow-legged Gull *Larus michahellis*

A single juvenile at Newbiggin on 4th was well photographed and stayed through to at least 10th (AT/PJA/PRM).

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

Some larger counts this month as birds moved to wintering grounds. The peak counts were 403 at Blyth South Harbour on 8th (DMT) and 175 at Beacon Pt, Newbiggin on 27th (STH/PJA). In the Tyne Estuary up to North Shields Fish Quay 110 were noted on 27th (DMT) with 26 in the Tweed Estuary on 12th (MHu). Only singles were noted elsewhere.

Little Tern *Sternula albifrons*

Few noted this month with two adults and two juveniles at Alnmouth on 2nd (NFO) and singles at Druridge on 8th (TRD/JD) and Holy Island causeway on 30th (PRM).

Black Tern *Chilidonias niger*

A marked influx this month starting with a moulting adult on Inner Farne on 2nd (CH *et al*) then singles at St Mary's on 8th and 16th (BMo/JWP), Holy Island on 16th & 26th (RA), Newbiggin from 24th to 27th (GMi/AT), Beadnell on 27th and Stag Rocks on 30th (DHH).

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

Large numbers were still present with peaks of 130 at Budle Point on 28th (CGK) and 122 at Cocklawburn on 9th (MHu). There were still at least 65 at Cocklawburn on 31st (TRD/JD) with up to 40 at Cresswell Pond on 3rd & 8th (TRD/JD). Smaller groups involved 18 at the Tweed Estuary on 12th (MHu) and 12 at East Chevington on 29th (SW). Otherwise well reported with up to six at various coastal localities.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

The only group noted this month was a feeding flock of 50 at Tynemouth on 14th (DRW). Otherwise up to five were found at Berwick, Cocklawburn, Druridge, East Chevington, Elswick Wharf, Holywell Pond, Newbiggin, West Hartford and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*

A marked increase in observations this month with birds wandering after the breeding season. There were frequent sightings off Holy Island with a peak of 20 on 18th (RA). Elsewhere there were ten adults and two juveniles at Alnmouth on 2nd and seven adults at the Wansbeck estuary on 4th (AT). At the breeding colony on Coquet Island three adults and three juveniles were still present around the quay on 14th (CB/OBr/MB). Four adults were present at Newbiggin on 4th and 18th (AT/TD). Elsewhere one or two were noted at Berwick, Budle Point, East Chevington, Hauxley, Ross and Tynemouth. One was also found on a pelagic trip one mile off Beadnell on 16th (MSK/NEWT).

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

Several groups were found with 42 roosting on the tide-line at Cheswick on 1st plus 32 at Little Beach, Berwick on 3rd (MHu) together with 20 at the Long Nanny, Newton on 9th (TRD/JD). Elsewhere up to nine were noted at Cocklawburn, Druridge and the Tweed Estuary.

Guillemot *Uria aalge*

An unusually large gathering was found around Blyth South Harbour and beach with 237 noted on 3rd (LJM). Another large concentration of 150 fed off the pier at Tynemouth on 14th (DRW). Smaller groups of 45 were seen at Stag Rocks on 31st (DHH), plus 40 in Cullercoats Bay on 9th (MN) and ten off Newbiggin on 30th (TRD/JD). Elsewhere up to six were found at Cocklawburn, Cresswell, Druridge, East Chevington and Hauxley. Worryingly twelve were found dead in a 3/4 mile stretch of beach at Warkworth on 27th (NFO).



A Guillemot at Amble
by Colin Bradshaw

Razorbill *Alca Torda*

The only sightings were of eight adults and six juveniles at Cresswell on 3rd with a single off East Chevington on 27th (TRD/JD).

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

There were still at least 20 adults on Coquet Island still carrying fish to young on 14th (CB/OBr/MB). The only other reports were two at Cocklawburn on 17th and one in Spittal Bay on 8th (MHu).

Rock Dove / Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

The maximum monthly count was 72 at North Shields Fish Quay on 20th with 64+ at Littlemill Quarry Howick on 18th and 36 at Blyth South Harbour on 8th (DMT).

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Well reported with the peak count of ten at Cresswell Pond on 21st and nine there on 18th with nine at Ellington on 28th (TB). Six were at Holywell Pond on 15th (CB/OBr/MBr), four at Druridge Pools on 10th (PRM) and at Bellasis Bridge on 28th (PCF) with three at West Hartford on 23rd (LJM). Two were at Coldwell, Jesmond Dene and Wark (N. Tyne) with two seen regularly in a Walbottle garden throughout the month. Singles were found at a further seven widespread localities plus five further locations in Jesmond Dene. Four broods consisting seven juveniles (two, two, one, two) were ringed at Sidwood on 5th (MD).

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

Just four reports the peak being 350 on farm sheds at Heddon Haughs Farm on 12th (PCF), 13 at Jesmond Dene on 7th and two at Beatty Avenue South Gosforth on 29th (MJCo). Two birds also fledged in a Kenton garden during the month (MRS).

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

The largest count was six at Hauxley NR on 7th and 14th (HRS) with one to three in an Old Hartley garden during the month (RJP) and singles at Jesmond Dene and South Gosforth.

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

Singles were at The Snook Holy Island on 14th and 23rd (IK/PRM), Druridge Pools on 10th (PRM) and Cresswell Pond on 19th where a juvenile escaped an attack by a Sparrowhawk (JSB).

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

All reports were of singles at East Chevington on 3rd, 5th and 29th (IF/SW), Holywell Dene on 13th (CS), Backworth Pond on 29th (MSH), Hadston on 29th (TWi) and Backworth on 30th/31st (MSH/CGK). Another victim of the A1 was found at Eshott on 25th (DHH).

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

A pair with two young were observed at Chugdon Wood Ellington from 6th to 22nd (TB). Two juveniles were calling at Newburn Riverside CP on 5th and two birds were observed in open country between Allendale Town and Catton on 21st (TD). A juvenile was calling near Holywell Dene on 13th (CS), an adult roosted on a house alarm box in Dinnington on 15th (PCF) and one was at Swallow Pond on 19th (JPD).

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

A family group was at Ellington throughout the month with one adult and three juveniles on 5th, an adult and youngster on 17th and two males and a female calling on 31st (TB). Three were calling at Mount Pleasant on 25th (SWA) and a family called at Holywell Dene on 3rd with one calling there on 13th and in the village on 13th (CS). A male and female called in Jesmond Dene on 25th (MJCo) with all other reports being singles at Ellington, Manor Drive Longbenton, a Walbottle garden, Wark (North Tyne) and one road casualty at Chollerford on 15th.

Owl sp. *Asio sp*

A single, likely Short-eared owl was observed mid afternoon at Prestwick Carr on 30th.

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

One was at Cresswell Pond on 17th (TB) and at Hope Fell on 21st (JL).

Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*

An immature female flew close to the observer's house at High Brunton near Chollerford (eight miles north of the established site at Slaley) on 14th (JWP).

Swift *Apus apus*

Well reported with the largest gatherings of 100 at Chugdon Wood and 50 at East Moor Farm Ellington on 7th (TB). Sixty flew W at Cramlington on 7th (CB) and 40+ south at Netherton Park Stannington on 13th (RWM/MIM). 35 at Marden Quarry on 14th had departed the next day (ASJ) with 30+ at Holywell Pond on 5th (MSH) and 25 at Clifton Morpeth on 4th (JMA). Twelve were at or over East Ord, Houghton Strother GP, Prestwick Carr, Shiremoor and Whitley Bay with ten at East Chevington. Eight were at Ellington on 19th and 27th with two on 30th (TB). Two to five birds were reported from nine other locations and singles at a further 14 the last being one W at Haughton Strother GP on 31st (MR).

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Two were at New Mills on 1st (TBr), Thrum Mill Rothbury on 20th (TRD/JD), Sweethope Lough on 21st (ADMc) and at Haughton Strother GP on 31st (MR). Single birds were found at Caistron, Castle Island, Hedgeley GP, Jesmond Dene, Lemington Gut, Scotch Gill Morpeth, Newburn Riverside CP, Ponteland, Mootlaw Quarry Ryal and Warkworth.

Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*

Two at the Farnes where single birds were on Brownsman and Inner Farne simultaneously on 26th (JC/DS *et al*).

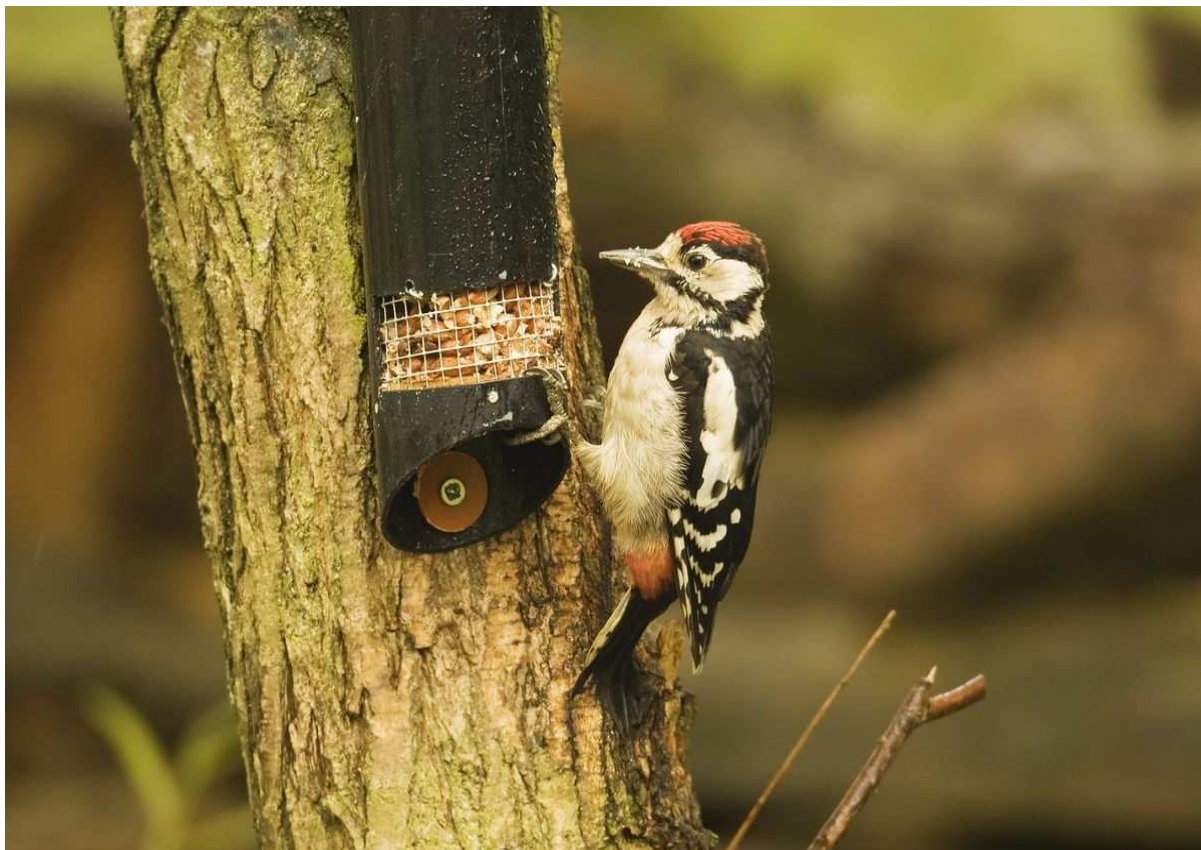
Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

All reports of single birds with juveniles at Kirkhill Estate, Morpeth on 8th (ADMc) and Morpeth Rugby Club on 14th (TD). One was at Hepburn Woods on 14th (TRD/JD), Gosforth Park NR on 17th (AJ), Morpeth Common on 19th (IRD) and calling at Rothbury on 25th (TRD/JD).

A Green Woodpecker
Gosforth Park NR
17th August
by Alan Janes

**Great Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos major*

The peak count was three at Arcot Pond on the 6th (DM) with two juveniles at Holywell Pond on 7th (CB), an adult and juvenile at Cragside, Rothbury on 26th and two at Bellingham on 31st (SWA). Single birds were present throughout the month at Scotland Gate, a Walbottle garden and a Tynemouth garden with other reports from Barns Park, Valley Park and Dam Dykes Cramlington, Hauxley NR, Coleman's Field Jesmond Dene, Woodhorn Church and Wark (N Tyne).



A Great Spotted Woodpecker
On Holywell peanuts
by Colin Bradshaw

Magpie *Pica pica*

Only two reports both on the 21st being eight at Brunswick Village (PCF) and two at Jesmond Dene (MJCo).

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Three were at Havannah NR on 17th (MNC) with two at Rothbury (TRD/JD) and Scotland gate (MSK/SLB) all month, Valley Park Cramlington on 6th (DM), West Hartford on 16th (PJA), Swallow Pond and Wark on 19th (JPD/MNC), Spindlestone on 28th (CB) and Hepburn Wood on 29th (JMA). Singles were also at Beanley, Bellasis Bridge and West Ord.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

One large count of 400 on stubble fields at Haughton Strother GP on 28th (MR) with 12 at Killingworth Lake on 10th one of which showed characteristics of ssp *monedula* (PCF) and two at Paddy Freeman's fields Jesmond Dene on 28th (MJCo).

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

150 were at Holystone on 4th with 50 at Caistron on the same date (JMA) and two NW at West Hartford on 21st (PJA).

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

Just two reports of 25 at Leafield Edge near Prendwick on 2nd (JMA) and eight at Jesmond Dene on 28th (MJCo).

Raven *Corvus corax*

Eight were at the Hanging Stone, Cheviot on 15th (IRD), three soared at Haughton Strother GP on 9th (MR), and were on crags at Sweetthope Lough / Hepple Heugh on 23rd (LMO/IWa).

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

The peak count was five at Catcleugh Reservoir on 17th (PRM) with numbers building to three on the Farnes on 30th (DS *et al*). Two were at Hauxley RS on 25th & 27th (HRS), St Mary's Island on 26th (MSH), Newbiggin GC on 27th (STH/PJA) and Exhibition Park on 30th (DM). Singles were at Valley Park Cramlington, Jesmond Dene, Holy Island and Newbiggin.

Tit sp. An assorted flock of ten+ Great, Blue and Coal Tit, including several juveniles were on feeders at Netherton Park, Stanington on 15th (RWM/MIM).

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Around 60 were at Haughton Strother GP on 26th (MR) with 16 at Hauxley RS on 14th (6 ringed) and nine there on 25th (three ringed) (HRS). Six were in a Walbottle garden on 2nd, three at Beatty Avenue South Gosforth on 29th and a single at Jesmond Dene on 7th. At Kirkley Hall Estate 13 pairs fledged 120 young during the season (IK).

Great Tit *Parus major*

Ten was the peak count at Hauxley RS during the month with six birds ringed and four were at Jesmond Dene on 28th. Nest boxes at Kirkley Hall Estate saw nine pairs fledge 63 young (IK).

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

At Hauxley RS six were present on 7th (HRS), four were in a Walbottle garden on 29th (KR/LR), three at Woodhorn Church on 23rd (STH), two in an Old Hartley garden on 21st with singles at two locations in Jesmond Dene on 14th and at Beatty Avenue South Gosforth on 29th.

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

Four were found in the Longwitton area on the 22nd (MJC), three at Prestwick Carr on 20th (PCF) and two in a Walbottle garden regularly throughout the month (KR/LR). Two were also at Mount Pleasant on 3rd, Mootlaw Quarry Ryal on 13th, and Backworth on 20th. Singles were also at Linden Hall, Linton Pond, Morpeth Common, Swallow Pond and Woodhorn Church.

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

Three were at Wark on 19th (MNC), two at Haughton Strother GP on 9th (MR) and Chollerford on 13th (SW) with singles at High House Woods and Mitford Castle on 1st, near Mitford on 8th, Haughton Castle on 7th, Thrum Mill Rothbury on 29th and Linden Hall throughout the month (NFO).

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Only two reports of ten+ with Meadow Pipits at Hedgehope, Cheviot on 28th (MJC) and 5 including one juvenile at St Mary's on 6th (ASJ).

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

The peak counts were 130 at Haughton Strother on 13th (MR), 55 at Druridge on 21st (ASJ), 50+ at Hauxley NR on 31st (HRS) and 30 S at East Chevington on 5th (IF). Three were on the dam at Catcleugh Reservoir on 30th and two at Newbiggin on 26th.

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

A large gathering of around 350, mainly juveniles, was feeding in the lee of dunes at Low Hauxley on 30th (EC/JSB) with 150 in the area on 27th (HRS). 200+ were at Bamburgh on 6th (BRS), 200 at Norham on 26th (MNC) and 110 appearing to roost at Backworth Pond on 30th (CGK). Around 60 gathered at Berwick GC on 23rd and Catcleugh Reservoir on 30th with 52 at Cresswell on 17th and Prestwick Carr on 28th. At Longwitton 100/h flew S throughout the day on 23rd (MJCo) with 50+ S at Hauxley NWT, 30+ S at Cocklawburn on both on 1st and 30+ S at Holywell Pond on 5th. One to 40 were at fifteen further widespread localities. Active nests remained at Chesters Farm near Ingram, Leaplish and Tower Knowe Kielder with four broods at Coquet Lodge Warkworth.

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

The peak count was 80 in the Hauxley area on 27th (HRS) with 65 at Wallridge on 31st (ASJ), around 60 at Spittal, Berwick on 19th (MHu) and 40+ at Bamburgh on 6th (BRS) and Whittle Wood Horsley on 7th (DWN). 12 to 30 were at Catcleugh Reservoir, Holywell Dene, Newbiggin, Exhibition Park and Prestwick Carr with 14 used nests found at Tower Knowe and seven at Hauxley Village.

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

Flocks of 18 were at Haughton Strother GP (Humshaugh) on 26th (MR) and at Prestwick Carr on 31st (PCF). 16 were attracted to garden feeders at Cramlington on 31st and 15 were at Ellington on 15th. Family parties were noted at Leazes Park and Valley Park (Cramlington) early in the month and one to two were reported from Castron, Jesmond Dene and Netherton Park.

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

One on Brownsman (Farne Islands) on 7th was a scarce island visitor (FIW)

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Noted as very common on passage through a Stamfordham garden during the month (EC) where numbers, as elsewhere, peaked during the final week. The highest counts were on 26th with ten at Newbiggin and nine with a tit flock at Haughton Strother GP. Six to seven were noted at Bamburgh on 6th and Hauxley NR on 7th, 14th and 27th; a family party was off Beacon Lane (Cramlington) on 6th and one to three were reported from a further eight localities.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Inland 20 were at Havannah NR on 17th (MNC) and 13 at Haughton Strother GP on 6th (MR). Coastal passage produced four to 14 daily at the Farne Islands from 7th-14th, ten on 21st and seven on 31st (FIW), while at Hauxley RS numbers peaked at ten on 21st and 16 on 27th (HRS). Inland movement was witnessed in a Chapel House garden where two-three were noted daily from 1st-15th (IK). Elsewhere nine were at Prestwick Carr on 20th, eight at Newbiggin on 26th, six at Prior's Park and St Mary's Island on 12th and one to four at a further 15 mainly inland localities.



A Tynemouth Willow Warbler
by Colin Bradshaw

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Hauxley RS reported one to nine on six dates with a peak on 24th. A family party of five was at Haughton Strother GP on 26th and four were noted at Newbiggin on 19th, Prior's Park (Tynemouth) on 12th and Scotland Gate. Three were at Newbiggin and Woodhorn Church on 26th and one to two at a further three localities.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

Coastal passage included one to four on the Farne Islands on six dates from 7th-24th with a peak on 12th (FIW), one at Newbiggin on 19th and up two at Newbiggin Ash Lagoons from 24th-26th and a single at Holy Island (Snook) on 24th. Inland three were at Haughton Strother GP on 1st and a single with food for young at Capheaton on 3rd.

Barred Warbler *Sylvia nisoria*

A juvenile was found at Newbiggin Ash Lagoons on 19th (PRM).

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

Single passage birds were at Hauxley RS on 14th (HRS/STE), in an East Ord garden on 15th and Woodhorn Church on 25th (STE/PJA). Two were at the latter locality on 26th (PRM).

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

Birds were well reported from the Newbiggin area with 16+ (mostly along the Ash Lagoon bank) on 19th (PRM), ten to 12 at Newbiggin GC on 25th-26th (STH/PJA/BDK) and six at the Ash Lagoon bank on 30th (LJM). Elsewhere nine were at Woodhorn Church on 14th (STH) and six+ at St Mary's Island on 2nd (MSH). Family parties were at Arcot Pond and St Mary's Wetland on 6th and 12th respectively. One to four passage birds were also reported from Bamburgh, Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay), the Farne Islands, Hauxley RS and Prior's Park (Tynemouth).

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

Two were on the Farne Islands on 11th and again on 13th (FIW) and singles at Arcot Pond on 2nd, Prestwick Carr on 1st, St Mary's Island on 2nd and Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 17th.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Family parties were noted at Arcot Pond on 6th (DM) and Capheaton on 3rd (STE). Elsewhere three to five were reported from Mootlaw Quarry (Ryal), Prestwick Carr and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. One to two were also noted at Cocklawburn, Crag Lough, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, the Farne Islands, Hauxley RS, Holy Island and Newbiggin GC. The final birds of the month were two at Holy Island on 31st (PRM).



A successful Sedge Warbler
Druridge on 15th August
by Tim Dean

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Single were at the Farne Islands 7th-8th, 11th and 23rd (FIW), at Cresswell Pond 1st-3rd (IRD/TRD/JD) and Killingworth Lake on 2nd (BMo).

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

The highest count by far was ten+ at Chillingham on 30th (MD/AM). Single birds were noted at four localities in Jesmond Dene on 21st (MJCo), three were at Wark (North Tyne) on 19th and one to two at Blanchland, Catcleugh, Haughton Strother, Norham, and gardens in Rothbury and Walbottle.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

A family party of five was at Ellington on 3rd (TB). On the coast one to two were noted at Hauxley RS on 14th and 21st, Newbiggin on 26th and Woodhorn Church on 26th. One to two were reported from a further seven inland localities.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Ten were at Hauxley RS on 7th followed by one to seven on five dates from 14th-27th. Three at Jesmond Dene on 14th was the only other report.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

Post breeding flocks began to gather, the largest of which were 300+ at Snab Point (Cresswell) on 26th (PCF) and 300 at Seaton Burn on 4th (JMA). Over 200 were at Prestwick Carr on 7th, 100 at Cullercoats Bay on 13th and at Hauxley on 14th and 59 flew W at Grindon Lough on 5th. Two flocks (50 and 20) were noted in the Blanchland area on 24th.

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

There were only two reports this month; two singing at Ponteland on 23rd (PCF) and one bird at Thrum Mill (Rothbury) on 20th (TRD/JD).

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

Two (adult female and 1st winter female) were at Budle Bay on 27th (CGK).

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

A male was feeding two young at Gosforth on 6th (STE); two were reported from South Gosforth on 29th and a single at Jesmond Dene on 7th.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Six were at Hauxley RS on 27th, five at Ellington on 10th and singles at Heaton Park and a Walbottle garden.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

27 flew S at Linden Hall on 21st (NFO) when seven were also near Blanchland (JL). The only other report was three at Heaton Park (Jesmond Dene) on 14th.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

Family parties of five to six were noted at Chesters (Ingram) on 2nd (JMA), Linden Hall on 8th (NFO) and Windyhaugh on 4th (JMA). Elsewhere three (adult and two juveniles) were at Bamburgh on 6th and Haughton Strother GP on 29th, two at Brierdene Burn (Earsdon) on 7th, Havannah Pond on 17th and a Stamfordham garden on 31st and singles at a further ten inland localities and on the coast at the Farne Islands on 11th and 20th and Holy Island on 26th.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

A peak of ten to 15 was noted at Hauxley RS on 27th with one to three on a further four earlier dates (HRS). Five were noted in Jesmond Dene on 14th (MJCo).

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

On the Farne Islands a juvenile at Brownsman on 1st and Longstone End on 3rd was presumably the same bird (FIW).

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

All reports were from inland breeding areas. A pair and two juveniles were noted at Haughton Strother GP up to 22nd and a juvenile nearby at Coldwell on 7th. Another juvenile was at Greenhead on 7th and single un-aged birds at Wark (North Tyne) on 11th and still near the Simonside Hills on 29th.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

In breeding areas, two were still at Usway Burn (Upper Coquetdale) on 14th (IRD) and one at Grindon Lough on 5th (PRM); juveniles were found at Hareshaw Common (Bellingham) on 17th (PRM) and on the Simonside Hills on 29th (NFO). On the Farne Islands one to four were noted on five dates from 7th-14th with a peak on 11th and another was between Druridge and Chevington on 19th. Singles were reported from Cocklawburn, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Prestwick Carr and Tynemouth between 22nd-29th.

Eight Yellow Wagtails were also found in the Hauxley area on 27th (HRS), five juveniles at Lynemouth Flash on 21st (ASJ), four on flooded fields at Prestwick Carr on 7th (IK), three at St. Mary's Island on 4th (JL), Longwiton area on 22nd (MJC) and Budle Bay on 28th (CGK). One to two were also at Backworth Pond, Berwick GC and Little Beach, Boulmer, Canty's Brig (Berwick), Capheaton, Cocklawburn, Coldwell, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Grindon Lough and Holy Island.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

11 (family parties of six and five) were at Whittle Dene on 17th (MR), five (family party) at Holywell Dene on 5th (CS), four in the Abbey Mill (Morpeth) area on 1st (ADMc) and Yarrow Slake, Tweed Estuary (family party) on 12th (MHu), three at Borough Woods (Morpeth) on 1st (ADMc) and Hauxley NR on 21st (HRS), two at Mootlaw Quarry (Ryal) on 13th and 27th (ALT), Hepple Heugh on 23rd (LMO/TWa) and Catcleugh Reservoir Dam on 30th (MJC). Singles were also noted at Castle Island, Craster, Eshott, Furnace Bridge, Jesmond Dene, Newbiggin, Newcastle City Centre, Thrum Mill (Rothbury) and Wark.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarellii*

125 were observed at Cresswell Pond on 13th (TB), 60 on flooded fields at Prestwick Carr on 7th (IK) with 15 still present there on 20th (PCF), 28 in the Hauxley area on 21st (HRS), 27 at Earsdon on 7th (MNC), 23 at St. Mary's Island on 24th (CGK), 21 at Whittle Dene on 17th (MR), 18 at Newbiggin GC on 23rd (STH) and 11 at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 30th (DM).

White Wagtail *M. a. alba*:- Three were noted at Cresswell Pond on 13th (TB) and one at Hauxley NR on 29th (MSH).

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

Two flew S over the Snook, Holy Island on 24th (MJC) and one mobbed a Buzzard at Haughton Strother GP on 31st (MR).

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Ca.100 were found around the summit of the Cheviot on 31st (MD/AM), 80+ on nearby Hedgehope (Cheviot Hills) on 28th (MJC), 35 at Haughton Strother GP on 26th (MR), 25 at Pennypie near Blanchland on 1st (JMA) and Catcleugh Reservoir on 30th (MJC), 20 at Leafield Edge near Prendwick on 2nd (JMA) and one to ten at a further four widespread localities. Passage was indicated by 20 per hour heading S at Longwiton on 22nd with 50 per hour here on 23rd (MJC).

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Four were at Newbiggin on 26th (PRM/AT). A single was at St. Mary's Island on 23rd (CGK).

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

80+ came into feed at the Osprey viewpoint Leaplish, Kielder Forest on 6th July (TW). 20 were at Shildon near Blanchland on 1st, 15 at Tower Knowle, Kielder Forest on 26th, ten at Windyhaugh on 4th and Kielder Castle on 26th (JMA).

Greenfinch *Carduelis choris*

34 were at Prestwick Carr on 20th (PCF), 21+ visited a Netherton Park, Stannington garden on 30th (RWM/MIM), 11 at a Walbottle garden on 28th (KR/LR) and four at a Dinnington garden on 11th (PCF).

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Largest post breeding "charms" involved 100 in the Hauxley area on 27th (HRS), 76 at Cocklawburn on 26th (MHu), 60+ at Prestwick Carr on 8th (PCF), Swallow Pond on 19th (JPD) and Backworth on 29th (CGK). 55 were at Black Heddon on 31st (ASJ), 50 at a Mount Pleasant garden on 5th (SWA), 38 at Holy Island on 8th (PRM), 35 at West Hartford on 8th (PJA), 26 at Newbiggin on 19th (PRM) and 14 at a Walbottle garden on 28th (KR/LR). One to ten were at a further seven widespread localities.

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

100 were at Tower Knowle, Kielder on 26th (JMA), 80+ at Catcleugh Reservoir on 17th (PRM), 50 at Beltingham near Bardon Mill on 31st (SWA), 20 at the Osprey Viewpoint at Leaplish, Kielder on 6th (TW) and one to 15 at a further six widespread localities.

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

Post breeding flocks involved 250 at Longbridge End on 14th (IK), 52 at Haughton Strother GP on 9th increasing to 180 on 29th (MR), 110 at Church Farm, Earsdon on 29th (CGK), 21 at Prestwick Carr increasing to 70+ on 28th (PCF), 60+ near Killingworth Waggonways on 21st (BMo) and Black Heddon on 31st (ASJ), 58 at Cocklawburn on 1st (MHu) and 29 at Newbiggin on 19th (PRM).

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis caberret*

85 were observed at Sinderhope on 23rd (SAS). One at Grindon Lough on 9th increased to 34 by 25th (PRM), 22 were at Deadwater, Kielder Forest on 24th (MD/AM), one-six at Ridsdale all month (MD/AM), two at Crag Lough on 9th (PRM) and singles at Walltown Quarry on 21st (PRM) and Valley Park, Cramlington on 29th (DM).

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

Noted as common in the border forests with many parties of ten to 25 present on 9th (MD). 40 were at Deadwater, Kielder Forest on 24th (MD) and Catcleugh on 30th (MJC), 30+ at Drake Stone, Harbottle on 29th (MJC), 18 at Hepburn Woods on 14th (TRD/JD), 15 at Craggside on 26th (MJC), six feeding at Capheaton on 3rd (STE) and along a track between Bellingham - Falstone on 17th (MSK/NEWT), three at Prestwick Carr on 7th (PCF) and two recently fledged young at Sweethope Lough on 9th (MD). A migrant was found in a Monkseaton (Whitley Bay) garden at dawn on 24th (MSH).

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

12 were at the Craggside feeding station on 26th (MJC), five (family party) at Longwitton on 22nd (MJC), four (family party) at Scotland Gate all month (SLB/MSK), Prestwick Carr on 27th (PCF) and Holywell Waggonways on 29th (CGK) and one to three at a further ten widespread localities gardens at Rothbury, South Gosforth and Walbottle.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

Seven were at Black Heddon on 31st (ASJ) and three at Coldwell on 7th (SW).

July bulletin. The first sentence should read:-

"In the Tranwell/Saltwick area 25 males was present on 7th (ASJ) and 20 males were in the Ingoe/Black Heddon locality on 3rd (ASJ)."

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Three were at Druridge Pools on 10th (PRM), two on Holy Island on 31st (PRM) and singles at Newbiggin on 19th (PRM) and Hauxley on 27th (HRS).

ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN**Escapes****Bar-headed Goose** *Anser indicus*

The three from last month continued their stay at Cresswell Pond where they were seen through to at least 10th (TRD/JD/PRM/PJA). They then moved to Hauxley where they were noted from 15th to 28th (HRS/TRD/JD) and finally East Chevington on 31st (STE).

Birds of Unknown Origin**Rose-ringed Parakeet** *Psittacula krameri*

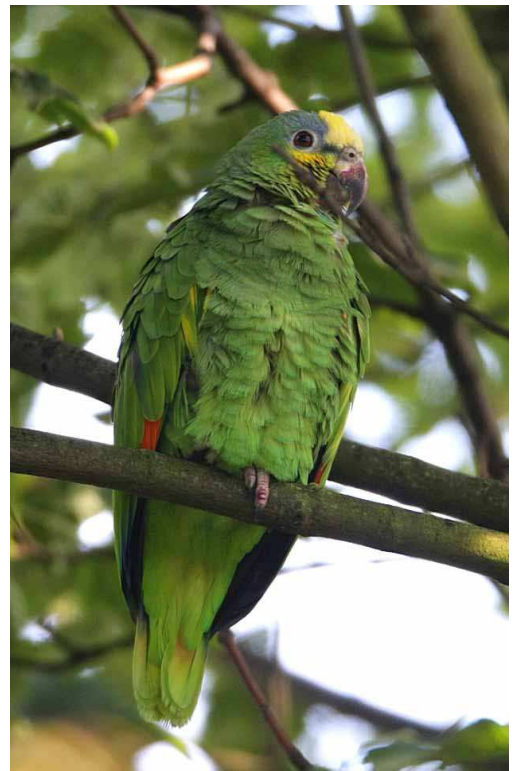
One was seen at Exhibition Park in Newcastle on 18th (STE). It then flew E over the Great North Rd at 07:00h.

A late report was of an **Oranged-winged Parrot** in Prior's Park (Tynemouth)

Is this a first for Northumberland?

25th August

Photograph by Colin Bradshaw

**LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS**

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Bamburgh Ringing Station, Berwick Wildlife Group, Northern Experience Wildlife Tours.

Those observers marked with an asterisk after their name(s) have submitted records online using the club spreadsheet, copies are available by emailing Dick Myatt at dick@dickmyatt.co.uk

Apologies for any accidental omissions

BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION

This bulletin was compiled by Lindsay McDougall (Mute Swan to Egyptian Goose, Red Grouse to Black-necked Grebe), Graeme Bowman (Ruddy Shelduck to Ruddy Duck), Trevor Blake (Honey Buzzard to Crane), Ian Forsyth (Oystercatcher to Skua), Tim Dean (Ivory Gull to Puffin, Escapes, Hybrids and Unknown Origin, List of Contributors, Highlights), Peter Fletcher (Feral Pigeon to Red-rumped Swallow), Mike Richardson (Cetti's Warbler to Pied Flycatcher), David McKeown (Dunnock to Corn Bunting), Julie Roper/Dan Turner (WeBS Coastal Counts) and Steve Holliday (WeBS Inland Counts). Thanks again to Ann McKeown for typing the section Dunnock to Corn Bunting. Thanks to Barbara Welch of NNBC for providing data.

Edited by Steve Barrett Sscmagpie@aol.com

Distributed by Alan Watson apusx@blueyonder.co.uk

BULLETIN SECTION WRITERS

Please send an email to Steve Barrett Sscmagpie@aol.com to volunteer or for more information.

RECORD SUBMISSION

Please send all record cards to Tim Dean, 2 Knocklaw Park, Rothbury NE65 7PW, to arrive on, or preferably before, the 8th of the month following that in which the records were collected. Please write cards legibly to ensure that your sightings are correctly recorded.

E-mail: Members are encouraged to e-mail their records on an Excel-style spreadsheet. Please e-mail Dick Myatt at dick@dickmyatt.co.uk for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and Grid references: The use of standard location names and the inclusion of grid references greatly increases the value of records in subsequent analyses. A 1km square grid reference is the ideal e.g. NY8067 for Grindon Lough, but 2km square references (tetrads) are also acceptable e.g. NY86D in this case. A list of localities and their tetrad grid references (tetrad/Locality List) can be downloaded from the 'Resources & Downloads' section of the Club website at <http://www.ntbc.org.uk> – the use of these names, wherever possible, would be highly appreciated.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Please keep submitting your articles, photographs, sketches and illustrations for the bulletin. Thanks again to those who have supplied the excellent photographs. Please send to Steve Barrett at Sscmagpie@aol.com

ELECTRONIC BULLETIN

The NTBC bulletin can be received electronically or as hard copy. The electronic bulletin arrives earlier than the printed version, it is in colour and we save the cost of printing and stamps.

Ask for an e-mailed bulletin from;

jo.bentley@waitrose.com

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS 2011

Annual subscription is a bargain £23. For membership enquiries please contact jo.bentley@waitrose.com

NTBC WEB SITE

The Club website is an excellent resource for all interested in birds in the north east. There are numerous interesting sections, including a photograph gallery, site information and trip reports together with extensive reference information for birding in our area. The site is at www.ntbc.org.uk

If you have any ideas or things you would like to see or hear about on the site please let Chris know on 0751 582 5024 or email christopher.knox@o2.co.uk

NTBC SIGHTINGS PAGE

The club sightings web page gives listings of birds seen locally. Adding a sighting is simple. A short email is all that is needed. If anyone would like to be added as a contributor please contact Alan Tilmouth at ntbcorg@gmail.com. The sightings page can be found at <http://ntbc sightings.posterous.com>

IINDOOR MEETINGS

The next indoor meeting swill be at Newcastle Falcons on Thursday 13th October at 7pm.

AGM followed by;

Brain's Trust/Birder's Question time.

The genial host will be Tom Cadwallender.

The brains are;

Adrian Pitches (BBC)

Jim Steele (BOURC)

Mike Pratt (NWT)

Martin Kerby (RSPB)

Tim Dean (County Recorder)

James Littlewood (NNHS)

They will give opinions and answer questions on any topic the audience wish to throw at them. It should be a lively, enjoyable and informative evening.

NTBC COMMITTEE NEWS

AGM

The Annual General Meeting of Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club will take place on 13th October 2011.

Alan Tilmouth Honorary Secretary

ATLAS NEWS

Sponsorship of species in aid of the Atlas publication is progressing well. So if you want 'own' your favourite bird contact Steve Lowe at zappa99@live.co.uk

PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

Last year's winner Peter Fletcher will be judging the Bulletin photographic competition. The winner will be announced at the October indoor meeting.

COASTAL WeBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND

RP R. Poyer

RC R. Chilton

MHu M. Hutcheson

MLC M. L. Cadwallender / J. Bentley

LJM L. J. McDougall

TB T. Brewis

JAR J. A. Roper

DMT D. M. Turner

AC A. Craggs

TAC T. A. Cadwallender

PF P. Fletcher

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AUGUST 2011

Site	TOTAL	Berwick North Shore	Berwick Little Beach	Tweed Estuary	Tweed: A1 By-Pass to Horncliffe	Spittal - Cocklawburn	Lindisfarne MNR (including Budle Bay)	(Budle Bay)	Budle Pt - Seahouses	Seahouses - Beadnell	Howick - Boulmer	Aln Estuary	Alnmouth South	Newbiggin - Cambois	Blyth Estuary	Tyne North Pier - Fish Quay	Wallsend, (north bank only)	Redheugh - Scotswood Bridge, (north bank)	Scotswood - Newburn Bridge, (north bank)
Counter		MHu	MHu	MHu	TB	MHu	AC	AC	RP	MLC	JAR	TAC	RP	RC	LJM	DMT	DMT	PF	PF
Date		15	15	12	13	9	14	14	14	12	18	12	14	15	9	20	22	13	13
Red-throated Diver	6													6					
Little Grebe	2								2										
Cormorant	391	35		10	1	8	160			24	5	7		5	83	13	37	3	
Shag	132	17		2		4	83		21				5						
Grey Heron	50	2	1	9	3	1	10	1		4	11						8		
Mute Swan	569		8	390	90	2	63	18	2			12					2		
Whooper Swan	1			1															
Greylag Goose	2			1								1							
Canada Goose	69			11								10							48
Shelduck	126						93	28		26	6							1	
Wigeon	261						261												
Teal	523						508			14	1								
Mallard	243			18	52	2	65	12	6			22					4	50	24
Tufted Duck	9						5		4										
Eider	795	6		4		18	327		190	75	112		46		14	3			
Common Scoter	327					7	320												
Red-breasted Merganser	10					5	4				1								
Goosander	226	4	4	106	72	5	5			3	20	7							
Moorhen	6								2	2		1			1				
Coot	5						4												1
Oystercatcher	1,028	57	20	18		104	139	42	85	268	164	6	19	7	87	54			
Ringed Plover	238		142			6	37	15		23	30								
Golden Plover	876						415			341	120								
Grey Plover	53	1					46			6									
Lapwing	1,413			540		74	110	61	48	85	4	276			1			252	23
Knot	634	5	8				391		220	3	7								
Sanderling	22						22												
Dunlin	235		54				54			126						1			
Snipe	5						4		1										
Black-tailed Godwit	2						2												
Bar-tailed Godwit	174						163	4		6	5								
Whimbrel	37			2			33			1					1				
Curlew	1,804	58	25	82		16	987	15	1	21	250	240		2	75	2	4	2	39
Redshank	1,187	14	10	186			528	34	4	64	116	88		4	124	16	1	32	
Greenshank	12						5					7							
Common Sandpiper	8			1	3							2							2
Turnstone	183	5	10				9		23	82	38		3			12	1		
Black-headed Gull	4,695	180	236	970	32	287	1630	350		279	185	264			45	93	127	260	107
Common Gull	709	6	17	170	52	7	455				2								
Lesser Black-backed Gull	205	2		8		2	145							3	1			33	11
Herring Gull	4,343	104	20	1086	33	17	2310			267	36	14			98	185	3	144	26
Great Black-backed Gull	252	4	4	26		6	34			63	2	3			61	21		8	20
Kittiwake	42	7								29	1				5				
Sandwich Tern	450	28	78	18		122	147			19	36				2				
Common Tern	91						65				18				6	1		1	
Arctic Tern	79	6	22	6		9	25			11									
Kingfisher	1																		1
ADDITIONAL SPECIES																			
Little Egret	8						5	1				2			1				
TOTALS - WILDFOWL	3,753	64	13	552	218	52	1,908	59	227	119	169	77	57	5	98	16	51	54	73
- WADERS	7,911	140	269	829	3	200	2,945	171	382	899	861	619	22	13	288	85	6	286	64
- GULLS & TERNS	10,866	337	377	2,284	117	450	4,811	350	0	668	280	281	0	0	220	301	130	446	164

INLAND WeBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND

Version:

Year: 2011

Month: AUGUST

[illegible]

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

<http://www.ntbc.org.uk/>

Bulletin 2011 No 9

MONTHLY SUMMARY – SEPTEMBER

6th November 2011



HIGHLIGHTS

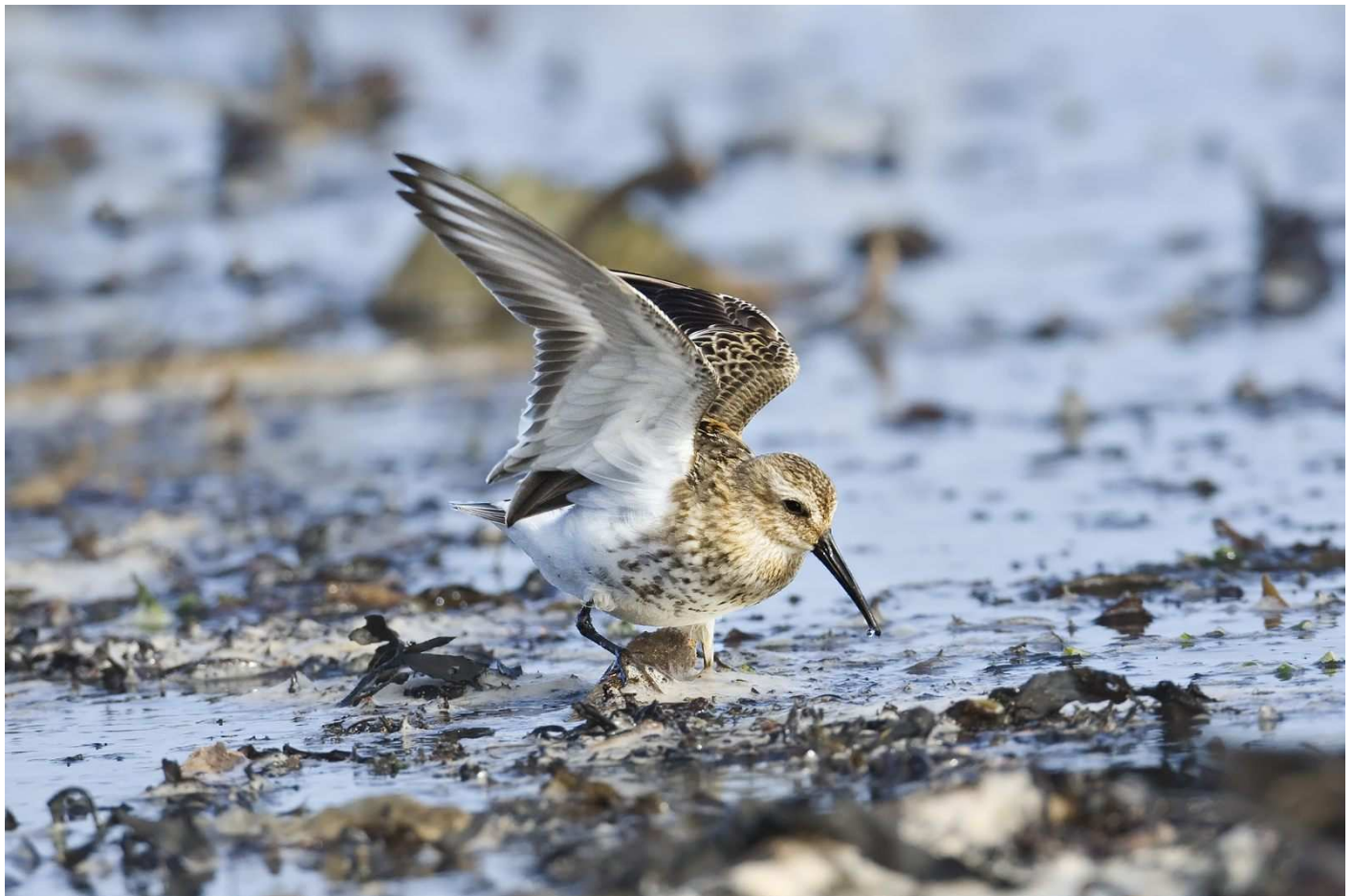
Balearic Shearwater
Spoonbill
Bittern
Little Egret
Crane
Sandhill Crane

Corncrake
Pectoral Sandpiper
Long-tailed Skua
Black Tern
Wryneck
Hoopoe
Yellow-browed Warbler
Barred Warbler
Icterine Warbler
White-spotted Bluethroat

Two at Newbiggin on 1st.
One at St Mary's on 26th.
Birds at Gosforth Park and Cresswell Pond.
Many sightings this month.
Single at Budle Bay from 19th to 26th.
Unsurprisingly a first for the county with several observers managing sightings and photos! as it moved S from Newbiggin through Holywell and Whitley Bay on 29th.
One taken by a Peregrine on Brownsman (Farne Islands) on 25th.
A juvenile at Derwent Reservoir.
Sightings at Newbiggin and on a pelagic.
An unusual group of eight at Budle Point with many other singles.
Single at Hauxley on 22nd.
One at Bamburgh on 11th.
Influx from 16th to 23rd.
Single on Holy Island on 18th.
One on Brownsman on 25th.
Male at East Chevington on 7th.

CONTENTS

Indoor Meeting 10th November – Kenyan Specialities
Gosforth NR – an appeal
Club Accounts
Bulletin Photographic Competition Result
Field Trip To Druridge Bay - 12th November
BTO Atlas news



A Dunlin has a stretch at St. Mary's by Colin Bradshaw,

WEATHER

A changeable 'westerly' weather type prevailed for most of the month, bringing rain and some strong winds at times. The last week saw a fine, very warm spell with some unusually high temperatures.

The mean temperature was 1.6 °C above the 1971-2000 average, provisionally making it the warmest September since 2006 and the fifth warmest in the last 100 years.

1st to 4th: The month started on a settled note, with some cool nights but warm sunshine developing in many areas by day.

5th to 11th: An unsettled week with showers or bands of rain spreading across all parts at times with occasionally strong winds. On 5th heavy showers and thunderstorms gave some locally torrential downpours. The 6th was very wet and windy with gales in many places. The week then became drier and brighter with some sunshine developing, especially in the east. It again became very warm and humid with high overnight minima. The weekend of 10th/11th saw a mixture of sunshine and showers before persistent and, at times, heavy rain spread to the north.

12th to 18th: It was unsettled at first, with a very windy day on 12th, especially in the north. By 14th a ridge of high pressure started to build bringing quieter conditions. Showers became well scattered with longer drier and sunny spells developing. A cold start to 15th, with temperatures around or below 5 °C in many inland areas and 0.8 °C at Redesdale Camp (Northumberland). Patchy mist and fog also formed overnight, slow to clear during the day. The 17th and 18th were unsettled with strong winds and showers or spells of rain at times and scattered thunderstorms.

19th to 26th: A drier and less windy start on 19th, but quickly turning more unsettled once again with rain on 20th. The 21st was very windy but drier and brighter after early rain. Pressure began building by 23rd with only isolated showers, and 24th/25th were mainly dry and warm, especially in the east, with a good deal of sunshine. Overnight into 26th saw a brief windier spell with some rain, but this cleared by morning to leave a dry, bright day.

27th to 30th: High pressure over the continent and southerly winds brought a fine, very warm spell with temperatures rising day by day. The final days saw almost unbroken sunshine in most places. A few mist and fog patches developed overnight, especially across the south-west, but these cleared by mid-morning. It became exceptionally warm for the time of year.

CLASSIFIED LIST

The following account consists of unchecked reports. The species/subspecies marked * require descriptions.

A complete list of all sightings that need notes is included in the NTBC website www.ntbc.org.uk under the County Records Committee section and in Birds in Northumbria 2009 page 224.

The Inland and Coastal Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) tables are at the rear of the bulletin. These contain counts additional to those in the Classified List.

TARGET SPECIES

The target species for 2011 are Gadwall, Snipe and Stonechat

Please report all records for these species.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

The peak gatherings were 107 at Killingworth Lake on 17th (LJM), 52 at QEII CP Lake on 26th (CDH), 38 at Capheaton Lake on 14th (MSH), 30 at Big Waters on 25th (GB) and 25 at Castle Island on 3rd (DM). Other double-figure counts were 18 on the River Tweed Estuary on 15th and 14 at Berwick North Shore on 14th (MHu), 12 at Longhirst Flash on 4th (TD) and 10 at Broomlee Lough on 18th (MRS). One to nine were at Arcot Pond, Bothal Pond, River Blyth Estuary, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Exhibition Park, Holy Island Lough, Holywell Pond, Leazes Park, Linton Pond, Newton Pool, River Lyne at Lynemouth, River Tyne at the Millennium Bridge, Sleekburn and Shield on the Wall,



A Mute Swan
Cresswell Pond by Colin Bradshaw

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

The expected autumn movement was first noted on Holy Island where 128 moved S on 14th (ADM) and on the following day 120 moved S at Tasset on the River North Tyne, (MD). Other significant movements were 300 S at Holy Island on 25th (ADM), 210 S at Cocklawburn on 29th (MHu), ca.200 S at Hauxley on 23rd, 120 S at Ellington on 26th (TB), and 200 S at St Mary's Island on 15th (AC/MSH). Smaller flocks of up to 100, all moving S, were noted at ten other coastal localities during the latter half of the month. The largest concentration was 1900 at Fenham Slake on 18th (DGB) which probably dispersed during subsequent days into smaller groups reported around this area; however, numbers in Budle Bay were reported to be slow in building up to 710 on 27th (CGK). At Doddington 300 were overhead on 19th. Cresswell recorded a flock of 200 on 18th and at least 100 were at Ross on 16th (MSH). Elsewhere one to 29 were at Craster, East Chevington and Prestwick Carr.

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

The largest flock was 700 at Branton GP (IBDa/KDa) but 520 seen there on 22nd were reported as a 'high count for Branton GP' and were thought to be the flock from Caistron (TRD/JD). A maximum count of 500 came from East Chevington North Pool on 27th (TB) with 232 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 8th (MR) and flocks of 144 and 136 on the River Tweed on 22nd (MHu). At Holywell Pond 68 were recorded on 3rd (DM) with 82 there on 25th (LJM) and Monk's House Pool held 75 on 22nd (JPL). One to four were at Budle Bay, Castle Island, Linton Pond and the QEII CP Lake.

Snow Goose *Anser caerulescens*

The four adult white-phase birds, first seen at Hauxley during the last week in August, were at East Chevington on 4th (MK) and thereafter were seen in this location throughout the month by many observers.

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

A flock of 30 flew W at Cramlington on the 18th (PJA). During the first few days of the month Cresswell Pond hosted an exceptionally large flock which peaked at 925 on 3rd (IRD). Other large gatherings were 350 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 14th (TRD/JD), 214 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 8th (MR) and 48 at Holywell Pond on 3rd (DM/GB). Nine to 38 were at Greenlee Lough, Hexham Tyne Green, Leazes Park, Linton Pond, QEII CP Lake and River Tweed, New Water Haugh.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

A single bird, seen in August, was still present at Derwent Reservoir on 12th (IFo). The autumn migration commenced with three birds at Monk's House Pool on 22nd (JPL) and on 24th 53 were at Beal Point, Lindisfarne NNR (TRD/JD). Two were at East Chevington on 25th and Monk's House Pool held eight on 29th.

Dark-bellied Brent Goose *Branta bernicla bernicla*

The only record was a group of eight moving S along the coast at High Newton (CB/JBS).

Pale-bellied Brent Goose *Branta bernicla hrota*

A flock of at least 1000 at Lindisfarne on 18th (IK) had built up slowly from 2nd. Small flocks of between four and 21 were reported moving N between 9th and 17th at Cresswell, Snab Point, Newbiggin, Newton Point, St Mary's Island and Seaton Sluice. A single bird was at Cresswell Pond from 17th until the end of the month.

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

59 were at Budle Bay on 24th (CGK). A juvenile at Derwent Reservoir on 1st was unusual for that locality (IFo).

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

An 'immaculate' drake was at Northumberland Park (North Shields) from 18th-30th (MNC).

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

Northerly movement involved 60 at Seaton Sluice on 17th (BB) and 20 at St Mary's on 25th (MSH). About 1,000 had returned to Lindisfarne NNR by 17th (IK), 120 were at East Chevington on 11th (AJR), 75 at Grindon Lough on 18th (MRS), 40-43 at Boulmer and Budle Bay, and 19-26 at Bothal, Cresswell and Linton Ponds, Derwent and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, and Druridge Pools. Two to five were also at Big Waters, the Blyth and Tweed Estuaries, and Holywell Pond.

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Two flew N at Beadnell on 1st (DHH). A notable 98 gathered at East Chevington south pool on 30th (TB), 61 were at Linton Ponds on 26th (CDH), ten at Druridge Pools on 27th (MSH), and three to five at Big Waters, Castle Island, East Chevington north pool and Ladyburn Lake. One to two were also at Cresswell and Holywell Ponds, Holy Island, QEII Lake and Woodhorn Flashes.

Gadwall is a **target species** for 2011. Please report all records.

Teal *Anas crecca*

Northerly movement was prominent on 17th, when 400 passed Seaton Sluice between 0730-1100 (BB), and 44 at Newbiggin (STH), while 48 flew N at St Mary's on 25th (MSH), 12-15 N at Seaton Sluice and St Mary's on 15th-16th, and 18-24 S at Cocklawburn and Seaton Sluice on 16th and 18th. East Chevington held about 500 on 4th (MK) and 430 on 11th (AJR), 360 were at Budle Bay on 11th (CGK), 250 at Holy Island 'rocket field' on 17th (up from 50 on 2nd; IK), 250 at Cresswell Pond on 29th (MN), 123-184 at Arcot Pond, Derwent Reservoir and Grindon Lough, and 70-72 at Druridge Pools and Newton Pool. Counts of 20-50 also came from Backworth and Holywell Ponds, Castle Island, Hauxley Reserve, Haughton Strother GP and Monk's House Pool, plus smaller numbers at several further sites including one in Jesmond Dene.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Peak concentrations were 184 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 8th (MR), 150 at East Chevington on 4th (MR), 123 at Derwent Reservoir on 9th (PRM), 75-90 at Big Waters, Haughton Strother GP, Newcastle Leazes Park and the Tweed Estuary, 54-59 at Longhirst Flash and Tyne Green, and 20-40 at Arcot and Cresswell Ponds, Lynemouth, Newcastle Exhibition Park, Northumberland Park (North Shields) Prestwick Carr, QEII Lake, Sleekburn and West Hartford.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

Singles flew N at Seaton Sluice on 17th (BB) and St Mary's on 25th (MSH). Good numbers (for the south of the county) were at East Chevington, with peaks of eight on 2nd (STH/IFo), 12 on 4th (MK), 34 on 25th (ADMc), and six to ten between 26th-30th (TB/MSH). Elsewhere, eight were at Budle Bay on 10th (CGK), six at Derwent Reservoir on 5th (IFo), five at Cresswell Pond on 3rd (AA) and one to three there on several dates up to 20th, two at Bothal Pond and singles at Monk's House Pool and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Swallow Pond attracted a peak of 15 on 28th, and 12-13 on 2nd and 15th (JPD). Other peak counts were eight at Newton Pool on 30th (TRD), six at Cresswell Pond on 2nd (STH/IFo), five at Backworth on 30th (CGK), three at Arcot Pond, and one to two at Bell's Pond (Cresswell), Big Waters, East Chevington, Holywell Pond, St Mary's and Woodhorn Flashes.

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

The species was in short supply, with peaks of only six at Holywell Pond on 3rd (GB/DM), four at Cresswell Pond on 29th (IFo), and three at East Chevington (TB) and, much more unusually, at Nelly's Moss Lake (Craggs: JD). One to two were also at Bothal Pond, Branton GP and Druridge Pools, and one flew up the River Blyth at Kitty Brewster on 18th (GB).

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Largest gatherings were 46 at Ladyburn Lake on 29th (IFo), 44 at Broomlee Lough on 18th (MRS), 42 at East Chevington on 1st (DHH), 41 at Castle Island on 18th (DM/STH/PJA), 38 at Bothal Pond, and 22-29 at Cresswell and Linton Ponds, Druridge Pools and QEII Lake, and 13-16 at Big Waters, Haughton Strother GP and Newcastle Leazes Park. Two to seven were also at Arcot, Cocklawburn and Holywell Ponds, Derwent Reservoir and Jesmond Dene, and one was at Budle Bay.

Scaup *Aythya marila*

Cresswell Pond held four on 10th (JL), three on 17th (AA) and one to two regularly between 10th-25th (ADMc *et al.*), four were offshore at Cresswell on 24th (ADMc), two at Monk's House Pool on 11th (RA) and one at Hauxley Reserve on 23rd (TRD/JD).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

600 were at a high tide roost at Guile Point (Lindisfarne NNR) on 3rd (IK), and 80 were at Cheswick on 21st (MHu).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

A strong movement took place on 17th, with 542 N at Seaton Sluice between 0730-1100 (BB) and 45 N at St Mary's (MSH); 157 flew N at St Mary's on 25th (MSH), 40 N at Beadnell on 1st-2nd (DHH), 27 N at Holy Island on 2nd (IK), and three to ten N at Cresswell and Newbiggin on 15th and 18th. Offshore, 182 were at Cheswick on 21st (MHu), 170 at Newbiggin on 17th (STH), 135 at Cocklawburn on 18th (MHu), and 50 off East Chevington on 4th (MK). One to four were also at Boulmer and Stag Rocks.

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

A total of 11 flew N at Newbiggin on 16th-17th (GMi/STH) and one N at Snab Point on 15th (BB). Three flew S at Seaton Sluice on 17th (BB) and one S at Holy Island on 2nd (IK). One was at Holy Island on 7th and 9th (RA).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

One to three were at the breeding site on 20th and 22nd (TRD/JD), and one was at the Tweed Estuary on 15th (MHu).

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Two flew N at Boulmer on 4th (TRD/JD), and twos S at Newbiggin on 2nd (TB) and St Mary's on 25th (MSH). Ten were at Cresswell Pond on 25th (IRD) and ten at East Chevington on 26th (MSH). Six were at Holy Island on 25th (ADM) and five off Cresswell on 26th (CDH), three at Cresswell Pond, and one to two at the Blyth Estuary, Budle Bay and Stag Rocks. More unusual were two seen to fly east from Kielder Water on 7th (MD).

Correction; six reported at West Allotment Pond in the August Inland WeBS table was erroneous

A Goosander
Football Hole
by Colin Bradshaw



Goosander *Mergus merganser*

Branton GP attracted up to 42 (IBDa/KDa), 24 were at Holy Island on 4th (MJC/ADM), 24 at Short-circuiting, Upper Coquetdale on 15th (IRD), 15 at the Tweed Estuary on 15th (MHu), and three to five at Alnmouth, Budle Bay, Castle Island, Derwent Reservoir, Newcastle Exhibition Park and Rothbury. One to two were also at Catcleugh Reservoir, Cresswell Pond, Football Hole, Kitty Brewster, Stag Rocks and Swallow Pond.

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

In excess of 40 were recorded near Allenheads on 26th (AJR) and a total of 28 were noted in three areas alongside the Beldon Burn above Derwent Reservoir on 23rd (BNR). A single bird drank from a road puddle on Alnwick Moor on 18th.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

At Hagdon 190 released birds were present on 14th (JMA), 55 were in the Harthope Valley at the Carey Burn on 29th, and 15 and 14 were at Bywell Cottagebank/Short Wood and Whitfield Hall on 30th and 26th respectively (BNR). Elsewhere five were at Seaton Delaval with single birds at Derwent Reservoir and Capheaton.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Coveys of 15 were at Ellington on 3rd and 23rd (TB) with 15 at Blyth South Beach on 29th (ASJ), 14 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 8th (MR), 13 near Blyth Cemetery on 21st (GMi), 12 at St Mary's on 20th (ASJ), 12 at Glorum, near Morpeth, on 29th (TB) and 11 at Scaffold Hill Farm, near Rising Sun CP on 28th (JPD). Two to ten were recorded at 13 localities namely Berwick, Cresswell Village, Druridge Lane, Ellington, Embleton, Horton Grange, Linden Hall, Longhirst Flash, St Mary's Island, Weetslade Colliery CP, West Hartford, West Ord and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

At Whitfield Hall/Parmently 60 released birds were recorded on 26th (BNR) with 30 near Ashington on 26th (TB). Two to eight were noted at Holywell Dene, Dinnington (three unfledged juveniles) and Stanington. A single bird was seen throughout the month in a Walbottle garden.

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

Over 30 records were received this month with the majority reporting birds flying along the coast at the favoured sea-watching sites. At Seaton Sluice 20 flew S in three hours on 17th (BB) with nine passing N or S at Newbiggin Church Point on 2nd (TB). Throughout the month, during sea-watching sessions, one to nine passed other sites namely Boulmer, Cresswell Snab Point, Cullercoats Bay, Hauxley, High Newton, Holy Island Emmanuel Head, Newton Point and St Mary's Island. On the sea, 11 were at Warkworth on 24th (RB/MB), seven at Cresswell on 26th (CDH), five at Druridge on 15th (TRD/JD), four on a NEWT pelagic trip on 17th and three at Cheswick on 21st (MHu). One or two were also seen on the sea at Beadnell, Boulmer, Druridge Bay, East Chevington and Holy Island.

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*

An 'unprecedented movement' was noted when 12 in summer plumage flew S at Holy Island Emmanuel Head in 75 minutes on 18th (IK) and on the same day two were on the sea at the island (IBDa/KDa). Single birds were at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 1st and 25th, the latter in summer plumage.

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

At Beadnell 45 flew N in two hours on 1st (DHH). One to six birds were reported on five days through the month comprising six at Newbiggin Church Point on 2nd, six flying N at Newbiggin on 15th, three at Cresswell, Snab Point on 15th, three seen from a NEWT pelagic trip on 17th and singles on two other dates.

Sooty Shearwater *Puffinus griseus*

The peak count occurred on 15th when 38 moved N in four hours at Newbiggin (JR) and on the following day 16 flew N at the same site whilst ten were seen off Holy Island Emmanuel Head and four passed Hauxley. A smaller movement was observed on 1st when 13 flew N at Newbiggin with seven passing in two hours at Beadnell and a single at Newton Point. Five were seen three miles east of Dunstanburgh on a NEWT pelagic trip on 10th.

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

The peak count was 72 flying N in four hours at Newbiggin Church Point on 15th (JR) and on the same day 25 and 20 were recorded from Cresswell, Snab Point (BB) and St Mary's Island (MSH/AC). One to two were also seen during the period 16th-18th from Holy Island, Newbiggin and Seaton Sluice. Six passed N in two hours at Beadnell on 1st (DHH).

***Balearic Shearwater** *Puffinus mauretanicus*

One flew N at Newbiggin at 8.44am on 1st (GB).

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

On 1st ca.1200 flew N and 48 flew S in two one-hour watches at Beadnell (DHH). On 2nd 600/h moved N at Holy Island Emmanuel Head (IK) when ca. 500 passed Beadnell in one hour (DHH). On 15th 121 flew N in one hour at St Mary's (MSH/AC), and on 17th 260/h flew N at Seaton Sluice over a three hour period (BB). On 18th 1100/h flew S at Emmanuel Head (IK). A feeding flock of ca. 400 fed in Beadnell Bay on 10th (CB/JGS) and on 11th flocks of 150 and 120 gathered in Budle Bay and Druridge Bay. Concentrations of ten to 64 were at Bamburgh, Boulmer, Cheswick, Cresswell Snab Point, Newton Point and Warkworth. One to five were also noted at Druridge, Hauxley and the River Tweed Estuary. An unusual record was of a single immature bird which flew N over Prestwick Carr on 29th (PCF/AJN).

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

The largest concentrations were 189 at Blyth Harbour on 17th (STH), 54 at Berwick, Meadow Haven on 25th (MHu), 34 at Castle Island (WeBS count, DM/STH/PJA) 28 at Derwent Reservoir on 26th (IFo), 27 at Castle Island on 1st (DM/GB), 24 in the River Tweed Estuary on 15th (MHu), 22 at Berwick, North Shore on 14th (MHu), 20 at N Shields jetty on 12th (JMA), 13 at East Chevington on 2nd (STH/IFo) and 12 at Cresswell Pond on 18th (DM *et al.*). One to seven were recorded at Alnmouth, Big Waters, Bothal Pond, Cresswell Pond, Hexham Tyne Green, Killingworth Lake, Newbiggin (Beldon Burn), Newburn, River Tyne (Elswick and Redheugh) and Sleekburn. A colour-ringed bird seen at Cresswell on the 9th and on subsequent days had been ringed as a nestling at Inverbervie, north east Scotland, in June 2011.



A gleaming Cormorant at St. Mary's
by Colin Bradshaw

***Continental Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis*

An adult and a juvenile were at Hauxley NWT on 5th (MSH) and a juvenile was on Druridge Pools on 27th (MSH).

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

The largest counts were 86 at Berwick, Meadow Haven on 25th (MHu), 55 at Stag Rocks, Bamburgh on 26th (CGK), 48 at Berwick North Shore on 14th and 12 at Blyth Harbour on 17th (STH). Three to four were noted elsewhere at Cresswell Pond and Beach, Newbiggin Church Point and Newton Point.

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

At least one bird was seen regularly throughout the month at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN) and a single bird was recorded at Cresswell Pond from 10th-12th (MSH/IRD/ADM), this being a presumed adult bird as it was in active moult on the secondaries. At East Chevington NWT a single bird was seen on 16th (MSK/NEWT).

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

This species was again well reported this month on Fenham Flats with a maximum of six at Fenham-le-Moor on 4th (ASJ) and up to five were reported regularly throughout the month in Budle Bay (CGK *et al.*). The Tweed Estuary held up to four throughout the month (MHu) and three were regular at Holy Island (IK/IBDa/KDa/DGB). Three were in the River Blyth Estuary on 26th (AC) and one to two birds were at eight other localities, namely Backworth (two flew SW), Branton GP, Caistron, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Long Nanny saltmarsh, Lyne Burn and Warkworth Gut.



Little Egrets
Budle Bay
by Chris Knox

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

The River Tweed Estuary held ten during a WeBS count on the 15th (MHu) and eight were at the River Blyth Estuary on 18th (LJM). Seven flew S at Warkworth on 15th (MSK/NEWT) and six were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 8th (MR); one to four were also reported from Arcot Pond, Berwick North Shore, Castle Island, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Exhibition Park, Holywell Pond and Dene, Longhirst Flash, Lynemouth, Weetslade Colliery and West Hartford.

Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

A single bird flew S in the early morning at St Mary's Island on 26th (D Lovatt).

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Peak counts were 12 at Linton Pond on 26th (CDH) where 11 were also present on 3rd (DM/GB), ten (six adults, four juveniles) at Gosforth Park NR throughout the month (NHSN), ten (inc. immatures) at Bothal pond on 8th (TD) and ten at Broomlee Lough on 18th (WeBS count, MRS). One to nine were at many other waters, namely Airy Holm Reservoir, Amble Braid, Backworth Pond, Big Waters, Blyth Estuary, Bothal Pond, Branton GP, Castle Island, Cocklawburn Pond, Craggside, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Hauxley, Ladyburn Lake, Rising Sun CP, River Coquet at Rothbury and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Very well reported this month with over 45 records. A single bird flew N at sea two miles E of Seaton Sluice on 3rd (MSK/NEWT) with one N at Newbiggin on 15th and one on the sea at Cresswell on 26th. The peak concentration was 15 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 29th (MR) with six at East Chevington, North Pool on 2nd (STH/IFo) and four at Branton GP throughout the month (IBDa/KDa). An adult with up to three juveniles was at Bothal Pond from 3rd–27th (TB *et al.*) and one to two were seen at ten other sites namely, Arcot Pond, Bamburgh, Stag Rocks, Big Waters, Cresswell Pond, Cresswell, Snab Point, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Holy Island Harbour, Killingworth Lake and QEII CP Lake,

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

One flew N at Seaton Sluice on 17th (BB). Other single birds were seen offshore at Newbiggin Church Point on 2nd with possibly the same bird in the Common Scoter flock on the sea off East Chevington on 4th (MK); both these birds were adults in partial summer plumage.

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

One was just offshore at Hauxley on 23rd (TRD/JD/JSB/EC).

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

One was at Big Waters on 7th–8th (GB).

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Two birds were seen at Bywell Cottagebank on 29th (BNR); single birds were at Ovington on 1st (SAS), West Mickley on 7th and 29th (SWA), Low Waskerley on 8th (IFo) and at North Acomb on 14th (SAS).

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

On 6th and 19th two birds were at West Chevington (JSB/EC), and on 9th two were at Blagdon (per PCF). Single birds were noted throughout the month in the Druridge Bay area, at Big Waters, Gosforth Park, Holy Island, and Prestwick Carr and at St Mary's Island.

Marsh Harrier

Druridge Bay

Peter Fletcher 3rd September

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

Single birds were noted over the sea at Bamburgh on 15th (per NNBC), Holy Island on 24th (NNBC) and at an inland site on 27th (MSH).

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

Single birds were seen at three sites on 14th (ADMc), 23rd (IRD) and on 30th (BNR).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Four birds were at Bywell Cottagebank area on 30th (BNR); three were at Cramlington on 11th (LJM). Two birds were at Holywell Dene (RJP) and Scotland Gate (SLB/MSK) throughout the month, two birds were also at Haughton Castle, Holy Island, and Kielder Dam and in a Walbottle garden. 30 records of single birds were received for September.

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

10 birds were in the Bywell Cottagebank/Short Wood area on 29th (BNR), eight birds were at Woolsington on 10th (per PCF), while seven birds were at Whitfield Hall on 26th (BNR). Six birds were at Big Waters (GB) and Kielder Dam (BB) on 25th. 45 records of one to five birds were received.



Osprey *Pandion haliaetuss*

Apart from one bird at the breeding site at Kielder on several dates (MD), up to two birds were at Derwent Reservoir (IFo *et al.*). Two were also at Fenham-le-Moor on 4th (ASJ); single birds were noted at Holy Island, near Rothbury & at Sweethope Lough during the month.

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Prestwick Carr had a maximum of eight birds during the month (BB *et al.*); four birds were at Allenheads on 14th (BNR) and at Swallow Pond on 28th (JPD). Three birds were seen at Blanchland, Derwent Reservoir, Dukeshagg Wood, Holy Island, Prestwick Carr and at Spindleston. One to two birds were recorded from 18 further sites.

Male Kestrel
Newburn Business Park
by Peter Fletcher
18th September

**Merlin** *Falco columbarius*

A single bird was seen at Budle Bay on a handful of dates (CGK). Other single birds were seen on the coast at Cresswell Pond, Holy Island and Newton Links on several dates and at St Mary's Island on 12th (MSH *et al.*), and at six inland sites during the month.

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

On the 7th single birds were reported from near Blanchland and at Beldon Burn on 7th (BNR).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Up to four birds were again in Budle Bay (CGK/MSH) during the month. Two birds were at Derwent Reservoir on 10th (PRM/EAW), Boulmer on 18th (TRD/JD) and at an inland site on 4th (ALT). Single birds were noted at a further 13 sites.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Two birds were heard or seen throughout the month at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN) and a single was heard throughout the month at Backworth (CGK). Other records came from Big Waters, Cresswell Pond, Holy Island and Swallow Pond.

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

15 birds on 31st were at Killingworth Lake on 17th and 14 were at Arcot Pond on 4th (LJM), 13 were at Linton Pond on 26th (CDH). Ten were at Druridge Pools on 3rd (DM) and eight were at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 1st (DM). One to six birds were at five further sites during the month.

Coot *Fulica atra*

The highest count this month came from Killingworth Lake on 17th with 129 birds (LJM), 56 were at East Chevington on 2nd (STH/IFo), 30 were at Bothal Pond on 3rd (DM) and Woodhorn Flash on 27th (SRB). Big waters had a maximum of 26 birds on 25th (GB). One to 19 birds were at seven further sites.

Crane *Grus grus*

An adult was seen in the Budle Bay area on the 11th, 19th and the 26th (ASH/CGK *et al.*).

Sandhill Crane *Grus canadensis*

An addition to the County list was first seen heading S over Newbiggin on 29th, then later in a ploughed field in the Holywell area (AC/CGK/ASK).

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

The high tide roost at Guile Point (Lindisfarne NNR) contained 300 on 3rd (IK), 154 were in Budle Bay on 26th (CGK), 148 at Snab Point on 22nd and the peak at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) was 140 on 25th (STH). There were 69 at St Mary's on 27th and ten to 38 at Berwick, Hauxley and Mount Pleasant (Upper Blyth Estuary). Inland six were at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd, three at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 4th and a single at Derwent Reservoir on 16th.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

Two juveniles were at Derwent Reservoir on 1st to 4th and a single juvenile was present on 7th to 13th (IFo).

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

The Blyth area held quite good numbers: 89 in the Harbour on 17th and 84 on the beach on 24th (STH) and a peak count of 83 in the estuary at Kitty Brewster on 27th (BB). Berwick, Cresswell, Hartley Bay and Newton had 46-60 at times and five to 15 were at Boulmer, Druridge Bay and Hauxley. Inland up to four were at Derwent Reservoir on 4th to 13th with singles at Castron on 1st, Haughton Strother GP on 4th and 12th, Whittle Dene on 16th and Prestwick Carr on 18th.

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

At Newton Point 734 flew S in several flocks on 9th (JEd). The regular St Mary's flock peaked at 1700 on 6th and 1440 on 21st (ASJ/AC) and 1250 were at Holy Island on 4th (ASJ). The peaks at Newbiggin, Beacon Point were 335 on 10th and 352 on 25th, 80-100 were at Cocklawburn, Cullercoats Bay and East Chevington and small numbers at Boulmer, Ellington and Kitty Brewster. The only ones reported inland were 100+ on the Tyne at Elswick Wharf on 29th and three at Derwent Reservoir on 4th.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Very few records were received: two at Hauxley on 24th and singles at Cresswell on 12th and 15th, Fenham Flats on 24th and Warkworth on 24th.

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

The peak at Derwent Reservoir reached 850 on 15th (IFo), Bothal Pond had 750 on 8th (TD) and 660 were in the Tweed Estuary on 15th (MHu). Fields near Blyth cemetery, Cocklawburn, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Elswick Wharf, Monk's House Pool, St Mary's and Whittle Dene Reservoirs had 200-440 at times with 160 or less at a further ten places.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

Unusually high numbers occurred along parts of the open coast in the second half of the month. At Cocklawburn, Saltpan Rocks 510 roosted at high tide on 21st (MHu). In Druridge Bay 450+ were at Hadston Scars on 17th (MSH/CGK), a peak of 425 at East Chevington north pool on 20th (ADMc) and up to 250 were at Hauxley shore (TD). Also 250 were at Stag Rocks on 11th (TRD/JD). Newbiggin Beacons had 90 on 19th, 30 were at Kitty Brewster on 14th, 15 at Tynemouth on 10th, eight at Boulmer on 4th and three or four at Cresswell Pond and St Mary's.

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

The peak at Newbiggin was 62 on 9th (EC) and that at St Mary's was 57 on 15th (MSH/AC). Up to 18 were in Druridge Bay and eight at Berwick.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

Three were at Fenham Flats on 18th (RA) with singles there on 13th and 19th. One was at Low Newton on 1st, two on 4th (IBDa/KDa *et al.*), one on 8th/9th and two on 10th (CB/JGS *et al.*), the latter having flown from High Newton, Football Hole. Two were at St Mary's on 12th (CB). Singles were found at Holy Island on 1st and 8th, at Cresswell Pond on 10th to 15th, Bothal Pond on 20th and at East Chevington on 26th.

***Pectoral Sandpiper** *Calidris melanotos*

A juvenile was present at Derwent Reservoir, west of Millshield picnic site, on 4th to 7th (IFo *et al.*).

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

At Fenham Flats 13 were seen on 13th, 11 on 18th and eight on 19th (RA). The Blyth Estuary attracted three on 1st, five on 5th/6th, nine on 11th and three on 14th/15th (AC *et al.*), Holy Island had eight on 1st and Boulmer eight on 4th and 11th (NFO). Singles also appeared at Berwick, Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Hauxley and Low Newton.

At Fenham Flats 13 were seen on 13th, 11 on 18th and eight on 19th (RA). The Blyth Estuary attracted three on 1st, five on 5th/6th, nine on 11th and three on 14th/15th (AC *et al.*), Holy Island had eight on 1st and Boulmer eight on 4th and 11th (NFO). Singles also appeared at Berwick, Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Hauxley and Low Newton.

Curlew Sandpiper
Cresswell
Colin Bradshaw



Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

Scarce: three were at Blyth Harbour on 17th, two at Tynemouth on 1st and one at Stag Rocks on 11th.



Two views of Dunlin
left at St. Mary's by Colin Bradshaw and right,
by Peter Fletcher at Druridge Pools on 10th September

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

The highest counts were 120 at Boulmer on 4th (TRD/JD) and 120 in Budle Bay on 26th (CGK), the latter observer commenting that it was a very poor autumn for the species there. Apart from 81 at Hadston Scars on 17th (MSH/CGK) and a peak of 60 in the Blyth Estuary on 27th (BB) other coastal records involved 30 or fewer at Berwick, Boulmer, Castle Island, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Hauxley, Lynemouth Flash, Newton and St Mary's. Inland singles appeared at Derwent Reservoir on 9th, Haughton Strother GP on 12th and Holywell Pond on 17th/19th.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

East Chevington north pool proved to be the most attractive site with 20 on 4th, rising to 35 on 28th and a peak of 41 on 29th (IFo/ADMc *et al.*). Birds were present at Cresswell Pond almost throughout, for example ten on 7th, 18 on 11th/12th and 21 on 13th (MSH/ADMc *et al.*) and Lynemouth Flash drew some up to 18th, including 12 on 3rd (JR) and eight on 6th; also at Low Newton on several days with a maximum of eight on 1st and eight were on a flash near Dunstanburgh Castle on 5th. Six were at Prestwick Carr on 14th and one to three appeared at Beadnell Flash, the Blyth Estuary, Budle Bay, Hauxley NR, Holy Island, Holywell Pond, West Hartford and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Seven flew S at Newbiggin Church Point on 2nd (TB). Other counts were rather modest with the largest 18 flushed from wet pasture at Fenwick Lodge on 14th (AJR), 13 at Cresswell Pond on 2nd and 12 at Holy Island on 4th. Four to eight appeared at Arcot Pond, Castle Island, Druridge Pools, Hauxley NR, Prestwick Carr and Whittle Dene Reservoirs and small numbers at Big Waters, Bothal Pond, Holywell Pond and West Hartford.

Snipe is a **target species** for 2011. Please report all records.

Three Snipe at Druridge Pools
Peter Fletcher
17th September



Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

The top count was 11 inland at Colt Crag Reservoir on 14th (TRD/JD). The peak at Cresswell Pond was five on 10th/11th, five were in Budle Bay on 10th and the Blyth Estuary had three on 6th and East Chevington three on 25th. Two flew S at Snab Point on 3rd, two were at Beadnell Flash on 30th and one at St Mary's on 8th.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Around 200 were viewed from the Holy Island causeway on 24th (TRD/JD) and 100+ were in nearby Budle Bay on 23rd (MSH), the most at that location during the month. The peak in the Blyth Estuary was 15 on 14th and 27th (BB). At Newbiggin six flew S and five N on 2nd (TB) and ten were at Hauxley on 7th. Five or fewer appeared at Beadnell Point, Boulmer, Cocklawburn, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Hartley Bay, Newton, St Mary's and, most notably, two at Holywell Pond on 1st (JPD).



Bar-tailed Godwit at St. Mary's by Colin Bradshaw

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Most S passage took place in the first half, notably 17 at Newbiggin on 2nd (TB) and six there on 3rd, two at Holy Island on 4th and 11th with singles at St Mary's on 7th and Newbiggin on 11th. On 16th two flew NW at Warkworth Dunes and one did so at Druridge Bay CP. Singles appeared between 1st and 19th at Beal, Boulmer, East Chevington, Hauxley, Newton and St Mary's. Last of the month were one in Budle Bay on 24th and two S at Ellington on 26th.

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

The high tide roost at Long Nanny held 320-330 on 4th and 10th (TD/CB), 127 were in the Blyth Estuary on 9th (ASH) before a peak of 145 on 14th (BB) and 128 were at St Mary's on 18th (ASJ). Beehive Flash, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Holywell Dene, Newbiggin and the Tweed Estuary had 37-84 and 45 flew N at Seaton Sluice in 3.5 hours on 17th (BB). The furthest inland were two at both Allenheads and Allendale on 14th and two at Derwent Reservoir on 26th.

A Curlew
Druridge Pools
28th September
Peter Fletcher



Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Early in the month two were at each of Castle Island on 3rd, Hauxley NR on 3rd and Budle Bay on 10th (DM/GB/PCF/CGK) and singles at Sleek Burn on 3rd, Hauxley on 5th and Alnmouth on 8th. A later one was at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 20th (MR).

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Two were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 20th (MR), also singles there on 8th and 29th. Other singles were found at Haughton Strother GP on 4th, Cresswell Pond on 14th, R Breamish on 15th and Bothal Pond on 25th.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

Seven juveniles were at Budle Bay on 10th (CGK). One was at Fenham Flats on 16th/18th with two on 19th (RA) and one was at Holy Island on 9th. Other singles appeared at Holywell Pond on 16th/17th and 25th and at St Mary's on 17th.

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Again Budle Bay had 17 on 4th (ASJ) with ten noted there on 10th, eight on 13th and five regularly 23rd-28th (CGK/RA). Fenham Flats attracted four on 16th and a peak of eight on 18th (RA) and six were at Alnmouth on 8th (CB). Three were at Monk's House Pool on 13th and one or two visited nine other locations.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

The only record is of one at Monk's House Pool on 9th (JPL).



Redshank at Hauxley NR
Tim Dean
23rd September

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

The highest totals were 300 at high tide roost on Holy Island on 17th (IK), 218 at Kitty Brewster on 28th (BB), 172 in Budle Bay on 26th (CGK) and 128 in the Tweed Estuary on 15th (MHu). There were several counts of 44-80: at Berwick, Elswick Wharf, Hauxley, Newbiggin, Tynemouth and Whitley Bay.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

At Tynemouth 65 roosted on the pier on 1st (MK), 52 were at Berwick on 14th (MHu) with 26-40 noted at Hauxley, St Mary's, the Tweed Estuary and Whitley Bay. Five or less were seen at Kitty Brewster, Newbiggin, Newton Point and Stag Rocks.

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

Most passed N: four at St Mary's on 26th (ASJ), three at Snab Point on 15th (BB) and singles at Beadnell on 1st, St Mary's on 15th and Newbiggin on 16th. Singles moved S at Holy Island on 18th and Newbiggin on 19th and one was at sea two miles off Beadnell on 10th.

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

A total of 31 flew N at Newbiggin in four hours on 15th (JR) and other higher counts at that location include 15 on 16th (ASH), 11 on 2nd (TB) and eight on 1st; 12 were off Newton Point on 9th (JEd). Eight flew N off Snab Point on 15th and eight did likewise at Hauxley on 16th, when seven were seen off Holy Island; six moved N and one S at Beadnell on 1st. Five regularly attended the tern roost at Budle Bay during the month and five chased terns at High Newton on 10th. One or two were also noted at four other locations.

Long-tailed Skua *Stercorarius longicaudus*

Two (one adult, one juvenile) flew N at Newbiggin on 15th (JR) and one was at sea two miles off Beadnell on 10th (MSK/NEWT).

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

Six flew N in two hours at Beadnell on 1st (DHH), five+ on a Seahouses-Dunstanburgh pelagic on 10th and five on a Tynemouth-Cresswell pelagic on 17th (MSK/NEWT). On 15th three flew N at Newbiggin and two did so at St Mary's and one or two were noted on other days at Beadnell, Hauxley, Holy Island and Newbiggin.

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

Surprisingly few records were received with a peak of 150 offshore at Snab Point, Cresswell on 15th (TRD/JD) where they were feeding in groups. Otherwise the only other coastal records were 30 off Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 24th (TRD/JD) and 29 at Blyth Harbour on 17th (STH). An unusual inland record involved an adult at Kielder Water on 6th (MD) as a result of westerly gales.

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

The peak count for the month was at Budle Bay where 2,200 gathered on 26th (CGK). A high concentration was found at Holywell Pond on 1st with at least 800 present (JPD) with 280 there on 19th (BB). Other large groups involved 360 at New Water Haugh on the River Tweed on 22nd (MHu), 300 at West Hartford on 11th (DM) and 208 at Linton Ponds on 26th (CDH). Smaller groups were noted at QE II CP with 123 on 26th (CDH) and 116 at Elswick Wharf on 2nd (DM). Otherwise up to 95 at a number of localities. A colour-ringed bird (white T73) was found at Holywell Pond on 19th (BB).

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

A noticeable passage was noted on 9th with several groups S during the day including a peak of 34 juveniles in two groups at Cresswell Ices with a different group of 30 including 19 juveniles in the early morning at Snab Pt (ADMc). Few seen on other days with up to 5 the next day at Cresswell (JL) and four S at Seaton Sluice on 17th (BB). Two adults and a juvenile were at Newbiggin on 1st (ASH) and two offshore there on 15th (JR). Otherwise single juveniles reported at Boulmer, East Chevington, Newton and St Mary's plus an adult at St Mary's on 15th. An unusual inland sighting involved a juvenile at West Hartford on 1st (GB). Passage slowed down to the extent that the East Chevington bird on 25th was the only sighting in the latter half of the month.

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

The main focus as always was at Newbiggin where a peak of 24 was counted on 17th (STH) with only up to six on other dates there. Up to three were found on Holy Island on 1st and 8th (RA) with two at Holywell Pond on 9th (CS) and two adults at St Mary's on 8th (MK). An adult was present on Holy Island for much of the month with another adult at Swallow Pond on 4th (JPD) and one at Football Hole (Newton) on 10th (CB/JGS). A second-winter was noted at Holywell Pond on 2nd (BMo) with further singles there on 17th & 19th (BB). Finally a first-winter was at Linton Ponds on 26th (CDH) and a single at Fenham Flats on 16th (RA).

Common Gull *Larus canus*

A large evening roost at Budle Bay comprised 5,450 individuals on 23rd (CGK). Inland another large group involved at least 800 following a plough at Stocksfield on 10th (SWA). Further groups included 350 at Mootlaw Quarry on 25th (ALT), 300 at Big Waters on 4th (GB), 290 at West Ord on 15th (TBr) and 180 at New Water Haugh, Berwick on 22nd (MHu). The only other reports involved singles at Castle Island and Jesmond Dene.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

The peak counts were at Budle Point on 23rd when 84 adults were seen at the evening roost and at Budle Bay on 16th with 76 noted (MSH). Smaller groups involved 45 at Elswick Wharf on 2nd (DM), 26 adults at the Long Nanny on 10th (CB) and up to 16 at West Hartford on 11th (DM). Elsewhere up to eight were noted at a number of localities both coastal and inland.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argentatus*

The largest flocks reported were up to 1,100 between Low Newton and Embleton on 8th (JEd) and up to 850 at New Water Haugh near Berwick on 22nd (MHu). 150 were at North Shields Fish Quay on 12th (JMA). Elsewhere up to 64 were noted at a number of localities.

'Northern' Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argentatus*

Three individuals of this Northern race were noted in the gull assemblage at Budle Bay on 11th (TRD/JD).

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

Very few records this month of this under-recorded species. A sea watch showed a passage of 16 S at Emmanuel Head, Holy Island on 11th (MJC). The peak count was 64 at Newbiggin on 1st (GB). The only other sightings reported were 13 at Castle Island and two at West Hartford, both sightings on 18th (DM).

Black Tern *Chilidonias niger*

Almost a vintage autumn with an unusual gathering involving at least eight juveniles at Budle Point on 28th with five juveniles there the previous day (CGK). Nearby at Stag Rocks a juvenile was seen patrolling the tide edge from 9th to 16th. Up to four were also noted on Holy Island on 1st and 8th (RA). Further reports of single juveniles between the 4th & 16th were made at Boulmer, East Chevington, Football Hole (Newton), Newbiggin and Snab Point.



Black Tern at Football Hole by Colin Bradshaw

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

There were still many large groups post-breeding with a peak of 70 at St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) on 11th (MJC/ADM). Other large groups included 46 at Cocklawburn on 18th (MHu), 40 at Newton Point on 9th (JEd), 38 at Dodd's Well (Berwick) on 14th and 24 at St Mary's Island on 1st (BB). Even on the last day of the month there were still 17 at St Mary's (ASJ). Elsewhere up to six were noted at a number of coastal localities. Of most interest was a group of seven inland on 6th at Kielder Water in a westerly gale. At one point five of them were fishing with an Osprey!

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

The peak count was made at Dodd's Well, Berwick on 14th at a high tide roost (MHu). The only other large count was of 20 slowly moving S in a S/E gale on 16th (IK). Elsewhere up to ten were noted at a number of coastal localities. Inland the only report was of two at Kielder Water on 14th (MD).

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*

A group of five flying past St Mary's lighthouse on 26th was the peak count (DL). Otherwise up to three adults were noted at Boulmer on 4th and 11th (NFO) with also two at Football Hole (Newton) on 10th (CB/JGS) and two on Holy Island on 1st (RA). Singles were also noted at Holy Island on 8th (RA) and Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 18th (AA).

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

A WeBS high tide roost at Dodd's Well (Berwick) on 14th provided the only large group with 140 noted (MHu). Ten were at Cocklawburn on 18th with five there on 22nd (MHu). Two juveniles were at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 30th (MSH). An interesting inland record comprised a juvenile loafing at Derwent Reservoir before heading off E on 16th (IFo).

Guillemot *Uria aalge*

30 were offshore at Warkworth on 24th (RB/MB) with 24 at Cocklawburn on 22nd, 12 at Berwick on 14th (MHu) and ten at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 24th (TRD/JD). Otherwise up to three were at a number of coastal sites. Interestingly one was well up-river at Kitty Brewster on the Blyth Estuary near the road bridge on 14th (BB).

Razorbill *Alca Torda*

The only report involved a single at Newton Point on 30th (TRD/JD).

Rock Dove / Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

Only one report of 14 at Southfield Green, Cramlington on 18th (DM).

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

The peak counts were eight at Backworth on 30th (CGK), six at Alnmouth on 8th (CB), five at Bellasis Bridge on 24th (PCF), with three at Beldonburn on 23rd (BNR) and Monk's House Pool on 30th (MSH). Two were at Druridge Pools, West Hartford and Sinderhope with singles in a Walbottle Garden all month, five locations in Jesmond Dene and Exhibition Park (Newcastle). Breeding continued at Selwood near Greenhaugh with four nests containing six young (2,1,1,2) (MD).

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

Two large counts of 102 at East Cramlington NR on 17th (DM) and 85 in one field at Holywell Dene on 20th (RJP) with 11 at Jesmond Dene on 4th (MJCo), four (two juv.) in a Stannington garden on 16th (RWM/MIM) and three (one juv) in a Walbottle garden on 11th (KR/LR).

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

A gathering of 25 occurred on lines near a grain silo at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 22nd and 25th (TBr). Fourteen were at Dinnington on 19th, 11 at Callerton on 1st and 7 at Newburn on 16th (PCF). A pair had two freshly fledged juveniles at Dinnington on 6th and display was noted at Netherton Park (Stannington) on the same date with a single at Matthew Bank (Jesmond Dene) on 25th.

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

A juvenile flew in front of the Ponteland Hide at Hauxley NWT on 3rd (PCF) and probably the same bird was being mobbed by Crows at Hemscott Hill Links (Cresswell) on 4th (MK).

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Three birds were at the Snook (Holy Island) between 4th and 19th (MJC/ADM) with two noted hunting there regularly throughout the month (IK) and at Spindleston (CGK/GPK/DMi). Singles were at Holywell Dene on 2nd, South Charlton on 4th, Seaton Delaval Hall on 6th, Lamb Shield (Hexham) on 9th, Lilburn Newtown on 16th and Haltwhistle Common on 23rd.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Two were at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) throughout the month (TBr) with two at Derwent Reservoir on 7th and singles there on 2nd and 5th (IFo). Single birds were also found at Big Waters on 4th, Waren Mill Caravan Park (Bamburgh) on 11th, Park End on 15th, Pauperhaugh on 26th and Dinnington on 22nd and 29th. A road casualty was at Lion Bridge (Corbridge) on 15th.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Calling led to the species being well reported the peak being three at Longhirst on 26th (MSH) with two at Ordley on 9th and 27th, Dipton Main Wood on 10th (BNR), Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 21st (TWi), Walbottle Hall on 24th (KR/LR), Ellington on 24th (TB), Crow Hall Farm (Holywell) on 30th (MSH) and Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 30th (MNC). Singles were at Capheaton, Chollerford, Valley Park (Cramlington), East Ord, Ellington (on several dates), Gosforth Park, Tyne Green and Loughbrow (Hexham), Little Harle, Redheugh Farm and Wark (N.Tyne).

Owl sp. *Asio sp*

A single, either Short-eared owl or Long-eared, appeared to fly in from the sea at 11.45am at St Mary's on 28th (GB).

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

Sightings of perched birds were frequent at Prestwick Carr from 15th the peak being three on 17th (BB/PCF). Two roosted separately at Holy Island on 18th (IK) with singles there on four further dates (MJC/ADM/RA/IBa/KDa). The only other report was one flushed at Arcot Pond on 19th (LJM).

Long-eared Owl
Prestwick Carr
14th September
Ken Charlton



Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

A gathering of birds at Prestwick Carr rose from three on 8th to peak at nine on 26th (Gmi/PCF) with four to eight birds reported on most dates in between. Three were at The Snook (Holy Island) on 29th (MJC) with singles there on 17th (IBDa/KDa) at East Chevington on 4th and 25th (MK/IRD), St Mary's Island on 17th (AAM) and Cresswell Pond on 30th (TB).



The popular Short-eareds at Prestwick Carr were well photographed in September. Left, in flight by Peter Fletcher and, right, a perched alert bird by Colin Bradshaw

Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*

A single was hawking down the main glade of Dipton Main Wood on 3rd (BNR).

Swift *Apus apus*

Many reports with birds reported from Ellington/Chugdon Wood on eight dates from 7th till the month end with two there on 17th and 23rd (TB). Two were at Lynemouth on 22nd (ASJ) and Snab Point Cresswell on 3rd (ADMc) with singles at High Church Estate (Morpeth) on 2nd and 7th, Warton on 3rd, Cresswell on 5th and 7th, Blyth on 10th, Holywell Dene on 11th, St Mary's on 11th, Rothbury on 13th, Hauxley NR on 16th, Lynemouth Flash on 17th and the last at Bamburgh on 25th (CGK).

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Two were reported from Castle Island on 4th (AA), Haughton Strother GP on 4th and 8th (MR), Big Waters on 25th (JH per GB) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 29th. Birds were present at Branton GP, Budle Bay and Gosforth Park NR throughout the month with singles at Castron on 1st and 7th, Holywell Dene on 1st, Wark on 3rd, Castle Island on 3rd, Thrum Mill (Rothbury) on 5th and 16th, near Mitford on 7th and Kitty Brewster Blyth on 26th.

Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

One was at Bamburgh on 11th (RA).

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

A bird resident at Gosforth Park all year was seen and heard frequently during the month (NHSH) as was one at Rothbury (JD). On 3rd a bird yaffled south west of Arcot Pond and another called at Bywell South on 29th (BNR).

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Three were at Dukeshagg Wood (Prudhoe) on 9th (BNR) with two at Arcot Pond on 18th (DM), West Hartford on 25th (LJM) and Ellington on the same date. Single birds were reported from Beldon Burn, Blanchland, Bywell Cottagebank, Dam Dykes (Cramlington), Derwent Reservoir, Holy Island, Jesmond Dene, Exhibition Park Newcastle, Redheugh Farm (Rothbury) and Whitfield Hall.

Magpie *Pica pica*

Swallow Pond had high counts of 41 on 7th and 47 on 22nd (JPD) whilst 12 gathered at Big Waters on 25th (GB) and three were in Jesmond Dene on 18th (MJCo).

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Well reported as birds prepared for winter with three to five regularly recorded at Spindlestone where they are regarded as scarce (CGK/GPK/*et al.*). Three were at Slaley Hall on 19th (RMH) and at Bywell Cottagebank / Short Wood GP on 30th (BNR) with two visiting a Scotland Gate garden during the month and at Harwood Burn on 4th, Bolam Lake CP on 15th, Kielder Dam on 25th, Morpeth on 25th, Arcot Pond on 26th, Bywell S / Stocksfield Guessburn on 29th and Newburn on 30th. Single birds were at Dam Dykes and West Hartford (Cramlington), Letah Wood and Tyne Green (Hexham), Heddon on the Wall, Whitfield and Wylam.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

The peak counts were 210 at Swallow Pond on 7th and 130 at Holywell Grange Farm on 1st (JPD). 54 were at Bywell Cottagebank / Short Wood GP on 30th (BNR), 50 at Dinnington on 22nd (PCF), 11 at Paddy Freeman's fields (Jesmond Dene) on 25th (MJCo), seven in a Walbottle garden on 25th (KR/LR) and one at Fisherman's Lodge (Jesmond Dene) on the same date.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

Sixty were at Swallow Pond on 4th (JPD) with 53 the peak count at Prestwick Carr on 29th (PCF) and 23 at Scaffold Hill Farm on 1st (JPD).

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

52 roosted at Haughton Strother GP on 14th (MR), 50 gathered at Beal Saltmarsh (Lindisfarne) on 4th (IK), 13 at Tyne Green (Hexham) on 26th (BNR) and seven at Jesmond Dene on 4th (MJCo).

Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix*

An adult was at Budle Bay on 24th (CGK).

Raven *Corvus corax*

Three were at Shield on the Wall on 18th (MRS), two in the Slaggyford to Eals area on 24th (AJR) and one at Hepple Heugh on 1st (ADMc).

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Well reported with the peak counts being 40 at Bakethin Reservoir on 18th (MD) and 20 at Redheugh Farm on 10th (JR). Five to seven were at Holy Island on 8th and 19th (ADM), five at Scotch Gill Woods Morpeth on 22nd (TB) and at Prestwick Carr on 24th (PCF), four at Budle Point on 26th (CGK) and three at Bamburgh on 1st and 30th (BRS) and Clifton Lane (Morpeth) on 21st (TB). Two were at Beldon Burn (Newbiggin), East Cramlington, Leazes Park (Newcastle), Dukeshagg Wood (Prudhoe) and Tynemouth with singles at a further eight widespread locations.



A stunned Goldcrest which hit Peter Tapsell's window
Tranwell 28th September

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

The highest count was around 35 at Haughton Strother GP on 8th (MR) with 20 at Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 6th (MNC), four at Thorneyburn on 10th (JR), three at Jesmond Dene on 25th (MJCo) and Walbottle on the same date (KR/LR).

Great Tit *Parus major*

Just three reports of 20 at Northumberland Park on 6th (MNC), ten at Hexham on 26th (BNR) and six at Jesmond Dene on 25th (MJCo).

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

The peak count was ten at Bywell Cottagebank / Short Wood GP on 30th (BNR) with eight at Bamburgh GC on 25th (CGK), up to five during the month in an Old Hartley garden (RJP), four in a Walbottle garden on 4th (KR/LR), three at Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 6th (MNC) and QEII CP on 26th (CDH) with one to two at Jesmond Dene (MJCo). One of two birds found at The Snook (Holy Island) where this species is regarded as rare was a 'buffy' continental-looking bird (ADM).

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

Encouraging numbers with three the peak count at Prestwick Carr on five dates from 4th to 25th (PCF/AJH) and two found there on three further dates. Two were at Mootlaw Quarry (Ryal) on 4th (ALT) and Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 6th (ASJ) with singles at Swallow Pond on 1st, Linton Pond on 3rd, a Walbottle garden on 11th, Arcot Pond on 16th, Craster on 18th, Slaley Hall on 19th and Scaffold Hill Farm on 22nd.

A Willow Tit at a garden feeder
Walbottle
by Ken Russell

**Marsh Tit** *Poecile palustris*

Four were at Haughton Castle on 24th (SW) with two at Posternwood (Morpeth) on 15th and Mitford Castle on 21st with one there on 27th (ADM). Singles were at Riding Mill on 4th (BNR), Linden Hall on 4th and 17th (NFO) and Prestwick Carr on 20th and 27th (PCF/BB) where this species is regarded as rare.

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Some large gatherings as birds moved South with 80+ at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 20th (MR), 75 SW at Budle Bay on 28th (CGK), 32 at St Mary's on 28th (ASJ), 30+ S at Bamburgh on 25th (CGK) and 20 S at Weetslade Colliery on 28th (CDH). 11 to 18 were at Beacon Lane (Cramlington), Ellington and Prestwick Carr with one to ten at Bywell Cottagebank, five further locations in Cramlington, Druridge Pools, Chugdon Wood, Tyne Green (Hexham), Tasset and Wark (N.Tyne).

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

The peak count was 200 moving through westerly gales at Rothbury on 12th (TRD/JD) with 30 at Haughton Strother GP on 8th (MR), 25 at Derwent Reservoir on 1st (IFo) and Fenham le Moor on 4th (ASJ). One to two were at Big Waters, Kitty Brewster (Blyth), Holy Island, Newbiggin, and Whittle Dene Reservoirs up to 14th with the last sighting one at Low Newton on 30th (TRD).

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Again large movements South with 400 at Tynemouth between 7.30 – 9.30 on 10th (DRW), 350+ including a leucistic individual at Holy Island on 4th (MJC/ADM), 300/hr S at Druridge Bay on 17th (PCF), 200+ at Waren Mill nr Bamburgh on 10th (CGK), 200 at Cresswell on 5th (JMA), 180 at Haughton Strother on 17th (MR), 160 at Holy Island on 8th (ADM), 150 at Spindleston on 10th (CGK) and Great Whittington on 11th (ALT), 110 at St Mary's on 17th (ASJ) and 100 at Derwent Reservoir on 9th (IFo). 50 to 70 were at Belsay Hall, Coanwood, East Chevington, Ellington, Lynemouth Flash, Mitford, North Shields, Prestwick Carr, Prudhoe and Slaley. One to 41 were at a further 24 widespread localities.

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

The count at Tynemouth between 7.30 – 9.30 on 10th recorded 600 mainly S (DRW) with 150 at Berwick on 7th (BWG), 100 at Derwent Reservoir on 1st (IFo) and Haughton Strother GP on 17th (MR). 80 fed at Todburn (Slaley) on 14th (ASJ), with 50 at Belsay Hall on 11th (SRB), 30 at St Mary's on 27th and Old Hartley on 30th (ASJ). 20 were at Exhibition Park, Marden Farm Estate (Tynemouth), Slaley Hall and Stanington with one to 15 at ten further locations.

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

Flocks of 20 were reported from Dukeshagg Wood on 9th, Hepburn Wood on 1st, Holywell Pond on 18th and Tyne Green (Hexham) on 26th (BNR/MSH/JMA). Other sizeable gatherings included counts of 15-18 at Ellington, Haughton Strother (Humshaugh), Northumberland Park (North Shields) and Prestwick Carr and 13-14 from Bywell, Newcastle Business Park and Valley Park (Cramlington) and nine to ten+ at East Chevington, Guessburn (Stocksfield), Hadston Links, Holywell Pond, Kitty Brewster, QEII CP and Thorneyburn. Two to eight were reported from a further nine localities including Newcastle Quayside on 7th (DMT).

Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides*

One was seen and heard singing at Newbiggin on 23rd-24th August (per GB).

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*

Single birds were reported from the Crooked Lonnen (Holy Island) on 16th -17th (RA *et al.*), Seaton point (Boulmer) on 17th (GL), Cresswell Pond on 18th (DM/STH/PJA) and Bamburgh on 23rd (BRS).

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Very well reported again this month, in what has been an excellent year for the species. The highest count was ten+ at Hadston Links on 19th (MSH). Eight+ were at Bamburgh on 23rd and about seven at Holy Island on 25th (BRS/ADM). Counts of five to six were reported from Derwent Reservoir, Haughton Strother, Holywell Pond and a Stamfordham garden. At the latter locality it was again noted as common on passage throughout the month, with a peak of six together (EC). One to four were reported from a further 52 widespread localities.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

One to four were reported from Holy Island on nine dates from 4th-25th with peaks on 8th and 19th (ADM/MJC). Another coastal bird was at High Hauxley on 14th (MHS). Inland, singles were noted at Arcot Pond on 3rd and 18th (GB/DM), Linton Pond on 3rd (GB/DM), Haughton Strother (Humshaugh) on 8th (MR) and Morpeth on 23rd (MHS).

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Four at Scotland Gate were present to mid-month (SLB/MSK); three+ were at Brunswick Village on 11th (GB) and two at Bamburgh on 16th (BRS), Woodhorn on 17th-18th (DM/STH/PJA/MJC) and Budle Point on 27th (CGK). Singles were reported from a further nine localities including Mount Pleasant on 29th.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

One at Low Newton on 10th was the only record (CB/JGS).

Barred Warbler *Sylvia nisoria*

It was a very poor showing after the record influx in September 2010. An elusive juvenile on the Straight Lonnen (Holy Island) on 18th -19th was the only record (IK).

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

Inland one was at Big Waters on 4th (GB) and a singing bird at Swallow Pond to 8th (JPD). Coastal migrants were at Newbiggin on 5th (GMi) and Hadston Links on 17th (MSH/CGK).

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

Three were at Alnmouth on 8th (CB) and two at St Mary's Island on 17th (MSH/AC). Singles were reported from Cocklawburn (29th), Cresswell Pond, Hadston Links, Holy Island, Kitty Brewster, Prestwick Carr and Woodhorn. The final record of the month was two at Whitley Bay Cemetery on 30th (CB).

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

Singles were reported from Prestwick Carr on 9th (EC), Arcot Pond (juvenile) on 11th (LJM), St Mary's Island on 17th (AC) and again at Prestwick Carr on 22nd (per PCF).

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Seven-eight were at Holy Island (MJC/ADM) and two at Newton Pool on 4th (TRD/JD). Singles were noted at Arcot Pond on 3rd, Swallow Pond on 8th, Low Newton on 10th and The Snook (Holy Island) on 23rd.

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Three (adult and two juveniles) were at Cresswell Pond on 4th (MRS) and a single there on 18th (DM/ATH/ PJA).

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Four were noted at Haughton Castle on 24th (SW) and two at Chillingham, Hartford Bridge (Bedlington), Jesmond Dene, Mount Pleasant, Redheugh Farm, Rothbury, Tyne Green (Hexham) and Wark (North Tyne). Elsewhere singles were reported from a further ten widespread localities including the only coastal bird at Bamburgh on 11th.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Three were at Humshaugh on 24th (SW) and two at Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Jesmond Dene, Linton, Northumberland Park (North Shields) and Tyne Green (Hexham). Singles were reported from a further five localities.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Six at Tyne Green (Hexham) on 26th (BNR) and two in Jesmond Dene on 4th (MJCo) were the only reports.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

Flocks of 50-50+ were noted at Amble on 5th, Bigg Market (Newcastle) on 1st, Cresswell on 5th and East Chevington on 17th (JMA/DM). 30 were at Tughall and ten at Holy Island on 15th (JMA).

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

Up to four were noted in the Rothbury area on 15th-17th and another at Thrum Mill on 1st (TRD/JD). Singles were reported from two sites in Jesmond Dene (MJCo), and at Craggside (JEd) and Redheugh Farm (JR).

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

The first definite passage birds of the autumn were 25+ at Budle Point on 25th (CGK), although 12 'dull sooty' birds together in a hawthorn hedge at Haughton Strother GP on 17th may also have been immigrants (MR). Three at Jesmond Dene on 18th was the only other record (MJCo).

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Four were noted at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 19th (GB) and four arrived high from the NE at Bamburgh GC on 27th (CGK). One flew W at Bakethin Reservoir on 18th (MD).

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

The first of the autumn were three SW at The Heugh (Holy Island) on 18th (IK). Five were at East Ord on 30th (MHu).

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Counts of 14 came from Low Carritheth and Linden Hall on 10th (JR/NFO) and ten at Blyth Cemetery on 21st (GMi). Five to seven were at Ellington, Guessburn (Stocksfield), Haughton Mains and Beldon Burn (Newbiggin) and three at Aydon (Corbridge).

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

A count of 11 together on a fence wire at Swallow Pond on 8th was a site record (JPD/MPF). Elsewhere two were at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 5th, Prestwick on 15th and St Mary's Island on 23rd and singles at Branton, East Ord, Haughton Strother, High Hauxley, Powburn and Woodhorn. The final records of the month were again single birds at Budle Point on 27th (CGK) and Holy Island on 27th-28th (DGB/RHB/ADM).

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

23 at Tyne Green (Hexham) on 26th was the highest count. At Holy Island four-five increased to 16 on 19th with eight present here from 25th-30th (ADM). Prestwick Carr held 12 over 1km on 4th (PCF) and 12 were also at Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 14th. Six were at Jesmond Dene and three at Woodhorn on 18th and two at Redheugh Farm on 10th.

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Inland two were still at Haughton Strother on 4th (MR) and one at Prestwick Carr on 8th-9th (PCF). On the coast singles were at Holy Island on 17th (MJC) and St Mary's Island from 17th-19th (MSH/AC *et al.*).

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

Four were at Swallow Pond on 8th (JPD) and three at Prestwick Carr on 4th and two on 5th (PCF). Two were also at Druridge Dunes on 9th (EC), St Mary's on 24th (GMi) and Budle Point on 27th (CGK) and singles at Boulmer, Holy Island, Snab Point, Tynemouth, West Hartford and Woodhorn Church. In addition to the Budle Point birds the final records of the month were singles at St Mary's Island and well inland at Langleeford (Harthope Valley) on 27th (ASJ/AJN).



A Whinchat and a Wheatear at Druridge Links
9th September by John Clark

Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*

Eight (two pairs and four juveniles) were at Druridge Links on 9th and six (a pair with four juveniles) at Thorngraston Common on 2nd (EC/JSB). Up to four were noted at Budle Bay during the month and three (male and two juveniles) at Monk's House Pool on 1st and at Darden Lough on 8th. Two were reported from Cresswell Pond on four dates and from Cocklawburn on 29th and Low Newton on 30th and singles from Druridge, East Chevington, Holy Island and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Stonechat is a **target species** for 2011. Please report all records.



Two views of Stonechat, a target species for 2011. Left, at Druridge Links on 15th September by Tim Dean and right, at Budle Bay by Chris Knox on 20th September

Wheatear *Oenanthe Oenanthe*

A sizeable fall occurred on 8th when 61+ arrived on Holy Island (ADM) and 25 were at Newton Point (JEd). Nine were at Cocklawburn on 13th and smaller gatherings of four to five at Boulmer, Druridge Links, Dukeshagg Wood (Prudhoe), Hagdon, Hemscott Hill and Prestwick Carr between 8th-14th. One to three were reported from a further 22 mainly coastal localities, although inland birds were still at Hareshaw Common (Bellingham) and Prestwick Carr on 27th (IRB/BB). The final record was two at Cocklawburn on 29th (Mhu).

A bird of the **Greenland race** *O.o.leucorhoa* was at Berwick GC on 14th (Mhu).



A Wheatear at Prestwick Carr on 4th September by Peter Fletcher

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Singles were at St Mary's Island on 17th-18th (AC/AJS/MSH/CGK *et al.*), Holy Island on 17th (MJC) and Woodhorn Church on 17th (STH).

Dunnoek *Prunella modularis*

Four visited a Walbottle garden on 25th (KR/LR).

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Largest post-breeding gatherings involved 200+ at Scaffold Hill Farm on 1st (JPD), 120 at Whittle Dene on 20th (MR), 100 at St. Mary's Island area on 9th (ASJ), 90+ at Druridge Bay on 15th (PCF), 70+ at Widdrington on 15th (PCF), 65 at Holywell on 1st (ASJ), 50+ at Linton on 5th (JMA), Spitalford (Embleton) on 15th (JMA) and Stobswood on 15th (PCF). 40 visited a Marden Estate garden (Tynemouth) on 1st (ASJ). One to 30 were at a further three urban localities.

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

A migrant flew S over Bamburgh on 1st with eight N there on 25th (BRS/CGK). Two flew W at nearby Budle Point on 27th (CGK). Post-breeding flocks included 98 at Haughton Strother GP on 8th (MR), 43 at Whittle Dene on 20th (MR), 30+ present at garden feeders at Waren Mill Caravan Park near Bamburgh all month (CGK) and four to eight also at Aydon (Corbridge), Cresswell Pond and Hauxley.

A Tree Sparrow
Budle Bay
Chris Knox

**Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava*

Four flew S at Low Newton on 10th (CB/JGS). Four were also at Whittle Dene on 14th (MR), three at St. Mary's Island on 1st (BB), Cresswell Pond on 3rd (Gmi), Warton on 3rd (JD), Bell's Farm Pond (Cresswell) on 3rd (DM/GB), Bamburgh Castle Green on 11th (TRD/JD) and Bothal Pond on 5th (TB). Two were at Wark on 3rd (PRM), Boulmer on 4th (TRD/JD), Haughton Strother GP on 8th (MR) and Long Nanny on 10th (CB). Singles were also at Derwent Reservoir, Ellington, Hauxley NR, Longhirst Hall Golf Course, Swallow Pond, Tynemouth, Warkworth Dunes and Weetslade Colliery CP.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Six were noted at Thrum Burn (Rothbury) on 10th (JD). Five were along the Horton Burn (Cramlington) on 2nd (PJA), three at Wark on 1st (PRM), Blanchland on 7th (BNR) and Newcastle City Centre on 26th (DM), two at Jesmond Dene on 2nd (MJCo), Big Waters on 9th (PCF) and Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 13th (MNC). Singles were observed at a further 18 widespread localities.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrellii*

Holy Island held 100 on 11th with a further 62 at Holy Island Harbour on 11th (MJC/ADM). The roost at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) peaked at 32 on 7th (TB). Coastal passage also occurred at St. Mary's Island with 15 there on 1st and 20+ on 15th (BB/MSH/AC), 22 at Whitley Bay Links on 14th (ASJ), 18 at Newbiggin Golf Course on 1st (GB). Eight were at Beldon Burn (Newbiggin) on 23rd (BNR) and five at QE II CP on 26th (CDH). One to three were at a further five widespread localities.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba alba*

Two at Derwent Reservoir on 9th increased to four on 10th (PRM/EAW). One at Annstead Beach (Seahouses) on 2nd also at Holy Island on 7th (RA), Druridge Pools Dunes on 9th (EC), Football Hole (High Newton) on 10th (CB/JGS) and Budle Bay on 13th (RA).

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Southern passage was evident throughout the month. 428 were observed over Marden Estate (Tynemouth) all month (ASJ). On Holy Island 30 went S on 4th, 80 on 4th and 40 on 11th and 17th (MJC/ADM). 50+ headed SW at Newton Point on 8th (JEd). 50 per hour were recorded at Budle Point on 11th (CGK), 40 were at St. Mary's Island on 28th (ASJ), 30 at Mootlaw Quarry (Ryal) on 25th (ALT) and 25 at Haydon on 14th (JMA). Light passage was also observed at Allendale, Arcot Pond, Bamburgh, Beldon Burn, Big Waters, Blanchland, Blyth Estuary, Budle Bay, Cramlington, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Bay, Dukeshagg Wood, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Harwood Burn, Haughton Strother GP, Newcastle City Centre, Prestwick Carr, Shipley Shiel Farm, Town Moor (Newcastle) and West Hartford.



Meadow Pipit at Druridge Links by Tim Dean
15th September

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Two were noted at Cullercoats Bay on 17th (MN) and one at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 24th (TRD/JD).

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

40+ were at Waren Mill Caravan Park near Bamburgh on 25th (CGK), 25 at Bolton on 1st (JMA) and 15 at Whitfield Hall on 26th (BNR). Small numbers were noted moving south along the coast at Hadston Links (Druridge Bay) on 19th (MSH). Two to 14 were at a further four widespread localities.

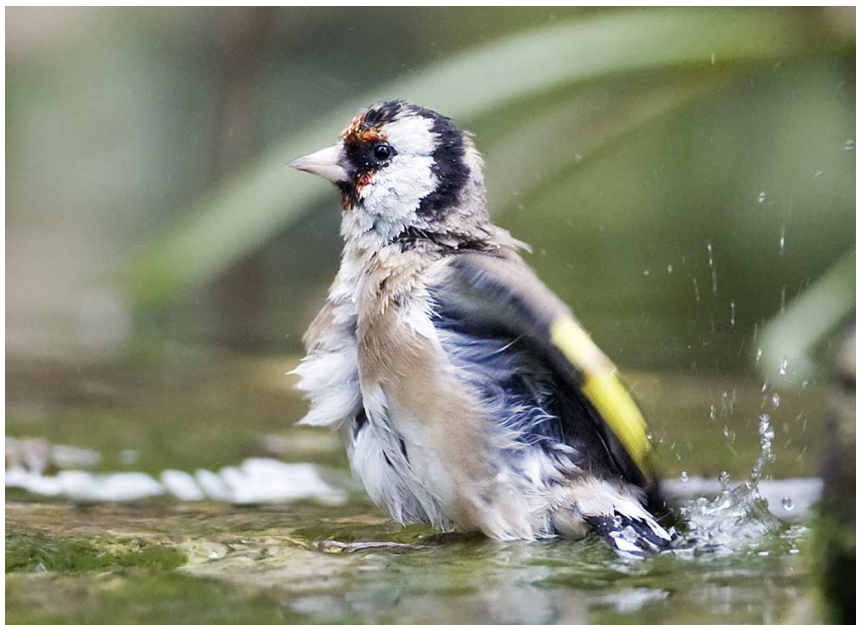
Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*

45 were feeding in a rape field at Woodhorn Flashes on 24th (STH), 42 at Bamburgh on 25th (CGK). 17 visited a Walbottle garden on 4th (KR/LR) and 12 at Woodhorn on 15th (BB). Two juveniles died after crashing into windows at Netherton Park (Stannington) on 2nd (RWM/MIM).

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Many post-breeding flocks were reported during month. 250 were noted at Prestwick Carr on 16th (JSB/EC), 170 at Lynemouth on 15th (ASJ) which declined to 20 by 20th (BB), 150 at Scaffold Hill Farm on 1st (JPD), 100 on Holy Island on 4th (MJC/ADM), East Chevington on 19th (JMA) and Hauxley on 23rd (TRD/JD). 85 were at Cocklawburn on 21st (MHu), 40 on stubble at Haughton Mains on 24th (SW) and one to 30 at a further 16 widespread localities.

A Goldfinch has a wash in Tynemouth
by Colin Bradshaw



Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

Winter gatherings began to form, the largest being 100+ at Harwood Head on 4th (MSH), 80 at Letah Wood on 26th (BNR), 70 at Sweethope Lough on 1st (ADM), 11 at Big Waters on 11th increased to 25 by 25th (GB). One to 20 were at a further 15 widespread localities. Movement was indicated by 16 S over West Hartford on 11th (LJM), 13 west at Budle Bay on 26th (CGK), two S at Druridge Pools on 19th (MSH) and small numbers moving S along the coast at Hadston Links (Druridge Bay) on 19th (MSH).

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

500 at Bamburgh on 18th (DGB) declined to 80 by 24th (TRD/JD). 270+ were at Brada Quarry near Bamburgh all month (CGK), 200 at Alnmouth on 8th (CB) and Beal on 18th (RHB), 150 at Mootlaw Quarry (Ryal) on 18th (ALT) and 100 at Prestwick Carr on 16th (JSB/EC). 85 were observed at Lynemouth Flash on 22nd (TB), 48 at Backworth on 30th (CGK), 45 at Bywell Cottage Bank on 29th (BNR), 40 at Linton Ponds on 5th (JMA) and Haughton Mains on 24th (SW). One to 30 were at a further seven widespread localities.

Redpoll sp.

15 flew S at Hadston Links on 19th (MSH). Five flew S over the Budle Bay/Bamburgh area on 25th (CGK), four at Big Waters on 4th (GB) and W at Budle Bay on 11th (CGK). One to three were also noted at Big Waters, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Hazlerigg, Linton Ponds, Prestwick Carr and Woodhorn.

The second stunned bird for September in
Peter Tapsell's garden at Tranwell
A Lesser Redpoll on 19th September

**Lesser Redpoll** *Carduelis cabaret*

Gatherings involved 80 at Bakethin (Kielder Forest) on 18th (MD), two at Swallow Pond on 7th increased to 65 on 15th (JPD), 50+ at Byrness on 9th (MJC), 40+ flew over Bamburgh on 16th (BRS), 31 S over Tynemouth on 11th (DRW), 30 S at West Hartford on 3rd (PJA) and East Chevington on 25th (IK), 20 at Harwood Burn on 4th (MSH) and Prestwick Carr on 20th (PCF). One to 15 were at a further 17 widespread localities.

Common Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

50+ were at Harwood Burn on 2nd with 30+ still there on 20th (MSH), 30+ still there on 20th (MSH), 30+ at Bakethin Reservoir (Kielder) on 18th (MD), 25 at Sweethope Lough on 1st (ADM), 11 S over Ellington on 5th (TB), ten+ at Harwood Head on 4th (MSH), Slaley Hall on 14th (RMH) and W over Bamburgh Golf Course on 25th (CGK). One to nine were noted at a further seven widespread localities.

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

15 found at Bakethin (Kielder) on 18th (MD), ten at Prestwick Carr on 24th (PCF), seven at Arcot Lane on 18th (DM) six at Dukeshagg Wood on 9th (BNR) and Swallow Pond on 29th (JPD), five at Fulbeck (Morpeth) all month (TD), Blanchland on 7th (BNR) and Valley Park (Cramlington) on 10th (DM). Four were at Scotland Gate all month (SLB/MSK) and Greenhead Bank on 25th (BNR). One to three were also at a further 18 widespread localities.

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

The first of the late autumn involved one heading S at St. Mary's Island on 25th (MSH).

Lapland Bunting *Calciarius lapponicus*

Two S at Crooked Lonnen (Holy Island) on 17th were the first of the autumn (MJC). Singles were also found at Cresswell Pond on 22nd (ASJ), St. Mary's Island on 24th (ASJ) and Bamburgh on 25th (CGK).

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

20 were found near Holywell on 29th (ASJ), 18+ at Bamburgh Golf Course on 25th (CGK), six at Aydon (Corbridge) on 28th (RB/MB), four at Beacon Lane (Cramlington) on 18th (DM) and one to two at Big Waters, Middle Farm (Seghill) and Sleekburn.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Nine were at St. Mary's Island area on 24th (ASJ), three at Derwent Reservoir on 9th (PRM), two at Woodhorn on 15th (BB) and Woodhorn Flashes on 18th (GB). Singles were also at Arcot Pond on 18th (DM) and Kitty Brewster (Blyth Estuary) on 18th (GB).

ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN**Escapes****Black Swan** *Cygnus atratus*

One at Newton from 4th to 10th at the Long Nanny was likely to have been the same individual as at Newton Pool in May (TD/CB/JGS).

Bar-headed Goose *Anser indicus*

The three individuals at East Chevington remained there all month so singles at Cresswell Pond on 3rd (GMi), Holywell Pond on 9th (CS) and Killingworth Lake on 17th (LJM) could well have been a different wandering bird.

Ross's Goose *Anser rossii*

Two at Monk's House Pool on 28th and 29th were thought to be feral geese accompanying a small group of feral Barnacle Geese (RA/PJA).

Harris's Hawk *Parabuteo unicinctus*

One was observed perched in a Scots Pine by the A1 bridge near Seaton Burn roundabout. It was obviously managing to adapt to the area as it had a rabbit in its talons (DM).

Eurasian Eagle Owl *Bubo bubo*

One moving N over Druridge Pools on 11th must have been an astonishing surprise (MSK/NEWT).

Cockatiel *Nymphicus hollandicus*

One at Holywell Pond on 16th flew over the pond and landed in willows by the members' hide where it proceeded to call for most of the afternoon (CS).

Birds of Unknown Origin**Rose-ringed Parakeet** *Psittacula krameri*

One was at Exhibition Park in Newcastle on 16th (GB).

Hybrids**Canada Goose x Greylag Goose** *Branta canadensis x Anser anser*

A hybrid was seen at Cresswell Pond on 5th in the Canada Goose flock (GMi).

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

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Bamburgh Ringing Station, Berwick Wildlife Group, Natural History Society of Northumbria, North Northumberland Bird Club, Northern Experience Wildlife Tours.

Those observers marked with an asterisk after their name(s) have submitted records online using the club spreadsheet, copies are available by emailing Dick Myatt at dick@dickmyatt.co.uk

Apologies for any accidental omissions**BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION**

This bulletin was compiled by Eddy Crabtree (Mute Swan to Egyptian Goose, Red Grouse to Black-necked Grebe), Graeme Bowman (Ruddy Shelduck to Ruddy Duck), Trevor Blake (Honey Buzzard to Crane), Ian Forsyth (Oystercatcher to Skua), Tim Dean (Ivory Gull to Puffin, Escapes, Hybrids and Unknown Origin, List of Contributors, Highlights), Peter Fletcher (Feral Pigeon to Red-rumped Swallow), Mike Richardson (Cetti's Warbler to Pied Flycatcher), Eddie Crabtree (Duncock to Corn Bunting), Julie Roper/Dan Turner (WeBS Coastal Counts) and Steve Holliday (WeBS Inland Counts). Thanks again to Ann McKeown for typing the section Duncock to Corn Bunting. Thanks to Barbara Welch of NNBC for providing data. Proof reading was by Mike Smith.

Edited by Steve Barrett Sscmagpie@aol.com

Distributed by Alan Watson apusx@blueyonder.co.uk

BULLETIN SECTION WRITER

Help is always needed. Please send an email to Steve Barrett Sscmagpie@aol.com to volunteer or for more information.

RECORD SUBMISSION

Please send all record cards to Tim Dean, 2 Knocklaw Park, Rothbury NE65 7PW, to arrive on, or preferably before, the 8th of the month following that in which the records were collected. Please write cards legibly to ensure that your sightings are correctly recorded.

E-mail: Members are encouraged to e-mail their records on an Excel-style spreadsheet. Please e-mail Dick Myatt at dick@dickmyatt.co.uk for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and Grid references: The use of standard location names and the inclusion of grid references greatly increases the value of records in subsequent analyses. A 1km square grid reference is the ideal e.g. NY8067 for Grindon Lough, but 2km square references (tetrads) are also acceptable e.g. NY86D in this case. A list of localities and their tetrad grid references (tetrad/Locality List) can be downloaded from the 'Resources & Downloads' section of the Club website at <http://www.ntbc.org.uk> – the use of these names, wherever possible, would be highly appreciated.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Please keep submitting your articles, photographs, sketches and illustrations for the bulletin. Thanks again to those who have supplied the excellent photographs. Please send to Steve Barrett at Sscmagpie@aol.com

ELECTRONIC BULLETIN

The NTBC bulletin can be received electronically or as hard copy. The electronic bulletin arrives earlier than the printed version, it is in colour and we save the cost of printing and stamps. Ask for an e-mailed bulletin from;

jo.bentley@waitrose.com

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS 2011

Annual subscription is a bargain £23. For membership enquiries please contact jo.bentley@waitrose.com

NTBC WEB SITE

The Club website is an excellent resource for all interested in birds in the north east. There are numerous interesting sections, including a photograph gallery, site information and trip reports together with extensive reference information for birding in our area. The site is at www.ntbc.org.uk

If you have any ideas or things you would like to see or hear about on the site please let Chris know on 0751 582 5024 or email christopher.knox@o2.co.uk

NTBC SIGHTINGS PAGE

The club sightings web page gives listings of birds seen locally. Adding a sighting is simple. A short e-mail is all that is needed. If anyone would like to be added as a contributor please contact Alan Tilmouth at ntbcorg@gmail.com The sightings page can be found at <http://ntbcsightings.posterous.com>

IINDOOR MEETINGS

The next indoor meetings will be at Newcastle Falcons on Thursday 10th November at 7pm.

On Track in Kenya - Tsavo and Sokoko Forest Specialities by Iain Robson, Neil Anderson and Tom Cadwallender. Birds and zebras, what more could you want?

ACCOUNTS

The 2009-2010 accounts are attached to this bulletin. 2010-2011 accounts will be issued shortly.

FIELD TRIP

The next field trip is to the Druridge Bay area on Saturday 12th November, it is aimed at beginners and families.

Please contact Trevor Blake direct for more information. trevor.1958@live.co.uk

BTO ATLAS NEWS - Request for records

Over the last four years the BTO have been given regular spreadsheets detailing bird sightings submitted to NTBC whether online or via record card. Only those records where the information included a new species for the tetrad, increased breeding evidence or a greater number of individuals were included. All these spreadsheets have now been uploaded into the Atlas database with the final two involving the last breeding and winter period very recently on 2nd November. Hence we are now in a position where the 10km squares should have complete species lists. The cut off date for submissions is 31st December 2011 so the Atlas sub-committee would like to urge all members to input any extra sightings by the end of the year. Registering on the Atlas website www.birdatlas.net is very easy and the 'Add Roving Records' option can be used to add sightings. Please ensure all sightings have the tetrad identifier included so that they can be used in the local Atlas. The 'Any Square Summary' can be used to see what species have already been seen for any 10km square or tetrad.

This is an opportunity for anyone to add something to the Atlas as it is still perfectly possible to add species even on a 10 km square basis. Examples such as Marsh Tit, Willow Tit, Green Woodpecker, Short-eared Owl, Redshank and Woodcock are all species where extra records could be the only evidence for individual 10km squares.

The BTO have given a date of 31st March 2012 when all records should be validated and included in the final database. Always good to have an aggressive target !

Tim Dean

Unwanted CDs and DVDs

You can help with Atlas fundraising and make some space in your home by donating any unwanted cds and dvds to NTBC. We have set up a Music Magpie account and can trade in items for cash, all of which will go to the club's Atlas fundraising. Now is the ideal time to get rid of those secret Steps and Abba recordings by bringing them along to a club meeting or by contacting Steve Lowe (zappa99@live.co.uk). Thanks in anticipation.

NTBC on FACEBOOK

In order to promote the club and its aims to both younger birders and non-members the committee have discussed and agreed to create a club page on Facebook the global social networking site. Two of the club's younger members Cain Scrimgour and Phil Allot will manage the content of this page for the club. The page is live and can be found by Facebook members by searching the club name 'Northumberland & Tyneside Bird Club'. NTBC members already using Facebook are encouraged to 'like' the page as this will ensure that posts to the page are spread and made visible via individual member walls and increase the promotional value of the material posted on the page.

PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

Eddie Douglas was the winner for 2010-2011 Bulletin competition with his reflecting Grey Wagtail at Stocksfield from the November 2010 bulletin. Thanks to Peter Fletcher for the judging (and for honourably excluding his own photographs)

The other short-listed photographs were from Colin Bradshaw, Tim Dean, Alan Tilmouth and Peter Tapsell as shown here.



GOSFORTH NATURE RESERVE

Natural History Society of Northumbria Appeal

The NHSN need your help to save the fields surrounding Gosforth Nature Reserve from being turned into 600 homes by the end of the decade. This would have a devastating effect on wildlife. Many of you will know that these fields are home to otters, roe deer, badgers, bats, owls and songbirds and are an important wildlife corridor and part of the Green Belt. The reserve is one of Newcastle's last remaining wildlife areas and is home to rare birds, plants and animals including England's last urban population of red squirrels. Newcastle City Council is setting out its latest development plans which they are calling the "One Core Strategy", this includes a "Strategic Land Review" in which they have identified potential sites for new development. They are proposing that 8,000 new homes are built in the Green Belt, including 600 new homes in the fields next to Gosforth Park Nature Reserve, which they are calling Salter's Lane Neighbourhood Growth Area. The fields that would be destroyed provide essential foraging habitat for wildlife that lives in the nature reserve. This area is so valuable for wildlife that 10 years ago Newcastle Council designated this area as a Strategic Wildlife Corridor linking Jesmond Dene to the wider countryside. Further developments since then make this wildlife corridor even more important today. The Government's Environmental White Paper, published in June, highlights the importance of creating buffer zones around important wildlife sites and retaining wildlife corridors – the Council's proposal clearly goes against this Government advice. The Council is consulting people on their views of these plans. You have until 18th November to tell them what you think. YOUR VIEWS WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE. You can stop the destruction of our wildlife and countryside by telling the Council that you object to their plans. The more people who object the better the chance we have to stop this terrible proposal and to save our wildlife and open spaces for future generations. You can view the Council's full plans at <http://onecorestrategyng-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal> If you want to give them your views on their plans to build houses next to the nature reserve then the policy that you are objecting to is Policy CS3 1a Salter's Lane Neighbourhood Growth Area. To give your comments online go to <http://www.nhsn.ncl.ac.uk/news/cms/save-gosforth-wildlife/> and follow the instructions. Alternatively send your comments by email to planning&housingstrategy@newcastle.gov.uk or write to Harvey Emms, Director of Planning, Newcastle City Council, Civic Centre, NE1 8PD. There will be a public meeting with Newcastle planners held at Gosforth Civic Hall, 7pm on Tuesday 15th November. We really hope that you will take a few minutes to contact Newcastle City Council to object to their plans, and if possible join us on 15th November.

Regards

James Littlewood

Director Natural History Society of Northumbria

Great North Museum: Hancock Barras Bridge Newcastle upon Tyne, NE2 4PT

Tel: 0191 232 6386

<mailto:nshn@ncl.ac.uk>

COASTAL WeBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND

[illegible]

NORTHUMBERLAND AND TYNESIDE BIRD CLUB
ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2010

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT	2010	2009	2008
INCOME			
Members subscriptions	5,391.00	5,927.00	5,183.00
<i>Includes 5 Honorary & 9 Life members</i>			
Birds in Northumbria 2008	1,675.45	1,747.75	942.50
Birds in Northumbria - other years			404.00
Other (atlas)	-		220.00
Birds of Holy Island			20.00
Refund of Income tax (Gift Aid)	1,277.98	1,311.83	1,194.08
Bank Interest (Northern Rock)	14.29	117.06	204.55
Field trips	-	658.00	1,344.65
Grants from DF	-	552.00	
50th		1,192.00	375.00
	8,358.72	11,505.64	9,887.78
EXPENDITURE			
Birds in Northumbria 2008	3,863.81	3,614.00	3,047.00
Closing Stock	- 2,471.00		
Membership		46.86	41.19
Indoor meetings	512.15	1,101.02	701.15
Monthly Bulletins	2,299.35	2,394.76	2,418.85
Birds in Northumbria 2008 (postage)	306.54	266.12	311.76
Birds of Holy Island			95.00
Officers expenditure	272.36	314.74	896.00
Field trips		922.16	1,343.95
Record cards/storage	752.00	333.89	658.00
Insurance	110.00	110.00	110.00
SSWT Rent and Rates		179.49	16.54
Website and IT	138.80	75.22	462.89
Miscellaneous	168.14	85.49	185.00
Atlas	-	399.34	80.00
50th	-	1,357.20	146.87
Grants (from DF)		402.00	
	5,952.15	11,602.29	10,514.20
Surplus / deficit for year	2,406.57	- 96.65	- 626.42
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30 JUNE 2010			
ACCUMULATED FUND			
Balance as at 30 June 2009	4,043.23	4,139.88	4,766.30
Surplus/ (Deficit) from I & E Account	2,406.57	- 96.65	- 626.42
	6,449.80	4,043.23	4,139.88
Represented by:			
Assets			
Stock	2,471.00	-	-
Debtors		1,311.83	-
Prepayments		-	-
Lloyds TSB Treasurers Account	1,853.09	1,201.31	2,323.72
Northern Rock	5,725.71	5,711.42	5,594.36
Cash in Hand	-	-	-
Total	10,049.80	8,224.56	7,918.08
Less Liabilities			
Accruals	-	-	458.13

Creditors	3,600.00	4,181.33	3,320.07
Total	3,600.00	4,181.33	3,778.20
	6,449.80	4,043.23	4,139.88

Note 1: Stock carried by members brought onto face of balance sheet

Note 2: Stock valued at lesser of cost or net realisable value

NORTHUMBERLAND AND TYNESIDE BIRD CLUB
DEVELOPMENT FUND ACCOUNTS
FOR YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2010

<u>INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2008</u>
INCOME			
Sales - Winter Atlas	91.00	276.90	377.00
Atlas Data	1,350.00	1,000.00	900.00
Donations (balance from 50th)	-	1,002.38	15.00
Bank Interest	17.50	249.84	1,015.53
	1,458.50	2,529.12	2,307.53
LESS EXPENDITURE			
Winter Atlas postage		-	38.43
Grants	1,450.00	4,275.26	4,090.90
Atlas	581.35		
	2,031.35	4,275.26	4,129.33
Surplus (Deficit) for Year	- 572.85	- 1,746.14	- 1,821.80
Balance sheet as at 30th June 2010			
Accumulated fund			
Balance as at 30 June 2009	17,568.89	19,315.03	21,136.83
Surplus/deficit from I & E account	- 572.85	- 1,746.14	- 1,821.80
	16,996.04	17,568.89	19,315.03
Represented by:			
ASSETS			
Cash - Alliance & Leicester	16,996.04	17,531.62	19,087.76
Debtor		-	220.00
Cash/Cheque in Hand	-	37.27	7.27
	16,996.04	17,568.89	19,315.03

Accounts prepared by Jo Bentley (Honorary Treasurer)

HONORARY AUDITORS REPORT

I hereby certify that the above Income and expenditure accounts and Balance Sheets are a true representation of the financial affairs of the Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club, as evidenced by the books, vouchers and other information supplied to me.

Signed V.L. Conlley
Date 12.8.11.

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

<http://www.ntbc.org.uk/>

Bulletin 2011 No 10

MONTHLY SUMMARY – OCTOBER

5th December 2011



HIGHLIGHTS

Taiga Bean Goose
Lesser Scaup
Black Scoter
Surf Scoter
Macaronesian Shearwater
White-rumped Sandpiper
Long-billed Dowitcher
Sabine's Gull
Turtle Dove
Firecrest
Short-toed Lark
Pallas's Warbler
Richard's Pipit

Seven N at Fenham Flats on 19th.
A well watched individual at Marden Quarry from 5th.
A male at Goswick from 11th.
A male with above at Goswick from 12th.
One off Tynemouth on 8th.
One at Fenham Flats on 7th.
Two at East Chevington on 5th for 45 minutes.
Singles at Hauxley and Seahouses.
A popular bird at Big Waters from 8th to 12th.
One at St Mary's from 24th to 26th.
One circled overhead at Brierdene calling on 25th.
One at Hauxley on 25th.
One at St Mary's on 27th and 28th.

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Target Species for 2012

Indoor Meeting at **Northern Rugby Club, MacCracken Park**, on Thursday 8th December at 7pm BIRDING IN MOROCCO by John McLoughlin

Committee News

Alan Curry joins CRC

Kosi project

Species sponsorship

Northern Raptor Review 2010

Butterfly records for 2011

Wildlife event at Gateshead

Jobs at RSPB

Christmas Quiz – with a prize!



The popular Lesser Scaup at Marden Quarry
by Tim Dean on 11th October

WEATHER

1st to 3rd: The first few days saw exceptionally high temperatures. On 2nd, central and eastern areas were very warm with maxima over 28 °C.

4th to 13th: An unsettled period with westerly winds and frequent bands of rain or showers and a good deal of cloud. It was often very windy, with a gust of 66 mph recorded at St Bees Head (Cumbria) and gusts to over 40 mph widely on 6th.

14th to 16th: A brief spell of more settled weather, with plenty of sunshine, but rather cold overnight with an air frost being recorded in several rural locations. However 16th also saw cloud beginning to move in from the west, ending the period of fine weather.

17th to 20th: The settled weather ended abruptly on 17th, when a cold front moved south-eastwards during the evening bringing heavy rain after a largely fine day. The following days saw cool north-westerly winds bearing occasional showers. The showers turned heavier on 19th. The first widespread air frost of the autumn occurred early on 20th, with temperatures in many rural areas of eastern and northern England dipping just below freezing.

21st to 31st: Another unsettled period with westerly winds and often rather cloudy and wet. However periods of clearer and brighter weather resulted in some low overnight temperatures, with air frost in eastern areas on the morning of 21st. Overnight 23rd/24th into the morning of 24th was very wet in the south-west while the rest of England was dry and sunny. The 25th saw more heavy rain in northern England. Heavy thundery showers continued overnight into 26th in the far south.

CLASSIFIED LIST

The following account consists of unchecked reports. The species/subspecies marked * require descriptions.

A complete list of all sightings that need notes is included in the NTBC website www.ntbc.org.uk under the County Records Committee section and in Birds in Northumbria 2009 page 224.

The Inland and Coastal Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) tables are at the rear of the bulletin. These contain counts additional to those in the Classified List.

TARGET SPECIES

The target species for 2011 are Gadwall, Snipe and Stonechat. Please report all records for these species.

The target species for 2012 will be all the owl species. The BTO Atlas is lacking information on these nocturnal species.



Mute Swans on the sea at St. Mary's Island by Adriana Buskin

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

The largest gatherings were 128 at Killingworth Lake on 28th (LJM), 36 at QEII Lake on 23rd (CDH), 27 at Big Waters on 8th (DM) and 26 in the Tweed Estuary on 14th (MHu). Ten were noted at Shield on the Wall on 16th (MRS) and Holy Island causeway on 19th (PRM). One to nine were noted at Arcot Pond, Berwick Little Beach, Castle Island, Exhibition and Leazes Parks (Newcastle), Hauxley NR, Lindisfarne NNR, Linton Ponds, Millennium Bridge (Newcastle), Willington Gut and offshore at St Mary's Island.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Light passage was noted during the month. At Alwinton 21 flew NE on 21st (IRD), 13 flew over Newbiggin GC on 8th (GMI), 12 arrived from E with Pink-feet at Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) on 7th (IK), 11 flew W at Berwick on 14th (MHu) and 11 flew S at the Snook (Holy Island) on 28th (MJC). Three to nine were noted flying over Goswick Sands on 28th, Hauxley on 8th, Holy Island on 16th, Newton Point on 28th, Prestwick Carr on 7th/14th, St Mary's Island on 9th and Tynemouth Priory on 8th. The largest gatherings were 64 at Cresswell Pond on 15th (BMo), 60 in the Holy Island causeway area on 19th (PRM), 49 at Beal Road Ends on 13th/16th (ASJ/MPF) and at East Chevington on 22nd (ADM), 23 at Big Waters on 15th (GB), 20 at Fenham Slake on 15th (CMur *et al.*), 18 at Bothal Pond on 11th (TB) and 17 at Druridge Pools on 22nd (CDB *et al.*). One to eight were noted at Ashington, Branton GP, Bell's Farm (Cresswell), Blyth Estuary, Budle Bay Coquet Estuary, Goswick, Greenlee Lough, Harper's Heugh (Budle Bay), Prestwick Carr, St Mary's Island and Twizel (Berwick).



Adult Whoopers at Druridge Pools
15th October by Peter Fletcher

Grey Goose species *Anser sp.*
Ten flew W at Longbenton on 6th (CDH).

***Taiga Bean Goose** *Anser fabalis fabalis*
A flock of seven flew N over Granary Point (Fenham Flats) on 19th (MH/AA).

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

A total of 73 records were received this month with significant movement noted. On 15th 3,900 flew N at Druridge in three flocks (JR), 3,000 arrived from N and NE at East Chevington on 7th (MSH), where 3,000 flew over the north pool on 5th (SPP), 1,650 flew S in eight skeins at Cocklawburn on 7th (MHu), 1,500 flew S at sunset at Longbenton on 30th (ADM), 500 flew S at Newton Point on 28th (TRD/JD), 370 flew S at Holy Island on 19th (ADM), 300 flew S at dusk at Prestwick Carr on 7th (PCF), 244 flew S at Cocklawburn on 20th (MHu), 238 flew S at Craster on 16th (MJC), 200 arrived from E at Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) on 7th (IK), and 200+ flew N at Bamburgh on 28th (BRS). Smaller flocks were noted with 150 S at St Mary's Island on 28th, 140 E at Tynemouth on 2nd and W at Cocklawburn on 17th, 115 S at Sandy Bay (Newbiggin) on 26th, 90 S at Berwick on 14th, 75 SW at Northburn (Cramlington) on 8th, 70 S at Cocklawburn on 26th, 55 S at Goswick on 27th, 50 S at Newbiggin on 16th, 33 N there on 7th and 32 S at Newton Point on 20th. The largest gatherings were a huge roost of 10,000 at Goswick Sand Rig on 9th (IK) with 7,000 noted there on 16th (ASJ/MPF/DGB), 4,000+ at East Chevington on 8th/15th (MSH/SRB), 2,500 at Holy Island causeway on 11th/12th (JMA/ADM), 2,000 at Cresswell Pond on 11th(MSH) and Ellington on 30th (TB), 940 in Budle Bay on 16th (CGK), and 460 at Lady Thorne (Cheswick) on 26th (MHu). On 9th 144 were at Murton (East Ord), 20 were at Hauxley on 8th, 11 in the Tweed Estuary on 14th and two at Grindon Lough and Prestwick Carr.

Pink-footed Geese
East Chevington
by Chris Barlow
8th October



Greenland White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons flavirostris*

An adult was noted at the regular wintering site of Grindon Lough from 13th-16th (PRM/JR/MRS) and a single was at East Chevington on 15th (SRB).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

On 22nd 43 flew E at Mootlaw Quarry (Ryal) (ALT), 35 flew S at Whitley Bay on 7th (TS) and 13 flew SE over Cramlington centre on 13th (DM). The largest flocks were 500+ at Hauxley on 8th (HRS), 400+ at East Chevington on 6th (MN), where coloured-ringed 'White DL6' noted on 1st had been ringed at an unknown date at Caerlaverock, Dumfries & Galloway (TRD/JD), 384 in the Tweed Estuary on 14th (MHu), 340 at Caistron on 15th (TRD), 65 at Big Waters on 30th (GB) and 60 at Monk's House Pool on 6th (JMA). Two to eight were at Killingworth Lake and Marden Quarry.



Greylags in flight at Caistron on 15th October by Tim Dean

***Snow Goose** *Anser caerulescens*

Four moved between East Chevington and Hauxley NR from 1st-13th (HRS/TRD/JD *et al.*).

The popular Snow Geese
East Chevington
1st October
Tim Dean

**Canada Goose** *Branta canadensis*

At Hauxley 47 flew N on 8th (HRS). The largest gatherings were 323 at Grindon Lough on 16th (JR/MRS) and 40 in the Tweed Estuary on 14th (MHu). Smaller gatherings were 35 at QEII Lake on 23rd (CDH), 19 at Holywell Pond on 2nd (PBu) and 17 at Greenlee Lough on 16th (MRS). Ten to 13 were noted at Killingworth Lake, Leazes Park (Newcastle) New Water Haugh (River Tweed) and Marden Quarry, where one bird had a damaged wing and missing foot.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Very well reported this month with 74 records received. A large-scale arrival occurred mid-month with 3,000+ at Goswick on 15th (TD), 3,000 at Lindisfarne NNR on 16th, 2,000 at East Chevington on 8th (MSH) and 9th (ASJ), where up to 350 were seen on 11 further dates, and in Budle Bay on 17th (NFO) 2,000+ at Goswick Sands on 13th (MSH) and at Beal Point on 16th (IK), 1,500 at Beal Point on 9th (IK) and Goswick on 13th (TRD/ASJ) and 1,000+ at East Chevington on 7th (MSH). Up to 700 birds were noted in the Lindisfarne NNR area on three further dates. Presumably these birds were *en route* to the Solway. Birds were noted flying overhead with 1,500 S at Hauxley on 8th (HRS) 560 at Ross on 28th (MJC), 543 over Tynemouth on 8th (SPP), 500 NW at Stag Rocks on 8th (SW). 160 flew over Boulmer on 8th, 150 flew over Cresswell Pond on 20th, 100+ over Druridge Pools on 8th, 92 S at Berwick Beach on 12th, 90 N at St Mary's Island on 8th, when 80+ flew N at Cambois. At Beal 80 flew W on 28th, 70 flew N at Snab Point on 7th and 62 N at Newbiggin on 7th. Smaller movements of three to 45 were noted at Berwick, Boulmer, Goswick Sands, Holy Island, Marden Quarry,

Newbiggin, Ross, Snab Point, Stag Rocks and Tynemouth on eight dates from 7th-28th. At Derwent Reservoir 53 were present on 7th (lFo) and on 13th 20 were in Budle Bay. 11 were on Monks' House Pool on 6th. One to ten were noted at Arcot Pond, Big Waters, Grindon Lough, Marden Quarry, Yarrow Slake and Cresswell Pond where ten on the pond joined ten overflying birds on 8th.

Pale-bellied Brent Goose *Branta bernicla hrota*

On 16th 2,400 were at Goswick Sands (DGB) and at Fenham Slake, where they were present until the end of the month (JPL). At Lindisfarne NNR 75-1,200 were recorded on three further dates. On 6th 50 were in Budle Bay (JMA). A single was at Cresswell Pond from 1st-8th with two being noted here on 16th (TRD/JD *et al.*).

Dark-bellied Brent Goose *Branta bernicla bernicla*

On 19th 43 were in Rocket Field (Holy Island) (PRM).

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

Beaters flushed 115+ during a shoot at Agarshill Fell (Whitfield Moor) on 14th (MH). Four were in the Hawksteel-Round Hill area on 1st and three were in the Tows Bank-Asholme area on 26th (BNR).

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

A total of 625 were at the Fenham Flats area of Lindisfarne NNR on 13th when 590 were at Budle Bay (ASJ). One was inland at Derwent Reservoir on 25th (lfo).



A gleaming drake Mandarin at Northumberland Park
by Adriana Buskin

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

A drake was at Northumberland Park (North Shields) between 1st-25th (MNC *et al.*).

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

Strong northerly passage was evident on 9th when 592 passed Snab Point in two hours (JR). Elsewhere, 43 flew N at Tynemouth on 2nd (CB) and 45 S at Hauxley on 9th (HRS). 'Thousands' were reported at Fenham Flats during the month (JPL). Peak concentrations were 310 at Budle Bay on 15th (CGK), 300 at Cresswell Pond on 27th (MSH), 150-200 at Big Waters on 20th (SPP), 100-118 at Druridge Pools and Grindon Lough, and 80 at Gosforth Park NR. Counts of 17-31 came from Bothal Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Hauxley Reserve and QEII Lake, and one to four were at seven further sites.

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Druridge Pools held 35 on 18th (MSH), 31 were at Big Waters on 16th (a record count for the site; GB), 23 at Linton Ponds on 23rd (CDH), 20 at Cresswell Pond on 24th (MSH), 20 at East Chevington on 1st (TRD/JD), 18 at St Mary's Wetland, 15-16 at Marden Quarry and QEII Lake, and six to eight at Gosforth Park and Woodhorn Flashes. Two were at Ladyburn Lake and one at Budle Bay.

Gadwall is a **target species** for 2011. Please report all records.

Teal *Anas crecca*

Coastal movement involved 196 N at Snab Point on 9th (JR), and six N and 97 S at Hauxley between 8th-23rd, including 45 S on 15th (HRS). Numbers at Derwent Reservoir increased from 144 on 25th to 393 by 29th (IFo), about 250 were at Holy Island on 30th (ADM), 220 at Grindon Lough on 13th (AJR), 173 at Arcot Pond on 15th (DM), and 139-150 at Castle Island and Cresswell Pond. Counts of 48-60 came from Alnmouth, Backworth, Druridge Pools and Hauxley Reserve, and 15-32 from Bothal Pond, Halton Red House, Prestwick Carr, Scotswood and St Mary's.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Coastal passage involved nine N and 25 S at Hauxley on 8th-9th (HRS) and three N and one S at Newbiggin on 26th (GB). Numbers were generally low, with peaks of only 88 at Derwent Reservoir on 21st (IFo), 80 at Druridge Pools on 24th (MSH), 76 at the Tweed Estuary on 14th (MHu), 75 at Heighley Gate on 15th (JMA), 50-58 at Cocklawburn, Linton Ponds and Newcastle Leazes Park, 20-41 at Arcot and Bothal Ponds, Airy Holm Reservoir, the Blyth Estuary, Grindon Lough, Hauxley Reserve, Northumberland Park (North Shields), QEII Lake, Richardson Dees Park (Wallsend), St Mary's Wetland, Tynemouth Park and Willington Gut, and 12-17 at four further sites.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

One flew N at Snab Point on 9th (JR). Up to eight were at East Chevington between 1st-16th (MSK/TD *et al.*) and 16 on 28th (ASJ), and two were at Budle Bay on 15th (CGK).

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Light passage concerned three N at Snab Point on 9th (JR) and three S at the Farne Islands on 24th (CH *et al.*). East Chevington regularly attracted up to 15 and a peak of 39 on 15th (MSH), 14-27 were at Monks' House Pool between 9th-31st (DGB), 12 at Grindon Lough on 16th (JR), ten at Gosforth Park NR on 28th (BB/NHSN), four to five at Cresswell and Swallow Ponds, three at Backworth and one to two at Big Waters, Holywell Pond and Newton Pool.

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

16 at Linton Ponds on 23rd (CDH) was the sole double-figure count. Four were at Bothal Pond on 14th (TD), three at Big Waters and one to two at Castron, Grindon Lough, Ladyburn Lake, Marden Quarry and Tynemouth Boating Lake.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Peak counts were 82 at Killingworth Lake on 16th (KWY), 43 at QEII Lake on 23rd (CDH), 37 at Castle Island on 13th (PRM), 21-26 at Grindon Lough, Linton Ponds and Tynemouth Boating Lake, 16 at Marden Quarry, and two to seven at Arcot, Bothal and Cocklawburn Ponds, Big Waters, Jesmond Dene, Newcastle Leazes Park and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

An interesting
comparison

The juvenile Lesser
Scaup and a Tufted
Duck

Marden Quarry

Keith York

**Scaup** *Aythya marila*

Two were at Cresswell Pond on 10th (TRD), two at Holy Island Lough on 5th (CL) and one at Druridge Pools on 19th (BMo).

Lesser Scaup *Aythya marila*

A juvenile first noted at Marden Quarry on 5th remained all month from 9th, except for a brief visit to Tynemouth Boating Lake on 10th (AC *et al.*). If accepted, this will be the fourth individual to be recorded in the county.

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

110 were at Cocklawburn on 3rd (MHu), 100 at Stag Rocks on 27th (ADM), 50 at Seahouses harbour, 40 at Goswick and ten to 17 at Lindisfarne NNR and Seaton Sluice.

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

Singles flew N at Hauxley on 8th (HRS) and Newbiggin on 25th (STH). Four were at Goswick on 27th-28th (PRM/MSH) and one to two there on 16th and 21st (JD/ASJ), two off Monks' House on 9th (TM), one at Stag Rocks on 7th (RNa) and two on 27th (ADM) and one off Ross on 9th.

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

Coastal movement involved 226 N at Snab Point on 9th (JR), 112 N and 22 S at Hauxley between 8th -29th (HRS), 65 N at Tynemouth on 30th (JPOD), 30 S at St Mary's on 19th (MSH) and 12 N at Newbiggin. A flock of 520+ at Cheswick Sands on 28th contained 50%+ females/juveniles (Tbr) and 250 were at nearby Goswick on 21st (MH). Several flocks off East Chevington on 9th totalled 280+ (MH) and two were at Stag Rocks.

Black Scoter *Melanitta americana*

A drake (possibly the same individual found at Bamburgh in April this year) was at Goswick regularly between 11th-27th (RA/CBD/ASJ/MSK *et al.*).

Surf Scoter *Melanitta perspicillata*

A drake was at Goswick on 12th-13th (RA/TRD/ASJ) and 26th (JD).

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

Most records were of birds on the move. Northerly movement involved nine at Holy Island on 13th (TRD), three at Hauxley (HRS) and Snab Point on 8th (ADM), two at Holy Island on 7th (IK), two at Newbiggin on 9th (ADM) and 26th (GB) and two at Snab Point on 9th (JR). Five flew S at Tynemouth on 8th (SPP) and three S on 24th (DRW), and two S at Hauxley on 23rd (HRS). One to four were at Goswick from 13th-29th and six were there on 26th-27th (JD/PRM *et al.*).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Two flew S at Newbiggin on 26th (GB). Seven were at Branton GP on 20th (JD), seven at Castle Island on 23rd (STH/TRC/AT), five at the Tweed Estuary on 14th (MHu) and three to four at Druridge Pools, East Chevington and the Tyne Estuary. One to two were also at Big Waters, Caistrion, Derwent and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, Grindon Lough, Hauxley Reserve and Newburn. A drake occasionally displayed to two ducks at Druridge Pools on 22nd (CDB).

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Six flew N and two S at Hauxley between 8th-29th (HRS), two flew N at Snab Point on 9th (JR) and one N at Newbiggin on 24th (GB). Budle Bay attracted 20 on 8th (SW), 20+ were at Goswick on 28th (MSH), 15 at Cresswell Pond on 24th (MSH) and two to 11 regularly there between 5th-27th, 12 at Cheswick Black Rocks on 18th (TRD/JD), 11 at Holy Island on 25th (ADM), six at Budle Bay, four at the Blyth Estuary and one to two at Druridge, Hauxley Reserve and Low Newton.

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

12 flew N at Holy Island on 12th (ADM) and two NW on 14th (ADM), and one N at Hauxley on 9th (HRS). Peak counts were 31 at Branton GP on 20th (JD), 12 at the Tweed Estuary on 14th (MHu), eight were at Newcastle Exhibition Park on 14th (GB/DM), Rothbury on 8th (JD) and Warkworth on 5th (JMA), six at West Ord and three to four at Airy Holm Reservoir, Budle Bay, Jesmond Dene, Holy Island and Killingworth Lake. One to two were also at Berwick, Bywell, the Coquet Estuary, Derwent and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, East Chevington, Felton, Hagg Bank (Wylam), Kitty Brewster, Longhoughton, Newburn, Tows Bank and West Hartford.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

On 15th 250 obviously released birds were seen near Ingram (JMA) when 39 were at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) (MNC). Six were in the Juniper-Dye House area on 18th, three at Ordley on 25th and two were in the Hawksteel-Round Hill area on 1st (BNR). A single was with Grey Partridge at Spittal (Newbiggin) on 2nd (GB).

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

The largest gathering was in the Gloucester Lodge-Meggie's Burn area of Blyth where 38-39 were present on 23rd/29th (MSH/BB). Elsewhere 28 were at Spittal (Newbiggin) on 2nd (GB), 23 at Ogle on 22nd (ADM), 18 at Cresswell Pond on 30th (ASH) and 17 at Ellington on 5th (TB). Counts of 15 were noted at Bothal Pond on 1st (IRD), Waren Mill Caravan Park on 15th (CGK), Pegswood on 26th (TB), Hemscott Hill Links on 28th (ASJ) and all month at Blyth GC (per PG). 14 were at Prestwick Carr on 12th (MNC), 13 at Holywell on 20th (ASJ), 12 near Horton Grange on 17th (ADM) and Newbiggin Ash Lagoon Bank on 27th (STH), 11 at Big Waters on 10th (NFO) and Scaffold Hill Farm (Wallsend) on 4th (JPD) and ten at Newbiggin GC on 25th (GB) and West Ord on 31st (MHu). One to nine were seen at Bellasis Bridge, Bell's Dunes (Cresswell), Chevington Moor, Cresswell Pond, Goswick, Sandy Bay (Newbiggin), Seaton Delaval, Snab Point and Warkworth Gut.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

On 3rd 45 were in the Newmoor (Ashington) area (TB), 21 were at Hartley West Farm (Holywell Dene) on 27th (RJP) and 17 in the Hawksteel-Round Hill area on 1st (BNR). Eight were at Combhills (Slaley) on 21st and two in a Netherton Park (Stannington) garden on 16th.

Diver species *Gavia sp.*

Four unidentified divers flew N at Hauxley on 9th (HRS).

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

On 9th 20 flew N at Snab Point in 2 hours (JR), eight flew N at Newbiggin on 26th (GB), six flew N and two S at Hauxley on 8th (HRS). Two flew S at Hauxley on 1st and N at Newbiggin on 25th, singles flew S at St Mary's Island on 7th and Hauxley on 15th and one was seen flying W along the River Tyne between Heddon-Ovingham on 24th (MH). The largest gatherings were 35 at Goswick on 22nd (IK), 28 in Druridge Bay on 1st (TRD/JD), 23 at Ross on 28th (MJC), 12 at Cheswick Black Rocks on 28th (MSH) and seven off The Heugh (Holy Island) on 16th (ASJ). One to three were seen at Dunstanburgh Castle, East Chevington, Meadow Haven (Berwick), Newton Point, Seaton Sluice, Spittal Bay (Berwick) and Stag Rocks.

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*

Singles flew N at Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) on 7th (IK) and S at Newton Point on 28th (TRD/JD). Two were off Stag Rocks on 9th (GRo) and Goswick on 11th (RA). Singles were at Annstead on 9th (IBDa/KDa), Goswick on 13th/16th/23rd/27th (TRD/ASJ/DRW/PRM), in Druridge Bay on 14th (GMi) and at Ross Back Sands on 23rd (*per* NNBC) and Stag Rocks on 25th (Rna).

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

On 8th five flew S and three flew N at Snab Point and three flew S at Newbiggin on 7th, where singles flew S on 9th and N on 14th/23rd (ADMc). A single flew S at Goswick Sands on 28th (MSH). Singles were off Ross on 9th (RA) and 28th (MJC) in summer plumage off Hadston Carrs on 15th (GMi) and off Stag Rocks on 28th (ADM).

Sooty Shearwater *Puffinus griseus*

Light N passage continued to be noted with a peak count of three at Newbiggin on 7th (JR). Singles flew N at Dunstanburgh Castle on 3rd, Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) on 23rd and Druridge on 24th.

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

Light passage was noted with two N at Newbiggin on 7th (JR) and at Goswick on 26th (JD). Singles flew S at Dunstanburgh Castle on 3rd, Shoreston Rocks on 9th and Hartley cliffs on 24th.

***Macronesian Shearwater** *Puffinus baroli*

An individual was seen flying N at Tynemouth on 8th and was watched for seven minutes (SPP/TD).

Storm Petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus*

An unfortunate individual was caught and eaten by a Great Black-backed Gull at Stag Rocks on 23rd (RNa).

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

Only small numbers were noted during the month with very light passage. At Snab Point 12 flew N in 20 minutes on 23rd and at Hauxley three flew N on 8th with singles N on 1st and S on 8th. At Goswick 50+ fed offshore on 13th (ASJ). Counts of 20 were a party fishing along the channels at high tide at Fenham Flats on 3rd (IK) and at Cheswick Black Rocks on 18th (TRD/JD). One to three were noted off Cresswell, Druridge, East Chevington, Goswick, Monks' House and Stag Rocks.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Ten flew S at Hauxley on 26th (HRS) and two flew N over Prestwick Carr on 14th. The peak counts were 144 in Blyth South Harbour on 14th (STH), 110 at Black Law (Lindisfarne NNR) on 16th (ASJ), 42 at North Shields Fish Quay on 14th (JMA), 31 at Castle Island on 4th (LJM), 22 at Derwent Reservoir on 7th (IFo) and in the Tweed Estuary on 14th (MHu), 18 at Killingworth Lake on 20th (BMo) and 15 at Big Waters on 30th (GB). Smaller gatherings were 11 at Gosforth Park on 31st, and ten at QEII Lake on 23rd, Woodhorn Flashes on 25th, ten at Sandstell Point (Berwick) on 31st, nine at Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 9th and Hauxley on 25th and seven, including colour-ringed White PJD, ringed as a chick at Inverbervie, NE Scotland 12th June 2011. One to four were noted at Berwick Old Bridge, Bolam Lake, Bothal Pond, Catcleugh Reservoir, Elswick Wharf, Guessburn (Stocksfield), Hagg Bank (Wylam), Holywell Dene, Millennium Bridge (Newcastle), Newcastle Quayside, Wark, West Allotment Pond and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

***Continental Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis*

A juvenile was at Tynemouth Boating Lake on 10th (AC) and a juvenile/first winter at Cresswell Pond on 24th (MSH).

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

100+ were at Long Ridge (Holy Island) on 16th (ASJ) and 45+ were at Goswick on 27th (PRM). The peak high-tide roost count at Blyth South Harbour was 30 on 14th (STH) and 20 roosted at Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 9th (MHu). One to eight were seen at Black Rocks (Cheswick), Druridge, Dunstanburgh Castle, Monks' House, Newton Point, Seaton Sluice, Spittal Bay (Berwick) and Stag Rocks.

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

Two were at Cresswell Pond on 12th (ADMc). Two were also at Gosforth Park on 13th, where one was present all month (NHSN). Singles were at East Chevington on 1st (TRD/JD) and 27th (MSK/NEWT).

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

The species continued to be well reported with 37 records received this month. The peak counts were six at Beal Road Ends (Lindisfarne NNR) on 13th (ASJ), five at Holy Island causeway on 10th (TM) and four in the Blyth Estuary at Kitty Brewster from 1st-5th (ADMc/BB/AC). One to three were recorded in the Lindisfarne NNR area ranging from Goswick to Budle Bay on nine further dates. Two were still present in the Blyth Estuary on 15th/16th with a single still remaining until 30th. Two were also seen on the River Wansbeck at North Seaton on 15th and Castle Island on 23rd and at Yarrow Slake (Tweed Estuary) on 22nd. Singles were noted at Eshott on 12th, the Sleek Burn on 2nd, Lyne Burn on 23rd and on a small pond near Gosforth Park NR on 30th.

A Little Egret
Blyth
20th October
Brian Bullough

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

A flock of 21 migrants arrived from NE at Holy Island on 1st and crossed over the island to SW. This was the observer's largest group ever for the site (IK). The peak counts were 19 in the Tweed Estuary on 14th, nine at Craster on 6th (JMA), Blyth Estuary on 16th (DM/STH/PJA) and Holy Island on 30th (ADM), seven in the Hauxley area on 8th (HRS) and five at Hartley West Farm (Holywell Dene) on 5th (RJP). One to four were noted at Arcot Pond, Big Waters, Blyth Harbour, Boulmer, Castle Island, Cresswell Pond, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Forest Lodge (Tarsset Burn), Marden Quarry, Monks' House Pool, Newbiggin Ash Lagoon, Plessey, Prestwick Carr, West Hartford and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Grebe species *Podiceps sp.*

One flew N at Hauxley on 9th (HRS).

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

The highest counts were 25 at Castle Island on 23rd (AT), 17 at Bothal Pond on 1st (IRD), 11 at Druridge Pools on 1st (TRD/JD), eight at Cresswell Pond on 1st (STH/IFo) and Linton Pond on 23rd (CDH) and six at Hauxley on 8th (HRS), Airy Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield) on 16th (IFo) and Gosforth Park on 18th (BB). Five were in the Blyth Estuary and at Ladyburn Lake and one to two at Big Waters, Bywell Cottagebank gravel pit, Cocklawburn Pond, Grindon Lough, High Stanners (Morpeth) and Newton Pool.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

A single flew N at Hauxley on 9th (HRS). The highest counts were five at East Chevington on 22nd/28th/30th (DHH/ASJ/MSH) and four during the month at Branton GP (IBDa/KDa) and Big Waters on 16th (GB). Two were at Derwent Reservoir up to 7th (IFo) and singles were noted at Blyth Estuary, Bothal Pond, Cresswell Pond, QEII Lake, Whittle Dene Reservoirs and on the sea in Druridge Bay, at Hauxley and in Sandon Bay (Holy Island).

A Great Crested Grebe at Blyth
by Brian Bullough on 7th October

**Red-necked Grebe** *Podiceps grisegena*

Singles flew N at Tynemouth Priory on 8th (SPP) and Newbiggin on 9th (ADMc). Three accompanied the scoter flock off Goswick on 15th (CDB) with singles being noted at Goswick, Lindisfarne NNR and St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) all on 16th (ASJ/MJCo/IK).

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

A gathering of seven was off Ross on 28th (MJC) and singles were offshore at Cheswick Black Rocks on 18th (TRD/JD), Seahouses on 28th (ADM), Goswick on 29th (CGK/PS) and Stag Rocks on 30th (ADM).

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Three birds were at Bywell Cottagebank on 10th (BNR) and single birds were seen at Stocksfield on 19th (BNR), Low Waskerley on 22nd (IFo) and near Styford on 25th (BNR).

White-tailed Eagle *Haliaeetus albacilla*

On 13th a sub-adult flew west, pursued by Jackdaws *Corvus monedula* near Halton Lea Gate (per SW).

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

On 5th & 23rd two birds were at West Chevington (SPP/JR) and on 9th two were at Blagdon (per PCF). Single birds were noted throughout the month in the Druridge Bay area and at Prestwick Carr on 1st (per PCF), Newbiggin on 26th (ASJ) and at Cramlington on 30th (GMi).

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

Single birds were noted on Holy Island on several dates (IK/RA *et al.*), Seahouses on 9th (IBDa/KDa) and at four inland sites (AB/LB *et al.*).

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

Only one record this month involving a male flying South at Fenham Mill on 26th (PRM).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Three birds were on Holy Island on 2nd (MJC/ADM) and at Cramlington on 30th (PJA). Two birds were in a Walbottle Garden (KR/LR) and at Scotland Gate (SLB/MSK) throughout the month and two birds were also at Marden Quarry on 11th (BB), Lesbury on 15th (JR) and at Stag Rocks on 21st (MSK/NEWT). Single birds were noted at over 30 sites during the month.

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

11 birds were near Longhorsley on 17th (ASJ); eight birds were in the Wylam/Prudhoe area on 24th (MH). Six birds were at Prestwick Carr, Tows Bank and Stamfordham (MH/MN *et al.*), five were seen at Big Waters (SPP), Grindon Lough (PRM) and on the River Blyth at W Hartford (LJM). 48 records of one to four birds were received.

Rough-legged Buzzard *Buteo lagopus*

A juvenile was observed at Goswick on 26th (MSK/NEWT).

Osprey *Pandion haliaetuss*

Two records this month, one of a juvenile at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd (IFo) and the other of a bird on road kill east of Fourstones on 4th. This bird was believed to be a possible young migrant which was grounded by gale force winds taking an opportunistic meal (AJR).

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Eight birds were again at Prestwick Carr on 11th (ASJ), five were in the Ingoe/Matten area on 15th (ASJ) and four birds were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 20th (PRM). One to three birds were recorded from 30 further sites.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Up to three birds were noted on Holy Island during the month (MJC *et al.*). Single birds were noted at Bamburgh, Boulmer, Budle Bay, East Chevington, Elwick, the River Coquet Estuary, St Mary's and at Seahouses. Single birds were seen at four inland sites during the month.

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Up to three birds were in Budle Bay during the month (CGK/MH/AA). Two birds were at Holy Island on 2nd (MJC/ADM) and at East Chevington on 3rd (ASJ). Single birds were noted at a further 11 sites.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Three birds were heard or seen throughout the month at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN/BB). Other records of birds either heard or seen came from Backworth, Big Waters, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Holy Island and Low Newton Pool.

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

24 birds were at Druridge Pools on 8th (CDB), 20 were seen at Marden Quarry on 16th (DM/STH/PJA) and 11 were at QEII CP on 23rd (CDH). One to eight birds were at six further sites during the month.

A Moorhen
Marden Quarry
by Adriana Buskin



Coot *Fulica atra*

The highest count this month was of 109 birds at Killingworth Lake on 28th (LJM); 73 were at East Chevington on 15th (PCF). On 16th 45 birds were at Big Waters (GB) and at Marden Quarry (DM/STH/PJA), 22 were at Gosforth Park NR on 31st (BB). One to eighteen birds were at four other sites.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Most records relate to high-tide roosts: 420 at Lindisfarne NNR, Guile Point on 13th (ASJ), 142 at St Mary's on 10th (ASJ), 136 at Berwick on 4th (MHu), 110 at Blyth staithes on 25th (STH) and 55-72 at Berwick GC, Hauxley NR and Seaton Sluice. Also, 20 were in the Tweed Estuary on 14th.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

The most were 75 at Long Nanny on 12th (TM) and 40 at Berwick GC on 23rd (MHu). In addition 17-35 were found at Berwick Little Beach, Cheswick Sands, Cresswell, Low Newton and Seahouses and small numbers in five other places at or near the coast.

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

On 16th counts of 4,000 roosting at Lindisfarne NNR, Beal Point (IK), 3,200 at Goswick Sands (DGB) and 3,000 at Fenham Flats (ASJ) may well have involved some of the same; on 15th 2,000 were visible from the Holy Island causeway (TD). The peak at St Mary's was 2,500+ on 7th (MSH) and 1,500 were at Swallow Pond on 30th (JPD); other large counts were of 800 at Boulmer on 15th, 650 at East Chevington on 30th and 500 at Monks' House on 28th. Blyth, Cresswell Pond, Grindon Lough, Hartley, Newcastle (Town Moor) and Whittle Dene had 110-357 at times and smaller numbers appeared at a further eight places.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Most were in the north: 35 at Fenham Flats on 13th (ASJ), 34 in Budle Bay on 15th (CGK) and 30 at Goswick on 26th (JD). Ten were at East Chevington on 9th and one-nine at Beadnell, Berwick, Castle Island, Hauxley, St Mary's, the Tweed Estuary and Tynemouth.

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

In the north 690 at Fenham Flats on 13th (ASJ), 620 in Budle Bay on 15th (CGK) and 600+ from Holy Island causeway on 16th (ASJ); 570 in the Tweed Estuary on 14th (MHu). Cocklawburn, Cresswell Pond, Grindon Lough and St Mary's held 275-480 with 80-200 at Blyth, Bothal Pond and East Chevington. Smaller numbers appeared at Arcot Pond, Big Waters, Blagdon and West Hartford.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

High-tide roosts at Holy Island causeway contained 2,000+ on 13th (ASJ) and 500 at Goswick on 26th (JD); 180 were at Cheswick on 3rd (MHu) and 90 at Stag Rocks on 18th. In the south the peak at East Chevington was 250+ on 13th (MSK) and that at Cresswell Pond 171 on 17th. Also 160 were at Hadston Carrs on 18th and 110 at Snab Point on 25th. Other records show 32 at Newbiggin on 7th and two at Seaton Sluice on 24th.

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

A flock of at least 600 at Holy Island North Shore on 26th is believed to be the largest seen in the County since the late 1980s (*per* NNBC). Earlier 200+ were roosting at high tide at Goswick Sands on 13th (MSH). The peak at St Mary's touched 100 on 28th (JPD), 45 were at Snab Point on 7th, 35 at Whitley Bay on 28th and five-15 at Berwick, East Chevington, Hauxley, Low Newton and Stag Rocks.

***White-rumped Sandpiper** *Calidris fuscicollis*

One was at Fenham Flats on 7th (RA).

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

At Fenham Flats nine were seen on 7th, six on 9th and three on 15th (RA). The only other was in the Blyth estuary on 15th (STH).

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

The Stag Rocks stronghold held a peak of 42 on 13th (ASJ) and 15 were at Snab Point on 28th (ASJ). Elsewhere up to four were noted at Beadnell, Berwick, Cresswell Pond, Hauxley, Low Newton, Newbiggin, North Blyth staithes (rare here), Seaton Sluice and St Mary's.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

On 13th high-tide roosts held 1,000+ at Holy Island causeway (ASJ) and 500+ at Goswick Sands (MSH). On 11th 86 were present at Berwick Little Beach and 67 at St Mary's and the peak at East Chevington was 32 on 8th; small numbers were found at Blyth, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Hauxley, Low Newton and Stag Rocks. The only one inland was at Grindon Lough on 13th.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

East Chevington continued to be attractive with 40 on 5th (SPP) but after 16 on 11th numbers dwindled to two by 28th. The only one away from there was at Monks' House Pool on 26th.

Jack Snipe *Limnocyrtus minimus*

The first arrival was noted at Halleypike Lough on 4th and 12th (AJR), followed by one at Swallow Pond on 14th (SPP). Two were close in front of the hide at Cresswell Pond on 16th (ASH/TD/TRD/JD *et al.*) with singles seen there on 17th, 20th, 23rd and 30th. Further singles were found in Rising Sun CP on 17th and 23rd, Hauxley on 22nd and East Chevington on 23rd.

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

19 were at Monks' House Pool on 28th (MSH), 12 at East Chevington on 16th, 11 at Backworth on 30th and up to ten at Holywell East Pond. Three to seven occurred at Big Waters, Bothal Pond, Cresswell Pond, Grindon Lough, Holy Island, Prestwick Carr, St Mary's, West Hartford and Whitfield Moor. Small numbers were noted at another seven places including one flying SW in off the sea at Craster on 16th (MJC).

Snipe is a **target species** for 2011. Please report all records.



A group of Snipe at Cresswell
by John Clark on 21st October

***Long-billed Dowitcher** *Limnodromus scolopaceus*

Two flew into East Chevington on 5th (MH/AA) and stayed just long enough for a few other observers to catch up with them before they flew off S. The finders were B Dack/J Leggett (*per* AT).

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

After singles at Craster on 3rd and Holy Island on 13th and 16th, the main influx took place from 23rd including five at Hauxley on 25th (HRS). There were at least two on Holy Island 24th-26th, two at Newbiggin and at St Mary's on 25th and singles around this period at Bamburgh, Newcastle, North Shields and Tynemouth. There were three further reports of singles at Newbiggin, including one flying S offshore on 26th (GB). Another hit an office block at Longbenton on 26th and died.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Six were at Monks' House Pool on 7th to 9th (IBDa *et al.*) with still five on 13th; singles were there on 2nd and 26th. Three were at East Chevington on 15th with one or two there on a few other days. At least one was present on Holy Island almost throughout with two on 19th and two flew S at Hauxley on 26th. Singles were found in Budle Bay on 15th/16th and at Cresswell Pond on 2nd and 24th.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

At Hauxley 60 flew N on 9th (HRS). Around 1,500 were at Holy Island on 16th (ASJ) with 140 noted in Budle Bay on 16th (CGK) and 100 at Goswick on 26th (JD). Berwick held 12 on 31st, the Blyth Estuary seven on 14th and five were at Low Newton on 20th/28th.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Two flew S at Ross on 5th (MJC) and singles were noted at Cresswell Pond on 2nd (ASH), Holy Island on 16th (DGB) and Hauxley on 25th/26th (HRS). Also on 26th one flew S at Holy Island (MJC).

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Boulmer held 270 on 13th (TM), the peak at St Mary's reached 150 on 28th (JPD), 120 were at Hauxley NR on 26th (HRS) and 100 at Holy Island on 6th (JMA); 64-74 were at Berwick, Cocklawburn and the Tweed Estuary. At Big Waters 11 flew W on 9th and small numbers were found at five other places. Four feeding on the moor at Hawksteel / Round Hill on 1st were unseasonable.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

A late one was at Cheswick on 3rd (MHu).

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

The only one was at Grindon Lough on 13th (PRM).

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

Two were at Fenham Flats on 7th (RA) and two on the R. Blyth at Kitty Brewster on 15th/16th (PJA/GB). One stayed at Cresswell Pond from 6th to 30th with singles at Holy Island on 24th and at Warkworth Gut on 29th.

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Fenham Flats had two on 7th and four on 15th (RA), three were in Budle Bay on 15th/16th (CGK) and three at Warkworth Gut on 27th (*per* NNBC). Two were at Beal Point on 9th and singles were noted at Warkworth Gut on 13th and 29th, at Beal Sluice on 19th and Budle Bay on 30th.

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Budle Bay held 160 on 15th (CGK) and 152 were in the Tweed Estuary on 14th (MHu). Peaks at Hauxley NR were 61 on 5th and 26th, 40 at Holy Island on 11th and 30+ at Monks' House Pool on 26th. Two were at Bothal Pond on 28th and one at Castle Island on 16th.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

100 were present at St. Mary's on 25th (KWY) and Hauxley NR attracted 65 on 23rd (HRS); 20-34 were at Berwick, Blyth, Cresswell Pond and Stag Rocks with small numbers at Low Newton and the Tweed estuary.

***Grey Phalarope** *Phalaropus fulicarius*

One off Hauxley beach on 18th (TW) flew S after about 15 minutes. Others were found at Seahouses on 22nd (RA) and Newbiggin Beacon Point on 25th (MH/TRC *per* GB/STH).

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

At Newbiggin seven flew N on 24th (ADMc) and three went S at Snab Point on 8th (ADMc). Two flew N at Tynemouth on 24th (DRW) and singles were noted at Newbiggin on 7th and 23rd, at Stag Rocks on 9th, Goswick on 23rd and 29th, Holy Island on 23rd and Hauxley on 25th.

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

During one hour at Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) 17 flew S on 7th (IK) and three did so next day. Four flew N at Hauxley on 23rd and three moved N at Newbiggin on 24th. One or two appeared occasionally at Budle Point, Goswick, Holy Island, Newbiggin, Stag Rocks and Tynemouth. An exhausted individual was seen dying at Cresswell Pond on 24th.

Long-tailed Skua *Stercorarius longicaudus*

Three juveniles, including two together, flew N off Tynemouth Priory on 8th (SPP/TD).

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

At Newbiggin seven flew N on 24th (GB); on 23rd four moved N at Hauxley (HRS) and three N at Newbiggin (ADMc). Three flew N at Snab Point on 24th and two N there on 20th and 23rd. Singles were seen at Boulmer, Dunstanburgh Castle, Howick Haven and Holy Island.

Sabine's Gull *Xema sabini*

One was seen at Annstead Pt (Seahouses) on 22nd (RA) followed by a juvenile N at Hauxley the following day (SWA).

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

Passage counts involved 40 per hour N at Hauxley on 22nd and 75 per hour N there the following day (HRS). Also 36 were noted S at Spittal Bay on 24th (MHu). The peak count was the 500 seen at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 19th where several flocks of 70 – 80 were noted feeding (MH/AA). Virtually all of these were adults with only two juveniles. Other localities also recorded feeding flocks with 45 at Cocklawburn on 17th (MHu) and up to 30 at Goswick on 13th and 29th (ASJ/CGK/PS) plus 20 at Newton on 20th (TRD/JD). Several other coastal localities recorded single figure counts.

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

The peak count noted was 2,000 at Walbottle on 9th (KR/LR) which were following a plough. 845 were counted on a WeBS survey of the Tweed Estuary on 14th (MHu) and 800 were at Swallow Pond on 4th (JPD). Other counts of 100 – 250 were made at Arcot Pond, Big Waters, Castle Island, Grindon Lough, Hauxley, Leazes Park, Newcastle Town Moor and West Hartford. Smaller counts were also noted elsewhere.

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

Many were again noted offshore with the peak count of 118 at Goswick on 29th (CGK) with up to 50 also seen on other dates there from 12th to 27th (RA *et al.*). The only other sites to have significant counts were 30 at Seahouses on 22nd (RA) and ten adults and two juveniles N at Snab Pt (Cresswell) on 8th (ADMc). Up to five were also found at Bamburgh, Berwick, Budle Bay, Druridge, Hadston Carr, Monks' House Pool, Newbiggin, Newton Pool, Snab Pt, Spittal Bay and Tynemouth. The large number of localities shows the extent of this late autumn movement.

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

The main focus as always was at Newbiggin where a peak of 22 was noted on 15th (STH) but the only other count noted there this month was seven on 10th which included three adults, one second-winter and three first-winters (TRD). The only other sites to see more than one individual were Fenham Flats with two on 7th (RA), an adult and first-winter at Holywell Pond on 15th (SPP) and an adult and first-winter at Hauxley on 8th (HRS). Single adults were found at Brierdene, Cullercoats, Holy Island, Monks' House Pool, St Mary's Island, Swallow Pond, Tynemouth boating lake and Warkworth. Also single first-winters were found at Linton Pond and Brierdene.

Common Gull *Larus canus*

The main count was at Grindon Lough with ca.800 on 16th (JR). 100 – 220 were noted at Haltwhistle, Juniper, South Charlton and the Tweed Estuary. Up to 50 were noted at a number of localities.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

Counts were low with most birds having already moved south. Up to eight were located at Big Waters, Castle Island, Cowden, Derwent Reservoir, Elswick Wharf, Lynemouth Flash, Southfield Green, the Tweed Estuary and West Hartford during the month.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

The peak counts involved 1,250 at Monks' House Pool on 6th (JMA) and ca.1,000 on fields at Holywell on 2nd (ASJ). 767 were found on a WeBS survey of the Tweed Estuary on 14th (MHu). Groups of 100 – 350 were noted at East Hartford, Haggerston, Plessey and Tynemouth. Up to 68 were found at a number of localities both coastal and inland.

A Herring Gull
Tynemouth
4th October
by Peter Fletcher

**'Northern' Herring Gull** *Larus argentatus argentatus*

Two individuals of this northern race were found at Hauxley on 25th (HRS).

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

The peak count noted was 500 at Holywell in fields W of the village on 2nd (ASJ). Groups of 100 – 200 were found at Castle Island, Hauxley and North Shields Fish Quay. Otherwise up to 75 were noted at a number of coastal localities.

Black Tern *Chilidonias niger*

After the autumn influx only one remained with a single off Craster Harbour on 3rd (JD).

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

Up to seven noted at Cheswick, Druridge Bay, East Chevington, Hauxley, Seahouses and Seaton Sluice with the final sighting being two at Stag Rocks on 23rd (IBDa/KDa).

Common Tern / Arctic Tern *Sterna hirundo* / *Sterna paradisaea*

One was noted on 28th at Goswick Sands (MSH).

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Three were offshore at Hauxley on 1st (HRS) with an adult and two first-winters at Stag Rocks on 18th (TRD/JD) and single juveniles at Goswick on 22nd (IK) and Cresswell on 30th (CDB).

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

Up to six noted at Holy Island & Stag Rocks with one or two at Budle Pt, Cocklawburn, Cresswell Pond, Goswick, Monks' House and Newbiggin. Most reports involved juveniles.

Auk sp *Uria aalge* / *Alca torda*

Passage movements noted at Hauxley with 210 per hour N on 22nd and 80 per hour N the following day (HRS).

Guillemot *Uria aalge*

Passage movements involved 115 N at Hauxley on 8th (HRS), 44 N in two hours at Snab Pt (Cresswell) on 9th (JR) and 30 N at Dunstanburgh in 45 minutes on 3rd (TRD/JD). A high count of 210 was made at Snab Pt on 1st with many groups loafing offshore. 30 were also noted there on 30th (MSH). 19 were offshore at Cocklawburn and 17 at Spittal Bay on 17th (MHu). Otherwise up to five were offshore at Cheswick, Druridge, East Chevington, Holy island, Monks' House, Newton Pt, St Mary's Island and Spittal Bay.

Razorbill *Alca Torda*

Only singles reported at Dunstanburgh, Newton Pt and Stag Rocks.

Black Guillemot *Cephus grylle*

One was reported offshore at Annstead (Seahouses) on 3rd (*per* NNBC).

Little Auk *Alle alle*

One was found recently dead in Holy Island village on 4th (IK).

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

Three were at Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 23rd (MHu).

Rock Dove / Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

Small flocks occurred at Holy Island on 1st with 40+ in the farmyard and 35+ at the Priory, 20+ were also near the A1 at Mousen (DWS) on the same date with 13 at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 15th and 14 there on 30th (DM).

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

The peak count was 26 at Swallow Pond on 29th with 12 at Rising Sun Farm on the same date (CDH). 11 were found in the Juniper/Dye House/Dotland area on 7th with nine at Haltwhistle North Wood on 15th (BNR), seven at Big Waters on 9th (GB) and six at Cresswell Pond on 7th (TRD). One to four birds were at Arcot Pond, Bywell South, Cresswell, Grindon Lough, Meggie's Burn (Blyth), Marden Quarry and in a Walbottle garden throughout the month.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

A big count at Holy Island on 12th of around 200 (ADM), 107 at Bywell S / Stocksfield Guessburn on 19th and 86 at Tows Bank S / W Asholme Common on 22nd (BNR). 16 were in Jesmond Dene on 2nd, ten at Lindisfarne NNR on 16th and Hauxley on 8th. Late breeding was evident with three juveniles in a Walbottle garden on 9th and a pair with young in nest at Holy Island on 3rd.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Holy Island was again the big attraction with *ca.*90 there on 5th and *ca.*40 there on 23rd (ADM). Elsewhere 26 were at High Chibburn Farm Druridge on 24th (ASJ), 22 at Big Waters on 8th and 9th (GB/ASJ) and 21 at Netherton Park (Stannington) on 7th (RWM/MIM). One to fourteen were at Dinnington, Holy Island Village and Scots Gap market.

Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*

A welcome sprinkling of this declining species with one found at Big Waters on 8th by Keith Bradley and watched thereafter by many until the 12th. One was heard at Branton Gravel Pits on 11th (Iba/KDa). One flew W over Prior's Park allotments (Tynemouth) on 13th (DRW) and another found with a broken leg at Scremerston was taken into care by local Vets (BWG).



The much viewed Turtle Dove at Big Waters

by Peter Fletcher

8th October

Owl sp.

Barn, Little and Tawny were all heard at 20.30h within one small area at Waren Mill on 15th (CGK).

Owls are **target species** for 2012. Please report all records.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Three young were found in a nest hole at Humshaugh on 5th with fledging noted on the 25th (JWP/RC) and a resident pair was noted regularly throughout the month at Holy Island (IK). Singles were at the A1 Wooler turn-off on 12th (ADM), Spindlestone on 13th (MSH), Wark (N Tyne) on 22nd, Hepple on 26th (PRM) and Ordley on 28th (BNR).

Barn Owl is a **target species** for 2012. Please report all records.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

A bird was at the regular site at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) throughout the month (TB) with singles at Kirkley Mill on 2nd (ASJ), Shiremoor on 8th (CGK), Dinnington on 9th & 23rd (PCF), Holywell Dene on 19th (RJP) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 20th (PRM).

Little Owl is a **target species** for 2012. Please report all records.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Nearly all reports were calling birds with two at Fulbeck (Morpeth) (TD) and Northumberland Park (North Shields) (MNC) throughout the month and at Longhirst on 1st, Spindlestone on 13th (MSH) and Ellington on 21st (TB). Singles were at Dipton Wood E, Dotland, Ellington (on four dates), Eshott, Letah Wood (Hexham) (on two dates), Ordley, Prestwick Carr, Riding Mill, Simonburn, Tows Bank S, and Wark (N Tyne) on three dates. Unfortunately there were three road casualties - at Whittle Colliery on 8th, Barmoor Farm (Morpeth) on the same date and Hepscott on 9th.

Tawny Owl is a **target species** for 2012. Please report all records.

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

Up to three birds were seen perched together regularly at Prestwick Carr from 1st to 22nd (ASJ/PCF). Singles were at Holy Island on five dates from 14th to 26th (RA/ADM/IK/MJC/CMur/VWa), at Tynemouth on 25th (DRW) and Hauxley on the same date (HRS).

Long-eared Owl is a **target species** for 2012. Please report all records.

A Long-eared Owl digi-scoped on Holy Island
26th October
by Mike Carr

**Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus*

Very well represented with the gathering at Prestwick Carr numbering ten on 1st and 9th and multiple counts most days throughout the month (PCF/ASJ). An influx of birds on the coast was evident with two at the Ash Lagoons (Newbiggin) on 21st rising to four on 27th and 30th (BB/MSK/AA/MH/ASH), three at West Hartford on 20th & 30th (PJA/LJM) and three at Holy Island on 21st-22nd (ADM/IK). Birds specifically noted coming in off the sea were two at St Mary's Island on 26th, and singles at Cresswell, Druridge Bay, Goswick, Holy Island, St Mary's Island, Snab Point and Tynemouth. Two were at Cresswell Pond, Longhoughton Steel and Woodhorn with singles seen at the above and four further locations including inland at Thirlwell Common.

Short-eared Owl is a **target species** for 2012. Please report all records.

Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*

The report for August should have read 'an immature or female'.

Swift *Apus apus*

Late individuals flew S at Beal Point (Lindisfarne NNR) on 3rd (IK) and NNW at St Mary's Island on 30th (SPP).

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

All reports were of singles all month at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN), Jesmond Dene on five dates (DWHB/MJCo/AA), Hauxley NR on three dates (HRS/JMA) and at Beal, Big Waters, the Blyth Estuary, Branton GP, Castle Island, R Wansbeck, Highford Bridge & High House Road, Meldon, Sleek Burn, Warkworth and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Just two sightings of singles at Rothbury on 7th (JD) and Sidwood on 25th (SW).

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Well reported with peaks of four at Swallowship Wood (Hexham) on 1st (AJH), Prior's Park (Tynemouth) on 2nd (CB), North Wood (Haltwhistle) on 15th (BNR) and Saley Hall on 21st (RMH). Three were at Prestwick Carr on 22nd, Sidwood on 25th and Hauxley on 26th with two at Big Waters, Blyth Cemetery, Newbiggin, Scotland Gate and Wark. Singles were at a further 23 widespread localities.

Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubiter*

A single was at The Snook (Holy Island) on 2nd (MJC/AM *et al.*) with another briefly at Cocklawburn on 3rd (MHu).

Magpie *Pica pica*

The peak count was 71 at Swallow Pond on 4th (JPD), around twenty came in to roost at Kitty Brewster (Blyth) on 3rd (BB), 12 at Hauxley NR on 16th (HRS), nine was the highest count for the month in a Walbottle garden on 9th (KR/LR), seven at Prestwick Carr on 3rd (PCF) and five worked together to dismantle a garden feeder at Cramlington on 6th (PJA). One to two were at Jesmond Dene and South Gosforth. A single at Tows Bank/W Asholme Common was regarded as unusual in an area with game-keeping (BNR).

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

On 3rd seven were at Borough Woods/Mitford Castle (ADM), five at Humford Mill (Bedlington) on 29th (JR), and three at Thrunton Woods on 2nd, Slaley Hall on 10th, Bothal on 14th, Gosforth Park on 18th, Ellington on 23rd, Tarsset Burn on 25th and Sidwood on the same date. Two were at Big Waters, Bywell S, Prestwick Carr, Scotland Gate and Swallow Pond frequently during the month with two at a further seven locations and singles at ten more.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

Large gatherings of 600 at Juniper/Dye House/Dotland/Barker House on 31st, 345 (flock of 270) at Tows Bank S/ W Ashholme on 11th and 160 (flock 105) at Bywell S / Stocksfield Guessburn on 10th (BNR), 100 at Walbottle Hall on 3rd (KR/LR) and Beacon Hill (Cramlington) on 22nd (DM) with 18 at Paddy Freeman's playing field on 18th (MJCo).

Birds displaying characteristics of the Nordic race *ssp monedula* were at Melton Park (Gosforth) on 3rd and 12th and on the beach at Newbiggin on 25th (GB).

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

There was one count of 210 near a rookery at Juniper/Dye House/ Dotland/ Barker House on 18th (BNR).

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

150 fed on acorns at Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 11th (MNC), 46 loafing at Black Middens (Tynemouth) on 2nd (CB), 25 at Hauxley on 29th (HRS) and four at Jesmond Dene on 19th (MJCo).

Raven *Corvus corax*

A group of four was found at Gilderdale Bridge on 16th (BNR), three at Coanwood Common on 15th (MH), three at Forest Lodge (Tarsset Burn) on 25th (SW), two at Parsons Shield / Williamstown N on 16th and College Valley on 17th with a single there on 20th (BNR/RHB).

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Well reported with peak counts due to migration of 38 at Holy Island on 2nd with 22 there on 14th and 21 on 3rd (MJC/ADM). 29 were at Craster on 16th, 11 at Ellington on 23rd, 10 at Ross on 3rd and at Prior's Park Tynemouth on 13th (MJC/TB/DRW). At Hauxley seven or more were present most days with peaks of 26 on 8th and 25 on 25th (HRS). Three to eight were at Bamburgh, Cramlington, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Links, East Chevington, Fenham Mill, Lindisfarne NNR, Newbiggin, Prestwick Carr, Scotland Gate and St Mary's Island with one to two at 12 further widespread localities.

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapillus*

Two birds were at St Mary's Island on 25th and 26th (AC/MSH/ASJ) with reports of singles there from 19th to 27th, at Hauxley on 25th (HRS) and Spittal (Newbiggin) on 26th (GB).

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

The largest count was 27 at Humford Mill (Bedlington) with 20 the peak at Hauxley on 25th (HRS), 14 at Bywell S / Stocksfield Guessburn on the same date and 11 at Corby's Crag (Edlingham) on 8th (JR). Fifteen remained at Hauxley on 30th of which five were ringed whilst four were at Jesmond Dene on 23rd and singles at Lindisfarne NNR and South Gosforth.

A Blue Tit at Prestwick Carr by Peter Fletcher

Great Tit *Parus major*

Humford Mill (Bedlington) again scored top with 18 on 29th (JR) with ten at Bywell S / Stocksfield Guessburn on 25th (BNR) and Hauxley on 25th (HRS), seven at Corby's Crag (Edlingham) on 8th and six at Jesmond Dene on the same date (MJCo). Singles were at South Gosforth and at Straight Lonnen (Holy Island) where it is regarded as a rarity.



Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

An impressive 36, mainly migrants, were at Craster on 16th (MJC), 11 at Humford Mill (Bedlington) on 29th (JR), eight at Hauxley on 15th (HRS), six at North Wood (Haltwhistle) on 15th (BNR) and at Chare Ends (Holy Island) on 23rd, the 3rd highest count for this locality (ADM). Birds visiting gardens were apparent with five the peak monthly count in Walbottle, three at Old Hartley and two all month at Marden Estate (Tynemouth). One to two were also at Cambois, Holy Island Village, Jesmond Dene and Newbiggin.

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

Four, two adults and two juveniles, were at Prestwick Carr on 15th (MRS) with multiple counts on four further dates during the month. Two were at Craster on 16th (MJC) with singles at Swallow Pond on 7th, Linden Hall on 8th, Shada Plantation near Bamburgh and Woodhorn on 16th and Whitley Bay GC on 25th.

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

On 16th two were at Letah Wood, Hexham (AJH) with all other reports being singles at Linden Hall on 1st, 16th & 30th (NFO), Newminster Cottage (Mitford Road) on 3rd (ADMc) and visiting a Fulbeck garden in Morpeth on 11th and 18th (TD).

Short-toed Lark *Calandrella brachydactyla*

A single bird circled over Brierdene (Whitley Bay) calling repeatedly before flying off S on 25th (NPD).

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Migration movements saw 89 SW in small groups at Craster on 16th (MJC), 50 including five singing at Holy Island on the same date and 33 there on the 14th and 29 on 13th (MJC/ADM). 32 including two singing for 15mins were at St Mary's on 12th (ASJ), 20-30 S at Hauxley on 1st (HRS), 22 at Prestwick Carr on 25th (PCF), 22 S at Berwick on 31st (MHu) and 20 at Ross on 3rd (MJC). Three to 17 were at Arcot Pond, Bamburgh, Bywell S, Cramlington, Druridge, Ellington, Lindisfarne NNR, Newbiggin and the A68 near Cowden.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

A single record of six at Branton GP on 4th (IBDa/KDa).

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

A flock of 40 fed at Druridge Pools on 5th (MH/AA), 28 flew SW and one N at Tows Bank S / W Asholme Common on 11th (BNR), 20 were at Powburn on 5th (IBDa/KDa), 18 at Sleafy Hall on 13th (RMH) and 15 at Holy Island on 12th (ADM). Five to 12 were at Ashington, Bywell S, Callerton Village, Druridge Links, Ellington, Hauxley NWT, Holy Island Village, Morpeth and Tuggal. One to four were at fifteen further widespread localities the latest being one S at Cresswell on 30th (CDB).

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

Thirty migrants fed over Holy Island Village on 2nd (IK), 16 below the promenade at Whitley Bay on 5th & 6th (ASJ), 13 at Bywell S / Stocksfield Guessburn on 10th (BNR) and 11 at Holywell Dene on 3rd (RJP). Late nests with adults feeding young were found at Beacon Hill (Cramlington) on 7th (PCF) and Rothbury on 7th (TRD). Three to five were at Southfield Green (Cramlington), Druridge Pools, East Chevington, East Ord, The Snook (Holy Island), Newbiggin and Netherton Park (Stannington) with one to two at three further locations the latest being one feeding with Swallows at Cresswell Village on 28th (ASJ).

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*

A bird was trapped and photographed on 2nd at Newton.

Cetti's Warbler in the hand
Newton Pool
2nd October
Gary Woodburn

**Long-tailed Tit** *Aegithalos caudatus*

Numbers in the Hauxley area increased from nine on 12th to ca.30 by 20th (HRS). Flocks of 20-24 were reported from Holywell Dene, Northumberland Park (North Shields) and Prestwick Carr (ASJ/PCF/MNC) and 15-19 from Edlingham, Ellington, Haltwhistle, Leazes Park (Newcastle), Longhorsley, Newbiggin, Ordley, Prior's Park, Stag Rocks and Tynemouth Priory. Counts of ten to 13 came from Allendale, Craster, Marden Quarry, Ovingham, Parson Shields, Tasset Burn, Twizel, West Hartford and Woodhorn. One to nine were reported from a further 12 localities.

Pallas's Warbler *Phylloscopus proregulus*

One at Hauxley NR on 25th was the only record (HRS).

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*

It was a very good month for this species with reports from 21 localities. Falls occurred from 2nd, again from 13th and there was a scattering of records later in the month from 26th. Holy Island was the most prolific site with 14-15 different individuals on the Island during the month, comprising up to nine from 2nd-6th (peak on 2nd); up to four from 13th-16th (peak on 14th) and one on 26th with at least one other at Beal road ends car park from 3rd-5th (MJC/ADM/IK *et al.*). Three to four were at Whitley Bay Cemetery on 15th (NPD); St Mary's Island/Wetland held two from 13th-14th, one on 19th and two from 24th-30th (MSH/ASJ/NPD/SPP *et al.*). Two were at Tynemouth Haven on 3rd and 9th (JPD/MPF/DRW); Craster held two on 16th (MJC) and one to two were at Hauxley RS on 15th and 25th-29th (HRS). From 2nd-9th singles were also reported from Berwick, Brierdene (Whitley Bay), Newbiggin (Ash lagoons), Prior's Park, QEII CP, Ridley Park (Blyth) and Woodhorn. The second fall 14th-17th also brought singles to Bamburgh, Hadston Carrs, Newbiggin (Mound and Ash lagoons), Ross and Whitley Bay (Astley track). Further singles at the end of the month were at Goswick and Marden Quarry on 26th and Cresswell Pond on 27th.



One of the autumn Yellow-broweds
The Snook, Holy Island
15th October
by Chris Barlow

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

There was a light coastal fall from 1st-3rd with peaks of 14 at Hauxley NR on 1st (HRS), eight at Holy Island on 2nd (MJC/ADM) and eight at Cambois, also on 2nd (ASH). Five + were at Bamburgh and three at Craster, both on 3rd (MSH/TRD/JD) and two at Woodhorn Church on 1st (STH/IFo). Mid-month five were at Craster on 16th (MJC), three + at St Mary's Island on 15th (MSH) and two at Holy Island from 13th-16th, while another light fall towards the end of the month produced a peak of eight at Holy Island from 26th-30th, three at Bamburgh on 28th and one to three at Hauxley NR from 22nd-30th. The highest inland count was five at Prestwick Carr on 1st (PCF). Singles were reported from a further 28 widespread localities.

Birds showing characteristics of the **Eastern race** *P.c.abietinus* were on Holy Island with one from 14th-19th, it or another on 23rd, three on 26th and singles on 28th and 30th (MJC/ADM). Another was at Hauxley on 25th (HRS).

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Holy Island had two on 2nd, reduced to one on 3rd (CGK/AC/ADM), two on 13th and singles on 15th-16th (ASJ/CDB/IK). The only other report was a single at Bamburgh on 3rd (MSH).

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

The majority were passage birds on the coast, most notably towards the end of the month. Holy Island held nine on 26th (MJC); five were at Newbiggin (Spittal) on 25th (GB) and four at Hauxley NR on 30th (HRS). Elsewhere during this period three were at Bamburgh on 26th and Tynemouth on 25th-26th. A light fall occurred mid-month when four were at Craster, Holy Island and Woodhorn Church and three at Tynemouth from 14th-16th. One to two were reported from a further 11 localities.

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

Singles (or single) were at Holy Island on 14th and 16th (MJC/ADM).

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

The only record was a single at Holy Island on 1st (IK).

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Two were at Hauxley NR on 25th (HRS).

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

A total of five were reported from four localities in Jesmond Dene on 19th (MJCo). Four were at Bothal on 14th (TB) and at Thrum Mill (Rothbury) on 25th (JD) and three at Humford Mill on 29th (JR). One to two were noted at a further ten localities.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Seven at Craster on 16th were considered to be migrants (MJC), as was a peak of five at Hauxley NR on 15th; one to two noted at this latter site on a further six dates during the month (HRS). Two were at Woodhorn on 2nd and Humford Mill on 29th and singles at a further nine inland and two coastal localities.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

The highest counts were at coastal localities, with 29 at Craster on 16th (MJC), a peak of 26 at Hauxley NR on 15th (HRS) and 11 at Holy Island on 13th (MJC); four to eight were at the latter locality from 10th-16th. Prestwick Carr had 16 (over 2km) on 29th (PCF) and ten were at Humford Mill on 29th (JR). Six at Belsay Hall on 20th and two in Jesmond Dene on 9th were the only other reports.

An alert Wren at Prestwick Carr
by Peter Fletcher
8th October

**Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris*

The largest flock at the beginning of the month was 450 at St Mary's on 1st (ASJ). There was an obvious influx later in the month with 1,500+ noted in a feeding flock at Goswick on 27th (PRM) and 700 at Gosforth Park on 31st (BB). At Hauxley NR numbers increased from 40 on 8th to a peak of 600+ on 25th-26th (HRS). Small numbers were moving in off the sea at Newbiggin on 24th and 26th. Elsewhere during this period 400 were at Snab Point and 350 at Newbiggin on 30th and 300+ at Seaton Sluice on 25th. Flocks of 100-200 were also reported from Big Waters, Cresswell, Hemscott Hill, Prestwick Carr and Shaftoe. Lower numbers were noted at a further six localities.

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

Three were reported from Thrum Mill (Rothbury) on 14th and 25th (TRD/JD), two at Ponteland Park on 25th (DHH), Warkworth on 29th (JMA) and West Holywell Village on 18th (SPP) and singles at three localities in Jesmond Dene and at Branton GP (river) and Sinderhope.

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

Singles were at Holy Island on 13th (MJC) and Craster on 16th (MJC).

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

A sizeable coastal influx occurred from 23th-26th. At Holy Island there were 200+ on 23rd, followed by ca.270 on 25th (ADM), with 217+ still present on the following day (PRM). Hauxley held 180 on 25th rising to 200 on 26th (HRS), when 150 were also at Northumberland Park (North Shields) (MNC). Earlier arrivals included a peak of 111 at Holy Island on 13th (MJC), 60 at Hauxley on 15th (HRS), 55 at Craster on 16th (MJC) and 40+ at St Mary's Island on 14th (MSH). Other notable flocks were 45+ at Fenham Mill on 26th, 35 at Big Waters on 29th and 20+ at Bamburgh on 26th.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

The first arrivals were on 9th with two at Snab Point (Cresswell) and West Ord (JR/MHu). At Holy Island 'thousands' were reported arriving on 15th and again on 26th (CMur/VWa); a total of 500 arrived from the NE in strong head winds on 21st (IK), numbers here declining to 290 by 23rd (ADM). An earlier influx brought 201 to the Island on 13th (MJC), when 50+ were well inland at Crindledykes Quarry (PRM). Very few appeared to linger on the coast for long, as more flocks were noted inland from 20th; when 200 were at Branton GP (JD). On 21st 100 were at Newbiggin and at Prestwick Carr and 200 were at Big Waters on 22nd (SPP). Later in the month 139-180 were found inland at Cowden (A68), Prestwick Carr, Ryal and Tows Bank from 26th-30th. Elsewhere 32-60 were noted at Juniper, Sidwood, Slaley and Yarridge. Lower numbers were reported from a further 16 widespread localities.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Light coastal falls occurred early in the month, mid-month and towards the end of the month. The first arrivals were on Holy Island where 44 were found on 2nd (MJC/ADM) followed by 15-25 at Hauxley on 8th (HRS). Mid-month produced 49 at Holy Island on 13th (MJC), 16 at Hauxley on 15th and six at Craster on 16th; 13 were at Holy Island on 24th, ca.35 at Hauxley on 25th and six at Bamburgh on 28th. Elsewhere one to four were reported from a further eight localities.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

'Thousands' were arriving at Holy Island on 2nd (CMur/VWa). An influx on 13th produced 424 at Holy Island (MJC), 380 SW at Shiremoor (CGK), 150 at Slaley Hall (RMH), 100+ at Hauxley NR (TD), 60 at Hexham (BNR) and 50 W at Bamburgh (MJC). At the end of the month a further fall brought another 300 to Holy Island on 25th-26th (MJC/ADM), 100 arrived at Hauxley on 25th (HRS) and 63 mobile birds to Bywell on 25th (BNR). Elsewhere flocks of 30-65 were reported from Backworth, Ellington, Juniper, Longhorsley, Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay), Prestwick Carr and St Mary's Island, with lower numbers noted at more than 20 further widespread localities.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Flocks of 14 were at Linden Hall on 16th (NFO), 12 at Bamburgh on 13th (BRS) and nine at Juniper on 18th (BNR). Potential immigrants included up to three in the Hauxley area from 15th (HRS), three arriving from the E at Bamburgh on 3rd (MSH) and singles at Holy Island on 15th, 24th and 26th and at Fenham Mill on 26th. One to two were reported from a further four localities.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

A mid-month influx deposited 72 at Craster on 16th (MJC). Birds were present on Holy Island throughout the month with peaks of 22 on 2nd, 20+ on 16th and a late influx of 55 on 26th (ASJ/MJC). Likewise Hauxley had birds all month with peaks of 17 on 1st, 29 on 15th and 40 on 25th (HRS). Singing birds included ten in the Tranwell area on 1st (ASJ), six at Marden Estate (Tynemouth) on 9th and five at Holywell on 9th. One to nine were reported from a further 12 localities.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

Apart from one at Holy Island on 16th all other reports were from 26th-31st. Five were found at Holy Island on 26th (MJC) and a further two at Goswick from 26th-29th (MSK/NEWT *et al.*). Two were at Low Newton on 28th (TRD/JD) and singles at Cresswell on 27th and 31st and Tynemouth from 28th-30th.

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Singles were at Newbiggin Mound on 2nd, Snab Point on 25th and Holy Island on 26th.

A Redstart at Newbiggin Mound
2nd October
Chris Barlow

**Whinchat** *Saxicola rubetra*

Four were at Swallow Pond on 8th (JPD). At Prestwick Carr there was one on 11th and two from 14th-15th (GB/ASJ/TRD) and possibly another from 20th-23rd (PCF). Other singles were reported from St Mary's on 10th (ASJ) and Cocklawburn and Longhoughton Steel on 13th (BWG/TM).

Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*

There was a welcome increase, particularly in coastal areas.

Five were found at Druridge on 15th (JR), four at Prestwick Carr on 11th and Blyth (Cemetery Dunes) on 27th and three at Bamburgh GC, Cresswell Pond and Hauxley. One to two were also noted at a further 13 coastal areas and inland at Ousen House and Spylaw (both Simonside Hills-A&LB).

Stonechat is a **target species** for 2011. Please report all records.

Wheatear *Oenanthe Oenanthe*

There was a light influx during the first ten days. Five were at Dunstanburgh Castle on 3rd (TRD/JD) and at St Mary's on 5th (ASJ). Three were found at Prior's Park (Tynemouth) on 5th (ASJ) and two at Berwick, Cocklawburn, Holy Island, Newbiggin GC and Prestwick Carr between 2nd and 14th. Elsewhere singles were reported from a further 19 localities including birds well inland at Scots Gap on 5th, Elsdon Gibbet on 6th, Grindon Lough on 10th and Plenmeller on 15th. The final record of the month was at Football Hole (High Newton) on 30th.

Birds showing characteristics of the **Greenland race** *O.o.leucorhoa* were two at Holy Island on 3rd (IK) and at Birling Carrs on 7th (MJC) and singles at Molesden (Morpeth) on 10th (MJC) and Holy Island on 30th (MJC/ADM).

A Wheatear spots Peter Fletcher
Brierdene
8th October

**Pied Flycatcher** *Ficedula hypoleuca*

One at Whitley Bay Cemetery on 2nd was the only record (CGK/AJ).

Dunnoek *Prunella modularis*

Coastal influxes were recorded between 8th-30th. These included 42 at Craster on 16th (MJC), 29 in the Hauxley area on 8th with 20 there on 15th and 14 on 25th (HRS), 20 at Holy Island on 14th (ADM) and five at Druridge on 15th (JR). Inland, seven were at Prestwick Carr on 1st (PCF). Two were ringed at Hauxley on 2th (HRS).

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

180+ were found around the farmyards and Straight Lonnen (Holy Island) on 18th (DWS). 80+ were at Rocky Island (Seaton Sluice) on 25th (MSH), 60 at Holywell all month (ASJ), 45 visited at Marden Estate (Tynemouth) garden all month (ASJ), 40+ at Hauxley on 16th (HRS), 20 at Lindisfarne NNR on 16th (MJCo), 12 at Chapel Lands (Alnwick) between 3rd-6th (JMA) and ten at Allendale Town on 8th (JMA).

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

Autumn movement was very evident throughout month. Peak coastal gatherings included 80-100 at Goswick Farm on 25th (*per* NNBC), 70+ at East Chevington on 11th (MSH), 66 at Fenham-le-Moor on 13th (ASJ), 50-60 (including 24 heading S) at Hauxley on 8th with 21 there on 15th, 45 on 16th and 20 on 25th, 58+ at Cresswell Home Farm (Lynemouth) on 16th (JL), 28 at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 30th (TB), 21 heading south at St. Mary's Island on 15th (ASJ), 19 flew W then E at Tynemouth on 16th (DRW), 15 at Cresswell Pond all month (TRD/JD/CDB), 12 N at Bamburgh on 26th (BRS) and Meggie's Burn (Blyth) on 29th (BB). One to ten were also noted at a further nine widespread localities. Inland, 42 were found in the Berwick Hill-Ingoe area on 1st (ASJ), 15 at Swallow Pond on 23rd (SPP), 11 visited a Walbottle garden on 9th (KR/LR), four at Linden Hall on 8th (FO), three at Big Waters on 11th (TRD) and two at feeders at Heddon Banks (Heddon-on-the-Wall) on 8th (AA). 13 were ringed at Hauxley during month (HRS).

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava flavisoma*

A late bird was at East Chevington on 8th (MSH).

Grey Wagtail *Montacilla cinerea*

Three were at Bothal on 14th (TB), two at Hauxley between 1st-8th (HRS), Blyth Town Centre on 5th (TB), Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 9th (KYW), Newcastle City Centre on 13th (NFO), Brierdene (Whitley Bay) on 14th (MSH), Wark on 20th (PRM), a Tynemouth garden on 26th (CB), Richardson Dees Park (Wallsend) on 27th (CDH), Tynemouth Pier on 30th (JPD). One to two were at Northumberland Park (North Shields) all month (MNC) and Jesmond Dene on 2nd (MJCo). Singles were at a further 22 widespread localities including gardens at Netherton Park and Walbottle.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

25 were at Sinderhope on 8th. 15 were at St. Mary's Island on 4th (ASJ), 14 S at Marden Estate (Tynemouth) on 9th (ASJ), 12 at Belsay Hall on 20th (KR/LR), 11 at Prestwick Carr on 21st (PCF) and one to six at a further seven widespread localities.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

One was at Dunstanburgh Castle on 9th (TM).

Richard's Pipit *Anthus richardi*

An excellent month for this autumn passage visitor. One was discovered on the Snook (Holy Island) on 7th (RA). It, or others, were noted there on 15th (CMur/VWA) and 26th (MJC/CMur/VWA). A well observed individual was at St. Mary's Wetland on 27th-28th (ASJ *et al.*).

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

One flew W over the Straight Lonnen (Holy Island) on 2nd (MJC).

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Southerly passage was observed throughout month. 60 over Tynemouth on 4th (ASJ), the Snook (Holy Island) on 16th (ADM), Druridge on 28th (ASJ), 40 over East Chevington on 13th (ASJ), 37 at Prestwick Carr on 8th (PCF), 30 over Bamburgh on 3rd (MSH), 25 at Derwent Reservoir on 7th (IFo), 21 over Newbiggin on 26th (GB), 19 at St. Mary's Island on 12th (ASJ), 15 at Craster on 16th (MJC) and one to 14 at a further 11 widespread localities.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus petrosus*

15 were at Alnmouth on 17th (ADM), 12 at Hauxley between 15th-23rd (HRS), ten at Holy Island on 30th (ADM), seven at Craster on 16th (MJC), six at Beadnell on 13th (ASJ), five at St. Mary's Island between 12th-20th (ASJ/MSH), four at Berwick Little Beach on 4th (MHu) and Dunstanburgh Castle on 9th (TM). One to three were at a further eight widespread coastal localities.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

200+ were along the A68 near Cowden on 31st (IFo). 50 headed S over Holy Island Village on 6th (IK), 40 at Spindleston on 15th (CGK), Craster on 16th (MJC) and East Chevington on 30th (MSH), 22 at Dye House on 7th (BNR), 16 at Hauxley on 8th (HRS) and 15 at Sandy Bay, Newbiggin on 2nd (GB).

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

Three at Hauxley and singles at Newbiggin Ash Lagoon bank and Tynemouth were the first arrivals of the autumn (HRS/STH/IFo/DRW). Light passage then occurred throughout the month with Holy Island proving popular with peaks of 24 on 14th (MJC/ADM), 15 on 25th (ADM), 13 on 13th (MJC), eight on 2nd (MJC/ADM) and one to three on a further nine dates between 3rd-31st. Elsewhere, 11 were at Ross on 3rd (MJC), ten at Kyloe Woods on 8th (BWG), eight in off the sea at Craster on 16th (MJC), eight in the beech wood at Tasset Burn on 25th (SW), four at St. Mary's Island on 14th (MSH) and one to three at Bamburgh, Cambois, Druridge Links, East Chevington, Fenham Mill, Longframlington, Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay), Newbiggin, Sidwood, Snab Point (Cresswell), Tynemouth and Whitley Bay Cemetery.

A Brambling
Newbiggin
2nd October
by Chris Barlow



Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*

30+ were at Tynemouth Haven on 30th (MSH), 21 feeding on rose-hips at St. Mary's on 4th (ASJ), 20+ at Bamburgh on 3rd (MSH), 18 at a Walbottle garden on 23rd (KR/LR), 11 at Hauxley between 8th-15th (HRS), ten at Prestwick Car on 1st (PCF) and Dye House on 7th (BNR).

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

"Charms" involved 120 at Druridge Bay on 9th (ASJ), Haughton on 12th (TWi) and Holy Island on 23rd (ADM), 65 at St. Mary's on 4th (ASJ), 60 at Cocklawburn on 11th (MHu), 50 at Allendale Town on 8th (JMA), 32 at Berwick Little Beach on 12th (MHu), 20 on feeders at a Marden Estate garden on 1st (ASJ) and Hadston Links (Druridge) on 16th (MSH) and 15 at Newbiggin on 13th (JMA). One to ten were at a further five widespread localities.

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

Autumn passage was very evident from 15th. 152 (in small groups) flew south west in off the sea at Craster on 16th (MJC), 54 headed south at Newbiggin during the morning of 26th (GB), 22 west at Budle Point on 16th (CGK), 20 south at Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 16th (KWY), 20 west/south west at Woodhorn on 16th (GB), nine at Hauxley on 15th (HRS), and one to five at Hadston Links (Druridge) and Holy Island. Inland, 50 were at Thrunton Woods on 2nd (TRD/JD), 40 at Swallowship Wood (Hexham) on 8th (AJH), 25 at Tows Bank on 11th (BNR), 23 at Stocksfield Guessburn on 10th (BNR), 20 at Ingram on 15th (JMA), 16 at Silverlink CP (North Shields) on 30th (CGK) and one to eight at a further five widespread localities. One was ringed at Hauxley on 15th (HRS).

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

Large winter flocks involved 400+ at Bamburgh on 15th (CGK), 240 at Chare Ends (Holy Island) on 16th (ASJ), 200 at Druridge Bay on 9th (ASJ), 150 at Goswick on 13th (ASJ) and Lindisfarne NR on 16th (MJCo), 140 at Berwick Coast-watch on 31st (MHu), 100 at Cresswell Pond on 28th (ASJ), 80 at Lincoln Hill on 9th (SW) and Howick on 16th (MJC), 71 at Craster on 16th (MJC) and one to 45 at a further ten widespread localities.

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*

Nine at Fenham Flats on 7th were the first autumn arrivals (RA). One at Hemscott Hill Links (Cresswell) on 9th increased to 5 by 28th (ASJ), 35 were at Seahouses Harbour on 11th (TM), 30 at Long Nanny on 18th (RHB/SUM/AJM). One at the Snook (Holy Island) on 26th increased to seven by 30th (MJC). Two were at Goswick on 21st (RA).

Redpoll Sp

90 headed S over Hadston Links (Druridge Bay) on 16th (MSH), 32 over Craster on 16th (MJC), 23 S at Woodhorn on 16th (GB), nine S at Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 16th (KWY) with six there on 27th (KWY), seven S at Bamburgh on 3rd (MSH), six S at Newbiggin on 26th (GB), four at Hauxley on 9th and 26th (HRS) and one to three at Bamburgh, Holy Island and Newbiggin.

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis caberet*

Ten headed S at Hauxley on 15th (HRS), 12 at Prestwick Carr on 15th (PCF), nine at Kitty Brewster (Blyth) on 16th (DM/STH/PJA), eight S at St. Mary's on 5th (ASJ), five at Swallow Pond on 4th (SPP) and Grindon Lough on 13th (PRM), four at Prestwick Carr on 9th (SPP). One to three were at a further 11 widespread localities.

Mealy Redpoll *Carduelis flammea*

Two flew over Straight Lonnen (Holy Island) on 26th (MJC).

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

90 (20-30 at a time) kept flying into a single ash tree at Forest Lodge (Tasset Burn) on 25th (SW). 60 were at Sidwood on 25th (SW), 35 at Thrunton Woods on 27th (IBDa/KDa), 15 at Grindon Lough on 13th (PRM), 12 at Eshott on 31st (MSH), ten at Rothbury on 8th-9th (RNa/NFO), nine at Harbottle Woods on 19th (IRD), six at Bolam Lake CP on 9th (CDB) and one to five at a further eight widespread localities. Autumn passage was also evident with 64 flying SW in off the sea at Craster on 16th (MLC), eight SW over Northburn (Cramlington) on 13th (PJA), seven S at Tynemouth on 26th (DRW) and Bamburgh on 26th (BRS), five W at Budle Point on 16th (CGK), four SW over Barns Park (Cramlington) on 15th (DM) and one to three also observed at Bates Mine-water Treatment Plant (Blyth Estuary). Bywell, Cramlington, Holywell Village, Newbiggin and Woodhorn.

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Eight were noted daily at Scotland Gate all month (SLB/MSK), seven at Prestwick Carr on 12th (PCF), six at Loosing Hill (Hexham) on 26th (ALT), four at Lincoln Hill on 9th (SW), Cambois on 25th (STH) and Humford Mill (Bedlington) on 29th (JR) and one to three at a further 23 widespread localities. One was ringed at Bamburgh on 26th (BRS).

A male Bullfinch eating a nettle
Prestwick Carr
by Brian Bullough
2nd October

**Snow Bunting** *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Two at the Snook (Holy Island) on 13th (MJC) increased to 13 in the area on 30th (MJC). Nine came in off the sea at Craster on 16th (MJC), eight flew over the dunes at Goswick on 26th (per NNBC), five were at Druridge Bay beach on 30th (AB/LB), three were at Long Nanny on 30th (SVM/AJM) and one to two at Alnmouth Golf Course, Bamburgh, Beacon Point (Newbiggin), Boulmer, Budle Point, Hauxley, Newbiggin Beach and Ross. Inland, one was at West Hartford on 30th (PJA).

Lapland Bunting *Calcarius lapponicus*

20 at Holy Island (three on the Snook, 17 at Straight Lonnen) on 2nd (MJC/ADM) dwindled to one on 30th (MJC/ADM). One to 17 were also noted on favoured Holy Island on a further 12 dates during month. Elsewhere, two were at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 27th (AT) and singles at Beal, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Dunes, Goswick, Seahouses and St. Mary's.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

81 were found at Craster on 16th (MJC), six at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) on 15th (BMo), five at Holywell on 4th (ASJ), Big Waters on 16th (GB), three at Newbiggin on 16th (GB) and one at Sandy Bay (Newbiggin) on 26th (GB).

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

23 were observed on Holy Island on 13th (MJC), 18+ at Backworth on 30th (CGK), 16 at Cocklawburn on 11th (MHu), 15+ at St. Mary's Island on 27th (MSH), seven at Hauxley on 29th (HRS), six at Bamburgh on 26th (BRS) and Meggie's Burn (Blyth) on 29th (BB). One to two were also at Arcot Pond, Prestwick Carr and Sandy Bay (Newbiggin).

ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN**Escapes****Bar-headed Goose** *Anser indicus*

The three individuals at East Chevington remained there until 23rd.

Ross's Goose *Anser rossii*

Two at Monks' House Pool continued to be seen through to 9th.

Speckled Teal *Anas flavirostris*

The individual seen in the summer was found again at Swallow Pond on 4th where it remained until at least 24th with visits to Marden Quarry from 8th to 19th (SPP/JPD/BB).

Parakeet sp *Psittacula*

One was at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 2nd but could not be pinned down to species due to wet and windy conditions (DM). Another unidentified individual was calling at Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 8th (PJA).

Orange-winged Parrot *Amazona amazonica*

One was calling at Prior's Park, Tynemouth on 8th (PJA).

Birds of Unknown Origin**Rose-ringed Parakeet** *Psittacula krameri*

Two noisy individuals were calling near Benton Metro Station on 31st (JCD).

Hybrids**Canada Goose x Greylag Goose** *Branta canadensis* x *Anser anser*

Two were at Yarrow Slake on the Tweed Estuary on 21st (TRD/JD).

Canada Goose x Barnacle Goose *Branta canadensis* x *Branta leucopsis*

One was at Marden Quarry on 16th (PJA/DM/STH)

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

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Bamburgh Ringing Station, Berwick Wildlife Group, Hauxley Ringing Station, Natural History Society of Northumbria, North Northumberland Bird Club, Northern Experience Wildlife Tours, NTBC Field Trip (BCFT).

Those observers marked with an asterisk after their name have submitted records online using the club spreadsheet. Copies are available by emailing Dick Myatt at dick@dickmyatt.co.uk

Apologies for any accidental omissions**BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION**

This bulletin was compiled by Lindsay McDougall (Mute Swan to Egyptian Goose, Red Grouse to Black-necked Grebe), Graeme Bowman (Ruddy Shelduck to Ruddy Duck), Trevor Blake (Honey Buzzard to Crane), Ian Forsyth (Oystercatcher to Skua), Tim Dean (Ivory Gull to Puffin, Escapes, Hybrids and Unknown Origin, List of Contributors, Highlights), Peter Fletcher (Feral Pigeon to Red-rumped Swallow), Mike Richardson (Cetti's Warbler to Pied Flycatcher), Eddie Crabtree (Dunnock to Corn Bunting), Julie Roper/Dan Turner (WeBS Coastal Counts) and Steve Holliday (WeBS Inland Counts). Thanks again to Ann McKeown for typing the section Dunnock to Corn Bunting. Thanks to David Sanders of NNBC for providing data. Proof reading was by Mike Smith.

Edited by Steve Barrett Sscmagpie@aol.com

Distributed by Alan Watson apusx@blueyonder.co.uk

BULLETIN SECTION WRITER

Please send an email to Steve Barrett Sscmagpie@aol.com to volunteer or for more information.

RECORD SUBMISSION

Please send all record cards to Tim Dean, 2 Knocklaw Park, Rothbury NE65 7PW, to arrive on, or preferably before, the 8th of the month following that in which the records were collected. Please write cards legibly to ensure that your sightings are correctly recorded.

E-mail: Members are encouraged to e-mail their records on an Excel-style spreadsheet. Please e-mail Dick Myatt at dick@dickmyatt.co.uk for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and Grid references: The use of standard location names and the inclusion of grid references greatly increases the value of records in subsequent analyses. A 1km square grid reference is the ideal e.g. NY8067 for Grindon Lough, but 2km square references (tetrads) are also acceptable e.g. NY86D in this case. A list of localities and their tetrad grid references (tetrad/Locality List) can be downloaded from the 'Resources & Downloads' section of the Club website at <http://www.ntbc.org.uk> – the use of these names, wherever possible, would be highly appreciated.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Please keep submitting your articles, photographs, sketches and illustrations for the bulletin. Thanks again to those who have supplied the excellent photographs. Please send to Steve Barrett at Sscmagpie@aol.com

ELECTRONIC BULLETIN

The NTBC bulletin can be received electronically or as hard copy. The electronic bulletin arrives earlier than the printed version, it is in colour and we save the cost of printing and stamps. Ask for an e-mailed bulletin from;

jo.bentley@waitrose.com.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS 2011

Annual subscription is a bargain £23.

For membership enquiries please contact jo.bentley@waitrose.com.

NTBC WEB SITE

The Club website is an excellent resource for all interested in birds in the north east. There are numerous interesting sections, including a photograph gallery, site information and trip reports together with extensive reference information for birding in our area. The site is at www.ntbc.org.uk

If you have any ideas or things you would like to see or hear about on the site please let Chris know on 0751 582 5024 or email christopher.knox@o2.co.uk.

NTBC SIGHTINGS PAGE

50,000 'hits' were recently recorded for the club sightings web page which gives listings of birds seen locally. Adding a sighting is simple. A short email is all that is needed. If anyone would like to be added as a contributor please contact Alan Tilmouth at ntbcorg@gmail.com The sightings page can be found at <http://ntbcsightings.posterous.com>.

INDOOR MEETINGS

The next indoor meeting will be at Northern Rugby Club, McCracken Park, Great North Road, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 2DT

Thursday 8th December at 7pm.

Please note the change of venue.

The December meeting will feature;

BIRDING IN MOROCCO by John McLoughlin

John is the voice behind Bird North East and is a professional tour guide for Bird Holidays. Morocco is one his most frequent and favourite destinations and he will show us what the country has to offer. Not to be missed.

NTBC COMMITTEE NEWS

Winter Atlases

A recent trial sale of old winter atlases on the on-line auction site eBay has resulted in a contact with a second-hand book seller and the club has been able to move 50% of the stock in a single sale to this source. The committee would like to thank Paul Stewart who has been storing the winter atlases and organising the eBay trials.

Local Site for Wildlife Designations

NTBC have been asked to offer guidance on the criteria to be used for designating Local Sites as Important for Birds. This is for sites that do not have other designations e.g. SSSI.

Club member and ecologist Paul Massey has kindly offered some advice on the criteria drawing on his professional experience This is greatly appreciated.

County Rarities Committee

The committee would like to thank retiring CRC member Graham Bowman for all the work put in during his time on the committee.

Alan Curry has been elected to replace Graham who retires from the committee at the end of this year.

ATLAS NEWS

Sponsorship of species in aid of the Atlas publication is progressing well. So if you want 'own' your favourite bird contact Steve Lowe at zappa99@live.co.uk

RAPTOR FORUM

The North of England Raptor Forum has recently been held in Durham. The Annual Review for 2010 - "Status of Raptors in Northern England 2010" is now available.

Martin Davison will have copies for sale at the forthcoming Club Indoor Meetings at £10 each (and £9 for 2009). Or you can email him at martindavison3@gmail.com

Raptors had mixed fortunes in 2010. Our Hen Harriers are clinging on by the skin of their teeth but Ospreys are again a breeding species in our area.

BUTTERFLY RECORDS for 2011

If any members have butterfly records for this year that they would like to contribute, now is the time!

They will be gratefully received at:

roger@norman784.plus.com

Roger Norman

WILDLIFE EVENT at GATESHEAD

On the evening of Friday 9th December, the Birds of Durham Heritage Project will be staging a FREE wildlife event in the Council Chamber, on the first floor, of the Gateshead Civic Centre. This is called:

**'Bringing the Wildlife of the Past to the People of Tomorrow'
An Evening with the Birds of Durham Heritage Project**

and is open to all. There is an illustrated presentation and the evening will include the showing of the short film 'Birds of Durham Heritage Project'. There will be displays for people to view from 6.30pm – 9pm. There will also be the opportunity to see some of the artwork that has been developed for the 'Birds of Durham' book.

Parking is available at the Civic Centre and the venue is five minutes' walk from the Gateshead Metro Interchange.

JOBS with RSPB

There are currently three RSPB roles being recruited for in the North East:

Species Protection Officer (for the Northumberland Hen Harrier Project):

<http://www.rspb.org.uk/vacancies/details/293071-species-protection-coordinator>

Volunteer & Farmland Alliance Project Officer (4 days a week):

<http://www.rspb.org.uk/vacancies/details/297664-volunteer-and-farmland-alliance-officer>

Conservation Officer for the North East:

<http://www.rspb.org.uk/vacancies/details/297796-conservation-officer-the-north-east>

The sharp-eyed among you will have noticed that the last vacancy is my present position. After seven excellent years with the RSPB, all being well I'll be joining Natural England's marine team in the new year. I can thoroughly recommend my current job!

Martin Kerby

CHRISTMAS PRIZE QUIZ

Fill in the grid by answering the matching questions. When completed, a bird species (notable in 2011) will read from left to right across the shaded squares. **The name of this species is the required answer** (i.e. the grid does not have to be completed necessarily). All answers are bird names and all have occurred in the county at least once.

All entries should be sent to Graeme Bowman, 20 Melness Road, Hazlerigg, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE13 7BN or email: g.bowman@rgs.newcastle.sch.uk, to be received no later than Wednesday 11th January 2012. Remember to include your contact details on your entry. The winner, who will receive a prize, will be drawn at the indoor meeting on Thursday 12th January 2012. Good luck!

[illegible]

- 1 A declining county breeder; Continental cousins have the potential to boost numbers however (9 letters)
- 2 A flurry of sightings in July 2011 smashed all previous county records of this dainty sea-bird (5,6)
- 3 Damn and blast and dive! Almost extinct but all in a good cause? (5,4)
- 4 A recent name changer, scientifically, the south east is most favoured by this scarce passerine (6,3)
- 5 Unusually perhaps, Catcleugh had the first back in '56; it was once ahead of swans and geese but is no longer (6,5.)
- 6 Shot in the thousands and hit by changes in the Sahel etc.; it's amazing one appeared at BW in October (6,4)
- 7 Last ring out for this impressive flocker! (8)
- 8 A recent county colonist but only rarely in winter (6)
- 9 Long distance fen runner that has taken a liking to East Chevington in the last few years (5,7)
- 10 Absent for a time recently (perhaps due to persecution?), most records come from the north (6,5)
- 11 Another recent colonist to Druridge Bay; one colour-ringed bird in 2011 originated from France (6)
- 12 The least of two but one this autumn made four! (6,5)
- 13 Cynical/ironic/sardonic part of the body it's said; breeding has been confirmed at Matfen (7)
- 14 Hammered last winter perhaps; mild weather favours this colourful water bird (10)
- 15 The opposite of 14 plumage-wise, the county population has been estimated at 5,000 to 6,000 'pairs' (7)
- 16 The third county addition of 2011 (when ratified) stayed on the bay for all to see (7,10)
- 17 Just the one so far; another is long overdue, especially since it has bred in England recently (6,5)

COASTAL WEBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND

October 2011

Site	Berwick North Shore		Berwick Little Beach		Tweed Estuary		Tweed: A1 By-Pass 10		Hospital - Cockburn		Lindisfarne NMR (including Budle Bay)		Budle Pt - Seahouses		Seahouses - Beadnell		Beadnell - Howick		Howick - Boulmer		Boulmer - Alnmouth		Aln Estuary		Alnmouth South		Coquet Estuary		Ambles - Chevington		Cresswell - Newbiggin		Glyth Estuary		Glyth Estuary - Seaton		St Mary's Island		Whitby Bay - Tynemouth		Tyne North Pier - Fish Quay		Wallsend, (north bank)		Redhugh - Scotswood Bridge, (north bank)		Scotswood - Newburn Bridge, (north bank)	
	MHu	MHu	MHu	TB	MHu	TB	MHu	AC	AC	RP	MLC	KR	JAR	AB	MLC	RP	RP	TW	MGA	LJM	KVB	SP	MK	DMT	DMT	PF	PF	DMT	DMT	PF	PF	PF	PF	PF	PF	PF	PF	PF	PF	PF	PF	PF	PF	PF				
Cumulative	12	12	12	14	15	13	16	16	14	14	1	1	4	24	14	10	15	19	15	30	9	23	16	15	17	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	
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Little Grebe																																																
Great Crested Grebe																																																
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Tufted Duck																																																
Scaup																																																

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

<http://www.ntbc.org.uk/>

Bulletin 2011 No 11

MONTHLY SUMMARY – NOVEMBER

4th January 2011



HIGHLIGHTS

Bewick's Swan	Two at Big Waters and East Chevington.
Tundra Bean Goose	Record-breaking influx into the county.
Green-winged Teal	Male at East Chevington from 9th.
Lesser Scaup	Juvenile female remained at Marden Quarry all month.
Black Scoter	One at Cheswick Sands from 11th.
Greater Yellowlegs	A county first in Druridge Bay area from 12th.
Grey Phalarope	Singles at Hauxley and the Farne Islands.
Sabine's Gull	Singles at Newbiggin and from a pelagic trip.
Glaucous Gull	An immature on 22nd at East Chevington.
Sandwich Tern	The second-latest county record involved one at Hauxley on 15th.
Black Guillemot	Singles off Holy Island and off the Farne Islands.
Great Grey Shrike	One at Prestwick Carr from 9th.
Yellow-browed Warbler	Single at St Mary's.
Hume's Warbler	One at Holy Island village on 15th.
Dusky Warbler	One at Holy Island Lough on 12th and 15th.
Eastern Black Redstart	Another first for the county with one on Holy Island from 16th to 20th.
Blue-headed Wagtail	Exceptionally late record at Low Newton on 27th.
Water Pipit	One at Low Newton on 12th.

CONTENTS

Indoor Meeting on 12th January – Graham Bell searches Siberia for Ross's Gull.

Bulletin section writers required.

Christmas Quiz again.

New places discovered in the county.

CRC News and Descriptions wanted

Lindisfarne NNR Count 2011

Field Trips

Subscriptions are overdue



Eastern Black Redstart
Holy Island
17th November by Tim Dean

WEATHER

1st to 5th: The first few days were unsettled with bands of rain and heavy showers crossing most parts. Temperatures remained well above average, with maxima around 17 °C reported widely on 3rd.

6th to 12th: A change to more settled conditions with high pressure becoming established to the east of the UK. An air frost occurred in northern areas overnight 6th/7th, with the temperature falling to -6.1 °C at Redesdale. Conditions were rather cloudy with dense fog patches developing across many central and eastern areas. Weather fronts pushed in from the west by 9th, with similar conditions on 10th, 11th and 12th with cloud and fog in the east. Despite this, temperatures remained well above average.

13th to 16th: The settled weather continued, with high pressure over Scandinavia bringing south-easterly winds. A very mild day on 13th with maxima over 16 °C. Most parts remained dry with cloudy skies, but sunny spells towards the north-west.

17th to 21st: A west/east split, with rather cloudy conditions and some patchy rain across the west and cool foggy conditions in the east. From 18th to 21st fog patches across central and eastern parts become persistent and dense, with lower daytime temperatures.

22nd to 30th: An unsettled theme for the rest of the month, with several deep areas of low pressure passing north of the UK. Colder air overnight into 23rd, with one of the first widespread ground frosts of the autumn. Elsewhere remained rather cloudy and dry, but windy. The 29th was very unsettled, with a squally band of rain moving eastwards. Heavy showers continued through 30th, especially in the west and near the south coast

CLASSIFIED LIST

The following account consists of unchecked reports. The species/subspecies marked * require descriptions.

A complete list of all sightings that need notes is included in the NTBC website www.ntbc.org.uk under the County Records Committee section and in Birds in Northumbria 2009 page 224.

The Inland and Coastal Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) tables are at the rear of the bulletin. These contain counts additional to those in the Classified List.

TARGET SPECIES

The target species for 2011 are Gadwall, Snipe and Stonechat. Please report all records for these species.

The target species for 2012 are all the owl species. The BTO Atlas will be lacking information on these nocturnal species, hence the choice.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

The largest gatherings were 134 at Killingworth Lake on 23rd (LJM), 45 at QEII Lake on 28th (CDH), 31 at Big Waters on 19th (GB), ten at East Chevington North Pool on 20th (DM/STH/IFo) and in the Tweed Estuary on 21st (MHu). One to nine were noted at Bothal Ponds, Broomlee Lough, Castle Island, Druridge Pools, Exhibition and Leazes Parks (Newcastle), Greenlee Lough, Grindon Lough, Hauxley NR, Holywell Pond, Ladyburn Lake, Lindisfarne NNR, Linton Ponds, Little Waters (Seaton Burn), Lower Ouseburn (Byker) and on the Tyne at Elswick Wharf and Scotswood.



Two Bewick's and a Whooper Swan
Big Waters
Chris Barlow on 26th November

Bewick's Swan *Cygnus columbianus*

Two adults were at Big Waters from 17th-27th and possibly earlier (BB/GB *et al.*). Two were also at East Chevington on 17th/20th (KWY/GMi/DM/STH/IFo). At Cresswell Pond two arrived from N on 29th and departed after ten minutes (MSH). Two adults at Arcot Pond on 30th were the first for this site (STH/LJM/PJA).

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

At Hauxley 105 flew S on 5th (HRS) when 26 flew S at Cresswell Pond (ADMc), 13 flew S at Ellington (TB) and ten flew S over Prestwick Carr (PCF). Counts of 11 flying S came from Warkworth Lane on 6th (ADMc) and Stamfordham (EC) on 17th and nine flew W at Clifton on 2nd (MJC). Numbers were generally low with peak counts of 31 at Warkworth Lane on 8th and 24 at Druridge Bay CP on 12th (IRD), 20 adults at East Chevington North Pool on 5th (ADMc), 19 at Big Waters on 17th (BB), 15 at Cresswell Pond on 16th (IRD) and Holy Island on 17th (IBDa/KDa). One to nine were seen at Branton GP, Boulmer, Castron, Catcleugh Reservoir, Greenlee Lough and Nelly's Moss Lakes (Craggside).

Grey Goose species *Anser sp.*

At Alnmouth 300 flew S over the sea on 18th (CDH).

***Taiga Bean Goose** *Anser fabalis fabalis*

A single was at East Chevington North Pool on 20th (STH/IFo/DM).

***Tundra Bean Goose** *Anser fabalis rossicus*

Four flew S at Easington Demesne on 17th (JPD). A large influx occurred towards the end of the month peaking at 18 at Holywell Pond on 19th/20th (STH/ASJ/SPP) and 17 in Budle Bay on 17th (ASJ). Elsewhere two were at Dunstan Hill (Craster) on 17th/18th, one of which had been neck-collared in the Netherlands (JSNa/TRD/JD/AT), Castron on 18th (TRD/JD) a juvenile was at Monks' House Pool on 20th (CGK/MSH) and further singles were at Hedgeley GP on 20th (CGK/MSH) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 21st (MR).

At Prestwick Carr up to 14 un-raced birds were present from 22nd-30th (PCF/BB/MN). Four were in the Pink-footed Goose flock at Holywell Pond on 19th (CDB) and singles were at East Chevington on 10th/22nd (CB/MSH), Hauxley on 14th (HRS), Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 25th (RMHa/PMHa) and Holywell Pond on 27th (JR).

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

On 5th 890 flew S at Newbiggin in several skeins (STH/GB). 650 flew N at East Ord on 13th (MHu), whilst at Hauxley 450 flew S on 5th and 200 on 6th (HRS), 500 flew very high S at Beal on 25th (ADM), 400 flew NW at Haughton Strother GP on 19th (MR), 295 flew S at Cresswell on 6th (STH/PJA), whilst on 5th 250 flew S at Benton (IF), 200 at Cramlington (DM) and 170 in two skeins at West Monkseaton (CS). Smaller movements were 156 S at Cheswick on 1st, 130 W at East Ord on 10th, 110 S at Alnmouth on 20th and East Ord on 22nd, 98 S at Berwick on 5th, 73 SW at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 5th, 70 S at Prestwick Carr on 30th, 60 S at East Chevington on 12th, 54 N and 45 N at Cramlington on 5th, 50 S at Walkerville on 14th, 45 S at Tynemouth on 5th, 40 S over Tyne Green (Hexham) on 11th, 22 S at Prestwick Carr on 6th, ten S at Shilford on 5th and birds were heard flying over Wark on the night of 1st. 2,500 roosted nightly on Goswick Sands (ADM). Other peak counts were 2,000 in fields west of Hemscott Hill on 29th (JSB/EC), 1,600 at Embleton on 17th (KWY) and in Budle Bay on 20th (CGK/MSH), 1,300 at Dunstan Hill (Craster) on 17th (CGK/MSH/AA/MH), 1,000 at Bamburgh on 5th (RNa) and East Chevington North Pool on 4th (JSB/EC), 400+ in the Dunstan Steads area on 18th (MJC), 250 at Hauxley on 12th (HRS), 239 at Holywell Pond on 21st (MSH), 150+ at Old Hartley on 24th (MSH), 130 at Beadnell Flash on 19th (JSNa/JGS) and 62 at Prestwick Carr on 12th (PCF). Two to three were at Castron, Monks' House Pool and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Eurasian White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons albifrons*

An unprecedented influx occurred from the middle of the month onwards, 85 reports being received. One was at Marden Quarry on 11th (SPP). At East Chevington 20 flew S on 12th, where one was on the pond (ADMc/SPP), when five flew S at Hauxley (HRS). At Swallow Pond eight (one juvenile) were present from 15th until at the least the end of the month (JPD/SPP *et al.*). 67 were at Hauxley near the coastguards on 14th, with numbers rising to ca.100 by 19th (ASH/HRS *et al.*). The largest gatherings were 202 at Beadnell Flash on 19th (JSNa/JGS), 195 at East Chevington North Pool on 20th (ADMc), 168 at Newton Flash on 28th (MSH), 150+ at Maiden's Hall Lake (West Chevington) on 30th (MSH), 60 at Coquet Point on 17th (TB), 56 at Dunstan Hill (Craster) on 21st (CB) and 53 at Chare Ends (Holy Island) on 25th (ADM). Counts of 25 came from Budle Bay (seven juveniles) on 12th (CGK), High Cocklaw (Berwick) (ten juveniles) on 23rd (TBr) and Grindon Lough on 30th (PRM). Counts of 22 came from Embleton on 17th/18th and Morpeth on 19th. At Whittle Dene Reservoirs 18 were present on 21st and 15 at White Damhead on 18th. One to ten were noted at Bywell Cottagebank, Castron, Hedgeley GP, Holywell Pond, Monks' House Pool, Newton Pool, Old Hartley, Prestwick Carr and Woodhorn Flashes.

Greenland White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons flavirostris*

A high count of 22 (six juveniles) came from Grindon Lough on 24th (AJR), otherwise only two were noted here on 19th/24th/30th (MRS/PRM/BNR). Three were at Cresswell Pond on 26th (ADMc).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Peak counts were 600+ at Hauxley on 3rd (HRS), ca.500 at East Chevington on 4th (JSB/EC), 320 at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 19th (BWG), 300 during the month at Monks' House Pool (JPL/DGB), 250 at White Damhead on 18th (TBr), and at Hedgeley GP on 10th (JMA), 164 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 21st (MR), 97 at Big Waters on 30th (PRM) and

95 at Bywell Cottagebank on 18th (BNR). Local movements occurred with 91 over Prestwick Carr on 4th (PCF), 75 over Hulne Park on 3rd (JMA) and 47 over Woodhorn Church on 6th (STH/PJA). Smaller gatherings were 70 at Newton Flash on 28th, 50 at Holywell Pond on 19th, 47 at Grindon Lough on 7th, 33 at Woodhorn Flashes on 30th and 30 at Old Hartley on 24th. Six neck-collared birds were seen at Newton Pool on 17th and one to seven were noted at Bothal Pond, Brandon West Pond and in flight at Castle Island.

***Snow Goose** *Anser caerulescens*

Two seen at Holywell Pond on 27th (JR) were also reported as Ross's Goose *Anser rossii* (EG).

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

At Grindon Lough 200 flew E during the WeBS count on 19th (MRS). The peak count here was 486 on 7th (PRM). Elsewhere 147 were at Bothal Pond on 6th (TD), 96 at Greenlee Lough on 19th (MRS), 70 at Killingworth Lake on 23rd (LJM), 31 at Hauxley, 25 at White Damhead, 16 at QEII Lake and 12 at Leazes Park (Newcastle). Two to three were at Cresswell Pond and Ladyburn Lake.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

At Bamburgh 200 flew NW on 8th (BRS) and 60 flew S here on 11th (ADM). The main concentration was in the Budle Bay area where numbers peaked at 1,750 on 9th (JPL/GRo), with 320 still remaining on 27th (CGK/MSH *et al.*). Elsewhere 212 were at Dunstan Hill (Craster) on 21st (CB), 200+ at East Chevington on 4th (JSB/EC), 80 at Embleton on 17th (KWY), 24 at Goswick Sands on 12th (SW) and 20 at Newton Flash on 22nd (SVM). One to nine were seen at Beadnell Flash, Big Waters, Castron, Chare Ends (Holy Island), Cresswell Pond, Grindon Lough, Holywell Pond, Morpeth and White Damhead (Paxton).

Dark-bellied Brent Goose *Branta bernicla bernicla*

On 17th 56 were in Holy Island Harbour (TRD/JD). Two were at Cresswell Pond from 17th-22nd (TB/MN *et al.*) and singles were at Beadnell Flash on 19th and in the Tweed Estuary on 22nd.

Pale-bellied Brent Goose *Branta bernicla hrota*

On 27th 403 were at Beal Saltmarsh (DM/GB). 30 were in Holy Island Harbour on 17th (TRD/JD) and one on Monks' House Pool on 27th.

2,200 un-raced birds were at Fenham Slake on 20th (IBDa/KDa) and two adults were with two juveniles at Long Nanny on 17th. Three flew N at Church Point (Newbiggin) on 6th.

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Four flew N at Snab Point on 6th (BB). Budle Bay held peaks of 474 on 12th (SW) and 200 on 3rd (JMA), 15 were at East Chevington on 12th (TB), four at Beal and singles at Bothal Pond, Branton GP, Castron and Monks' House.

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

A pair was at Howick Hall pond on 7th (PHa).

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

Three flew S at Hauxley on 3rd (HRS). Peak counts were 535 at Cresswell Pond on 18th (IRD), 420 offshore at Cresswell on 20th (PRM), 190 at Grindon Lough on 7th (PRM), 176+ at Big Waters on 20th (SPP), 130 at East Chevington (KWY) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs (MR), 100-104 at Bothal Pond, Branton GP and Druridge Pools, and 86 at Derwent Reservoir. Groups of 37-39 were at Hauxley Reserve and QEII Lake, and 12-14 at Craggside and Middle Ord Pond. More unusually one was at Elswick (River Tyne) on 11th and 16th (DM/GB).

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

One flew N at Newbiggin on 5th (GB). Largest concentrations were 35 at Linton Ponds on 28th (CDH), 19 at East Chevington on 13th (PBu/MPF), 17 at Castron on 6th (JL), 16 (nine drakes) at St Mary's Wetland on 1st (PG), 13-14 at Big Waters (GB) and Marden Quarry (AC), and 11 at Druridge Pools (BMo). Three to four were also at Holywell and Swallow Ponds, QEII Lake and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, two at Ladyburn Lake and Monks' House, and one at Grindon Lough. A more unusual record involved two on a farm pond at Mitford Steads on 29th (ADMc).

Gadwall is a **target species** for 2011. Please report all records.

Teal *Anas crecca*

60 flew N at Snab Point on 6th (BB). The greatest gatherings were 590 at the 'rocket field' pools on Holy Island on 12th (SW), 550 at Cresswell Pond on 3rd (PRM), 450 at Grindon Lough on 24th (PRM), 320 at Derwent Reservoir on 21st (IFo), 310 at East Chevington on 17th (KWY), 140-150 at Elswick, Newton Pool and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, 95 at Big Waters and 41-66 at Arcot Pond, Druridge Pools and Halton Lea House. Groups of 32-38 were at Bothal and Middle Ord Ponds, Greenlee Lough, Haughton Strother GP, Hauxley Reserve, Monks' House Pool and West Hartford, and ten to 21 at the Blyth Estuary, Bywell, Castle Island, Cheswick, Cocklawburn and Linton Ponds.

Green-winged Teal *Anas carolinensis*

A drake was at East Chevington South Pool regularly between 13th-27th (PBu/MPF/ADMc/SPP *et al.*).

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Peak counts were 166 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 10th (MR), 132 at the Tweed Estuary on 21st (MHu), 117 at Derwent Reservoir on 18th (IFo), 102 at Cocklawburn Pond on 23rd (MHu), 84 at Newcastle Leazes Park on 7th (DM), 81 at East Chevington (KWY), 60-71 at Big Waters, Grindon Lough and Marden Quarry, 32-50 at Druridge Pools, Greenlee Lough, Haughton Strother GP, Hauxley Reserve, Linton Ponds, Ladyburn and QEII Lakes and West Allotment Pond. Groups of 15 to 28 were at Bothal Pond, Byker, Castle Island, Grindon Lough, Jesmond Dene, Newcastle Civic Centre and Plessey Woods CP.



A drake Mallard
Marden Quarry
by Colin Bradshaw

Pintail *Anas acuta*

East Chevington North Pool held peaks of 12 on 17th (TB), nine on 12th-13th and 25th (BB/PBu/MPF), and two to eight were noted on various dates between 2nd-30th. Elsewhere, singles were at Druridge Pools on 25th (PRM), Grindon Lough on 18th-19th and 24th (AJH/PRM/AJR/MRS) and Howick Hall pond on 5th-6th (PHa).

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

East Chevington attracted 15 on 20th (DM/STH/IFo), 14 were at Monks' House Pool during the month (JPL/DGB), eleven at Swallow Pond on 18th (SPP), eight at Holy Island Lough on 16th (TRD/JD), six at Big Waters on 30th (PRM), six at Cresswell Pond on 3rd (PRM), six at Druridge Pools on 15th (MSH), four to five at Newton Pool and West Allotment Pond, and three at Grindon Lough and Linton Ponds.

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Peak counts were 28 at Linton Ponds on 28th (CDH), 24 at Broomlee Lough on 19th (MRS), 12 at Swallow Pond on 23rd (LJM/SPP), 11 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 21st (MR), ten at East Chevington on 12th (GB/TB), nine at Bothal Pond (STH/IFo) and Ladyburn Lake (TB/DM), six at Holywell Pond (EG), four to five at Cocklawburn Pond and QEII Lake, and three at Big Waters and Cresswell Pond. Singles were at Marden Quarry, Monks' House Pool and Newton Pool.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Peak counts were 102 at Killingworth Lake on 23rd (LJM), 70 at QEII Lake on 28th (CDH), 31 at Linton Ponds on 28th (CDH), 28 at Druridge Pools on 25th (CDH), 20 at Cresswell Pond on 20th (DM) and 12-13 at Big Waters, Bothal and West Allotment Ponds, East Chevington, Newcastle Leazes Park and Sweethope Lough. Five to eight were also at Broomlee and Grindon Loughs and Woodhorn Flashes, and one to four at six further localities.



A pair of Tufted Duck at Marden Quarry by Colin Bradshaw

Scaup *Aythya marila*

At Holy Island, eight flew S on 11th (IK) and six S on 12th (SW). Six (one drake) were at Ladyburn Lake on 20th (CDB) and three on 19th (TRD/JD), four (one drake) at East Chevington on 12th-13th (GB/JPD/ADMc) and three on 10th (CB), with singles at Alnmouth on 20th (JL), Castle Island on 20th (DM/STH/IFo) and Warkworth Gut on 12th (NFO). A first-winter drake and a juvenile were at Duke's Pond (Wallsend) on 16th, with the juvenile remaining on 18th (SPP).



A muddy Scaup at Druridge CP by Chris Barlow on 20th November

Lesser Scaup *Aythya affinis*

The juvenile, first noted in October 2011, remained all month (AC/MSH *et al.*).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

62 were at Cocklawburn-Spittal on 17th (MHu), 40 at Blyth Harbour on 7th (BB), 19 at the Tyne Estuary-North Shields Fish Quay on 14th (DMT), and ten at Meadow Haven (Berwick) (MHu). Three to five were at Berwick North Shore and The Tweed Estuary.

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

Two flew S at Holy Island on 12th (SW) and one N at Snab Point on 6th (BB). Holy Island attracted 21 on 9th (PH), 20 were at Stag Rocks-Budle Point on 22nd (ADM), 18 at Cheswick on 11th (MHu), ten at Cocklawburn on 22nd (TBr) and three at Berwick North Shore (MHu).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

Movement involved 70 N at Snab Point (IFo), 62 N at Newbiggin on 5th (STH), 65 S at Cresswell on 3rd (PRM) and seven S at Hauxley on 5th (HRS). In the north of the county, 680 were at Cheswick on 11th and 510 on 23rd (MHu), 440 at nearby Cocklawburn-Spittal on 17th (MHu), 45 at Budle Point on 12th (CGK), 40 at Holy Island on 25th (ADM) and one at Stag Rocks. Further south, 85 were off Alnmouth on 19th (AB/LB), 60 at Snab Point on 10th (TB) and eight at Hauxley.

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

All records were in the north. Three flew N at Holy Island on 6th (ADM/MJC). Nine were off Cheswick on 27th (GB/DM) and five on 11th (MHu), five were at Holy Island on 9th (PH) and three on 6th (MJC), three at Goswick Sands on 10th (AT/ADM) and one at Stag Rocks on 12th (SW).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Northerly movement concerned 30 at Newbiggin on 6th (PBu/ABu), eight at St Mary's on 11th (MSH) and seven at Snab Point on 6th (BB). Peak gatherings were 52 at the Tweed Estuary on 21st (MHu), 34 at Castle Island on 20th (DM/STH/IFo), 15 at QEII Lake on 28th (CDH), 14 at Holy Island on 18th and 29th (ADM), 11-13 at Big Waters (SPP), Blyth Harbour (BB), Branton GP (IBDa/KDa), East Chevington (PRM), Grindon Lough (BNR) and West Ord-Whiteadder Point (TBr), eight to nine at Beadnell Bay and Whittle Dene Reservoirs and five to six at Bolam Lake CP, Budle Bay and Derwent Reservoir. Three to four were also at Bothal Pond and Killingworth Lake and one to two at eight further sites.

Smew *Mergellus albellus*

A 'redhead' was at Grindon Lough on 16th and 23rd (BNR).

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Four flew N at Snab Point on 6th (BB) and three S at Alnmouth on 19th (CDH). Peak counts were 12 at Budle Bay-Stag Rocks on 12th-13th (CGK/ADM), nine at Cresswell Pond on 9th (AA/MH), eight at Holy Island on 29th (ADM), six at Cheswick on 11th (MHu), five at the Blyth Estuary and Foxton, and three to four at Alnmouth and Cheswick. One to two were also at Castle Island, East Chevington, Ladyburn Lake and Newton Point.

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

The largest counts were 22 on the River Tweed between West Ord-Whiteadder Point on 16th (TBr), 15 at Branton GP on 1st (JD), 13 at Killingworth Lake on 20th (BMo), 12 at Newcastle Exhibition Park on 28th (GB), ten at Bolam Lake CP on 26th (KWY) and five to seven at Airy Holm Reservoir and Greenlee Lough. Three to four at Bywell, Castle Island, Derwent Reservoir, East Chevington, Marden Quarry, Scotswood and Wylam. One to two were also at Ashington, Bothal Pond, Castron, Corbridge, Holy Island, Jesmond Dene, Marden Quarry, Swallow Pond and the Tweed Estuary.

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

The only records received were of 25 at Harwood Shield on 1st (BNR) and five at Fomart Knowe on 20th (CGK/MSH).

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

The sole record was of four males feeding at Plenmeller on 19th (MH).

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

On 19th ca.30 were at Lilburn Glebe (JR) and on 10th 20+ were at Holywell Pond, where seven juveniles were noted on 15th (PRM/PG). 18 were on Alnwick Moor on 6th (JR), 15 at Haughterslaw on 22nd (MJC) and nine at Urchin's Bank (Yetlington) on 18th (JR). One to six were seen at Airey Holm Reservoir, Bywell, Druridge Pools and Ellington.

Grey Partridge at Dunstan Hill by Colin Bradshaw



Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

The largest gathering was in coastal fields at Blyth Links where 63 were present in several coveys on 10th (PRM). 28 were in Cresswell Dunes on 9th (MH/AA), 20 at Beal Road Ends on 11th (MJC) and Boulmer on 20th (JL), 18 at Hebron on 20th (JR), 17 at Dunstan Hill (Craster) on 21st (CB), 16 at Cresswell Pond on 12th (TB), 15 at Shiremoor on 6th (CGK) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 21st (MR). 12 were at Ellington on 13th and at Alnwick on 22nd, 11 all month at Pegswood and at Snab Point on 6th and ten at Howick on 20th. One to nine were seen at Beaconhill (Cramlington), Birling Carrs, Borewell (Scremerston), Bothal Pond, Boulmer, Cowden, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, High Hauxley, Holywell Dene, Harwood Shield, Howick Scar, Lynemouth Flash, Newbiggin GC, Prestwick Carr, St Mary's Wetland, Warkworth Gut, West Chevington and West Ord.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

On 18th 22 were at Newton (Alwinton) (JR), 16 were at Hyons Wood (Prudhoe) on 15th (BNR) and 15 at Hartley West Farm (Holywell Dene) on 11th (RJP) and at Hartside on 18th when 13 were at Northside (Netherton) (JR). Two were at Cresswell Pond on 28th.

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

On 12th 16 flew S in 10 minutes at Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) (SW), whilst on 8th seven flew N at Castle Point (Holy Island) (ADM) and on 5th five flew N and five flew S in 1 hour at Newbiggin (GB).

At Stag Rocks ca.20 were offshore on 1st (MH/AA) and at Holy Island 10/11 were in the harbour and off St Cuthbert's Island on 12th (IK/SW). Eight were off Cresswell Dunes on 3rd (PRM), six were off Seaton Sluice on 7th (BMo) and in Spittal Bay on 24th with four nearby at Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 6th and three were off Cheswick on 7th (MHu). One to two were seen at Annstead, Birling Carrs, Blyth (Estuary, South Harbour and South Beach), Cocklawburn Beach, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Bay, East Chevington, Newton Point and in the Tweed Estuary.

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*

Singles were off Stag rocks on 12th (CGK/SW), in Druridge Bay on 19th (AJH) and in the Tweed Estuary on 21st (MHu).

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

One flew S at Stag Rocks on 1st (MH/AA). Singles were noted off Holy Island on 6th (ADM/MJC) and 20th (GB), off Goswick Sands on 10th (AT), Budle Point on 12th (CGK), Stag Rocks on 22nd (ADM) and Cocklawburn on 23rd (MHu).

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

On 3rd 22 flew N at Hauxley (HRS), whilst four flew S at St Mary's Island on 11th (MSH) and three flew S at Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 25th (MHu). 15 juveniles were off Stag Rocks on 12th (CGK). Four were off Cheswick on 27th and one off Holy Island on 27th.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Three flew W over Prestwick Carr on 5th (PCF). The peak counts were 87 in Blyth South Harbour on 20th and 72 at North Shields Fish Quay on 19th (DMT). Inland 17 were at Killingworth Lake on 20th (BMo) and QEII Lake on 28th (CDH), 15 at Derwent Reservoir on 7th (IFo) and 14 in the Tweed Estuary on 21st (MHu). Smaller gatherings were eight at Big Waters on 30th, seven at East Chevington North Pool on 20th, six at Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 6th and downstream of Wylam on 15th and five at Swallow Pond on 18th. One to four were noted at Bywell Cottagebank, Cresswell Pond, Elswick Wharf, Castle Island, Greenlee Lough, Grindon Lough, Holywell Dene, Ladyburn Lake, Newcastle Ouseburn mouth and Quayside, Ovingham, Whittle Dene Reservoirs and Woodhorn North Flash.

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Four flew N at Newbiggin on 6th (PBU/Abu). The peak roost counts were 32 at Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 6th (MHu) and 30 at Blyth South Harbour on 5th (STH). Five were at Stag Rocks on 13th and one to three noted at Holy Island and in the Tweed and Tyne estuaries.

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

Two birds were present all month at Gosforth Park NR with some observers reporting that three birds were present (NHSN *et al.*). Singles were at Cresswell Pond on 10th/13th (MN/GMi/ASJ) and at East Chevington on 12th/29th (TRD/JD/SPP/JPD/MN/NEWT/MSK).

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Lower numbers were reported this month with peak counts of two at Castle Island on 6th/20th (AT/DM/STH/IFo), at Beal Sands on 12th (SW), in the Wansbeck Estuary on 25th (MSH) and in Budle Bay on 27th (CS). Singles were seen at Beal on 1st, Blyth Estuary on 4th, Holy Island on 6th, Yarrow Slake, Tweed Estuary on 8th and Warkworth Dunes Pond on 9th.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

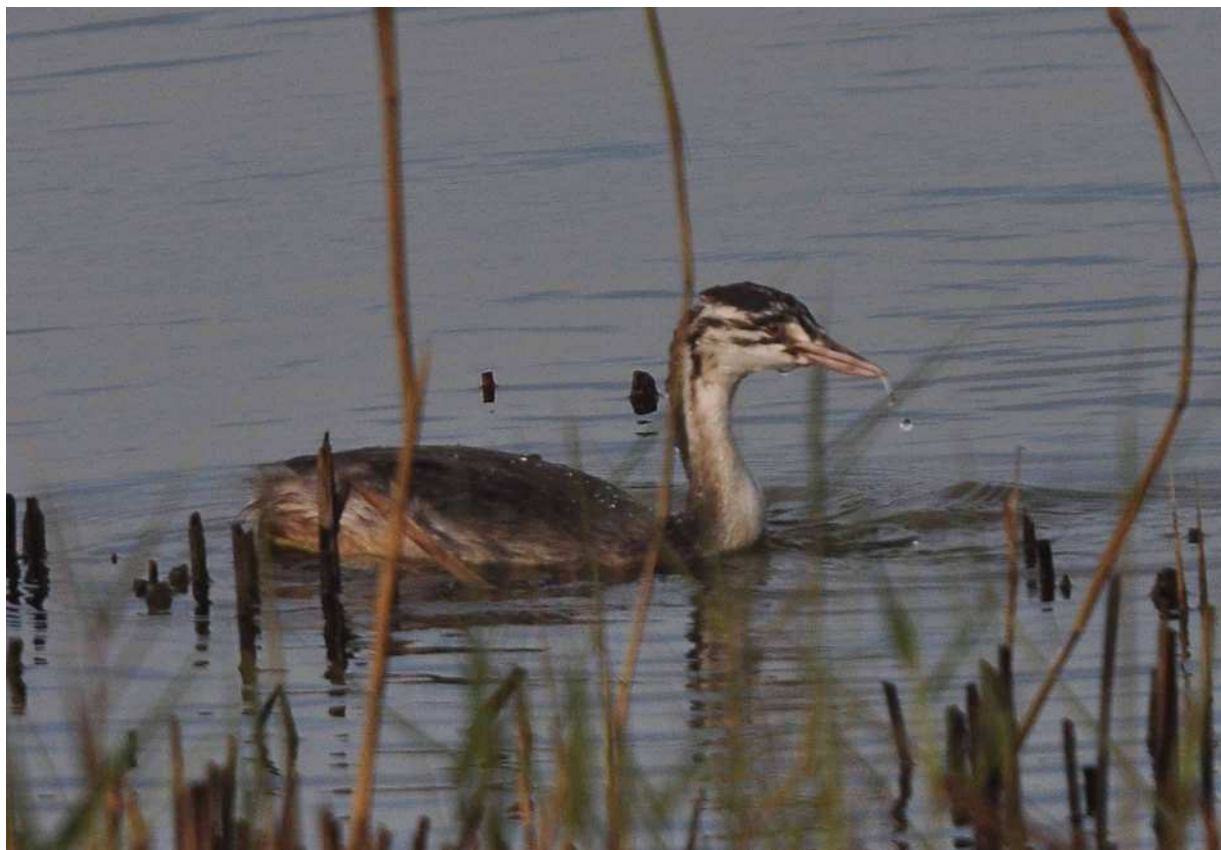
The peak counts were 14 in the Tweed Estuary on 21st (MHu), 10 in the Blyth Estuary on 9th (BB), eight on Holy Island on 9th which included three new arrivals in off the sea (ADM), seven at Hartley West Farm (Holywell Dene) on 1st (RJP) and Cambois on 6th (STH/PJA) and six at West Chevington on 10th (MN) and High Hauxley on 20th (DM/STH/IFo). One to five were seen at Alnmouth GC, Catcleugh Reservoir, Castle Island, College Valley, Cresswell Pond, QEII Lake, Elswick Wharf, Leazes Park (Newcastle), QEII Lake, Whittle Dene Reservoirs and flying SW over Kenton.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

The highest counts were 17 at Castle Island on 6th (AT), 12 on the River Aln on 20th (JL), nine in the Blyth Estuary on 13th (LJM) and six at Hauxley on 12th (BB). Four were seen at Cresswell Pond on 3rd, Bothal Pond on 6th and Alnmouth GC and Nelly's Moss Lakes (Craggside) on 19th. One to three were seen at Big Waters, Caistron, Cocklawburn Pond, Druridge Pools, Holy Island Lough, Holywell Pond, Linton Ponds, on the Tyne from Ovingham-Prudhoe and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

One flew N at Snab Point on 6th (BB). Five (two juveniles) were at East Chevington on 2nd (TRD/JD), four were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 10th/21st (MR) and two off Stag Rocks on 6th (RNa). Singles were noted at Big Waters, Birling Carrs, Bothal Pond, Branton GP, Cheswick, Cresswell Pond (juvenile), Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) and Monks' House Pool.



Juvenile Great Crested Grebe
Cresswell Pond
2nd November by Tim Dean

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

The only reports came from Holy Island, where on 18th a bird in winter plumage was off Castle Point and another showing traces of summer plumage was off the North Shore (ADM) and a single was off St Cuthbert's Island on 12th (IK).

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

The largest gatherings were 12 in Holy Island Harbour and ten off Stag Rocks on 12th (SW). At the latter site up to six were seen on four further dates. Three were also off Budle Point on 12th (CGK) and two off Holy Island on 11th (ADM). A single was on Ladyburn Lake on 14th/19th /21st (BMo/SPP/AJH/AT).

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Three birds were seen along a 1km stretch of the A68 at Carterway Heads on 23rd (AJR). Single birds were seen at Blanchland and Killingworth on 16th (JMA/CS), Haughterslaw on 19th (JR), Wylam on 28th (RMHa) and at Derwent Reservoir on 29th (IFo).

Harrier/ Buzzard sp

An unidentified bird was seen at an extreme height and distance from the observer's position at the Snook on Holy Island on 6th (ADM).

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Single birds were noted at Holywell Pond on 6th (EG), Big Waters on 15th (EC/JSB) and at Prestwick Carr on 16th (BMo).

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

Birds were seen at several sites during November.

Pallid/Montagu's Harrier *Circus sp*

On 8th a juvenile flew around Holy Island Village area early pm (MJC/ADM).

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

Only one record this month of a male interacting aggressively with another raptor at a site on 1st (BNR).

An alert Sparrowhawk
Dinnington on 25th November
Peter Fletcher

**Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus*

Up to four birds were reported on Holy Island during the month (MJC), three birds were seen at Tynemouth on 11th (DRW) and at Blyth on 16th (LJM). Two birds were at Holywell Dene and at Scotland Gate throughout the month (RJP/SLB/MSK) and two were at Fomart Knowe on 20th (CGK/MSH). Single birds were at 24 further sites during the month.

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Nine birds were near Plennmeller on 19th (MH), five birds were at West Chevington on 12th & 30th (MH/MSH) and four were at Haughterslaw on 22nd (MJC). One to three birds were at 34 sites during November.

A Buzzard at East Chevington
by Peter Fletcher

**Osprey** *Pandion haliaetuss*

A very late record involved a bird following the River Coquet S at Felton on 27th (MWi).

Kestrel *Falco tinninculus*

Prestwick Carr had a maximum of five birds during the month (MN *et al.*). Three birds were seen at Cresswell Pond, Harwood Shield, Holy Island, Prestwick Carr and at West Hartford. One to two birds were recorded from 25 sites.

Below Kestrels in flight

Left at Prestwick Carr by Peter Fletcher and right hovering at Tynemouth by Colin Bradshaw



Merlin *Falco columbarius*

12 records were received for one to two birds in the Holy Island area throughout the month (CP/IBDa/KDa *et al.*). Single birds were at two inland sites and at Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, the Long Nanny (Newton) and at Monks' House Pool.

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Up to two birds were on Holy Island during the month (SW) and at Cresswell Pond on 25th (MSH). Single birds were noted at 12 coastal sites and at six inland sites.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

A maximum of four birds were heard or seen throughout the month at East Chevington (KWY *et al.*). Three were at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN *et al.*) and at Backworth (CGK). Two birds were at Cresswell Pond and Holy Island Lough and single birds were at Big Waters, Prestwick Carr and Swallow Pond.

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

The largest counts this month were 33 at Silverlink Park LNR on 24th (MSH), 26 at Backworth on 6th (CGK), and 23 at Druridge Bay CP on 20th (TB) and at Woodhorn Flash on 30th (STH). Other high counts were 17 birds at Cresswell Pond and QEII CP on 17th and 12 at Alnmouth GC on 19th (CDH). One to ten birds were at seven further sites during the month.

Coot *Fulica atra*

124 birds at Killingworth Lake on 23rd (LJM) was the highest count followed by 110 at East Chevington on 12th (GB). 48 were at Woodhorn Flash on 5th (STH). Big Waters had a maximum of 30 birds on 19th (GB) and 22 were at Druridge Pools on 25th (PRM). Three to 17 birds were at Castle Island, Leazes Park (Newcastle), Linton Pond and at Silverlink Park LNR.



A Coot
Marden Quarry
by Colin Bradshaw



An Oystercatcher has a stretch in the sun at St. Mary's
30th November by Simon Elliott

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

The WeBS count at Berwick North Shore produced 224 on 18th (MHu) and 120 were in the Snab Point high tide roost on 5th (IFo); 42-65 could be found at Cocklawburn/Spittal, Hauxley NR, Kitty Brewster, Newbiggin and Seaton Sluice.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

The roost on the warehouse roof at Blyth South Harbour held a peak of 120 on 8th (EC/JSB); 70 were at Long Nanny on 5th (IRD) and 20-43 at Boulmer, Cocklawburn/Spittal, East Chevington, High Hauxley and Newbiggin.

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

Most of the higher counts were again in the north: 3,000+ in Budle Bay on 17th (MSH/CGK), a peak of 3,000 from Holy Island causeway on 4th (ADM), 2,500 at Monks' House Pool on 9th and 20th (CP/IBDa/KDa) and 2,500 at Goswick Sands on 12th (SW). In the south 2,400 were at St Mary's on 10th (ASJ) and 2,000+ in a field next to Station Road (Wallsend) on 7th (SPP). Other larger totals included 1,000 at Boulmer on 5th (RB/MB), 800+ at Cresswell Pond on 3rd, 240+ at Grindon Lough on 24th, 220 at Newbiggin on 5th and 100-150 at East Chevington, Killingworth Waggonways, Longhorsley and Airy Holm Reservoir. Two at Steng Moss (Harwood Forest) on 3rd were perhaps unseasonable.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Goswick Sands had 97 on 12th (SW) and seven or fewer were at Boulmer, East Chevington, Holy Island, Newbiggin and St Mary's.

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

The number in Budle Bay rose from 1,100 on 12th (CGK) to 2,000 on 20th (DGB); 870+ were at Grindon Lough on 24th (PRM) and the peak at Cresswell Pond was 625 on 11th (IRD). Several places had peaks of 200-350: Cocklawburn, Derwent Reservoir, East Chevington, Elswick Wharf, Houghton Strother GP, Holywell Pond, Prestwick Carr, Monks' House Pool, St Mary's, Shiremoor and West Hartford. Smaller numbers were found at another eight locations.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

Hauxley shore continued to attract, including 130 on 16th (JPD). Elsewhere 34 were at Seaton Sluice on 19th, 30 at East Chevington on 26th and 20 at St Mary's on 6th.

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

At St Mary's the peak was 128 on 14th (ASJ); 54 were at Berwick North Shore on 18th (MHu) and 20-44 at Boulmer, Goswick Sands, Hauxley, Low Newton and Newbiggin. Small numbers were seen at East Chevington, Holy Island and Seaton Sluice.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

The peak at Stag Rocks was 62 on 12th (SW). 22 were at Low Newton on 27th, 16 at Newbiggin on 30th and 14 at Tynemouth on 1st. up to six were at Boulmer, Cheswick, Cocklawburn, Craster, Cresswell, Hauxley and Seaton Sluice.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Most were in the north on 27th: 114 at Holy Island (TRD) and 49 at Goswick Sands (DM/GB). Boulmer had 30 on 5th, 23 were at Newbiggin on 30th and 20 at Cresswell Pond on 22nd with one to three at Bothal Pond, East Chevington, Elswick, Newton Point and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

Two were at West Hartford on 21st (PJA) and singles appeared at Monks' House Pool on 4th, Holy Island on 6th and Cresswell Pond on 16th.

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyptes minimus*

Just two: at Holy Island on 4th (ADM) and Cresswell Pond on 21st (ADMc).

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

The peak at Cresswell Pond reached 47 on 16th (IRD) and 41 were at Hauxley NR on 12th (HRS); other higher counts were 26 at West Hartford on 20th (DM/IFo/STH), 15 at Eshott on 12th and ten at Monks' House Pool on 13th. One to four were seen at Big Waters, Bothal Pond, East Chevington, Holy Island, Otterburn Ranges, Prestwick Carr and Rothbury.

Snipe is a **target species** for 2011. Please report all records.

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Most or all of 12-13 on The Snook (Holy Island) on 11th (ADM) were probably newly arrived. Up to six were noted on several other days on the island around this time, including five in off the sea on 9th (PH). Four were at Hauxley NR on 12th and one or two were found at another 19 widespread locations, including singles in off the sea at Newbiggin on 5th and St Mary's on 12th.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

One present almost throughout at the Rocket Field Pools (Holy Island) was joined by a second from 13th (ADM *et al.*). Two were in Budle Bay on 1st (AA/MH).

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Numbers reported were low with the most being ten in Budle Bay on 13th and eight at Holy Island on 27th (TRD/JD). Three or four were noted occasionally at Hauxley, Low Newton and Newbiggin and singles at Beal and St Mary's.

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Several arable fields Alnmouth-Dunstan held a total of 300+ on 20th (JL), 132 were at Long Nanny on 17th (MH/AA), 98 at St Mary's on 14th (ASJ) and 100+ at Hauxley on 5th. Cocklawburn, Cresswell Pond, Holy Island, Holywell Pond and Kitty Brewster attracted 54-81 with 16-42 at Alnwick, Berwick and Blyth Links. Inland five were at Bothal Pond on 6th and one at Grindon Lough on 7th.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Three were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 10th, four on 21st and one on 25th and one at Bothal Pond on 8th (TRD/JD).

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

Singles were at Cresswell Pond on 1st and 3rd (ADMc *et al.*), Holy Island on 6th (IK) and Warkworth Gut on 12th (NFO).

***Greater Yellowlegs** *Tringa melanoleuca*

The first County record came in the shape of an immaculate first-winter found at East Chevington North Pool on 12th (ADMc/KD/TB/ACo *et al.*). After disappearing from there it turned up at Hauxley NR later in the day. For the rest of the month and well into December it embarked on grand, but unpredictable, tours of suitable wetland habitat in Druridge Bay. It was first seen at Cresswell Pond on 20th and was reported from Ladyburn Lake at some point although there appears to be nothing in writing so far to support the latter sightings.

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Singles were seen in Budle Bay on 1st, 9th and 27th (AA/MH/MJC/CS) and at Warkworth Gut on 9th and 12th (*per* NNBC/NFO).

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

A high-tide roost at the Rocket Field (Holy Island) contained 250 on 6th (IK), 172 were in the Tweed Estuary on 21st (MHu) and Hauxley held a peak of 121 on 3rd (HRS). Cresswell Pond, Cullercoats and Elswick Wharf had 53-60 at times and small numbers were found at a further eight places.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

At St Mary's about 50 were present on 2nd (JMA) and 31-35 were in The Tweed Estuary, Craster Harbour and at Newbiggin. Twenty or fewer were noted at Berwick, Boulmer, Hauxley and Low Newton.

***Grey Phalarope** *Phalaropus fulicarius*

An obliging individual was on the south pool at Hauxley NR 12th-14th (BB *et al.*), sometimes in close company with a certain Greater Yellowlegs.

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

One was chasing Little Gulls at Stag Rocks on 1st and one was off Church Point (Newbiggin) on 5th (STH).

Sabine's Gull *Xema sabini*

A juvenile was recorded on a pelagic trip two miles east of Blyth on 8th (MSK/NECP).

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

The main count this month was at Berwick Pier on 3rd (MHu) with 500 per hour S. Other passage movements included 24 S on 12th at Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) and 12 S on 25th at Meadow Haven (Berwick) (MHu). Otherwise few sightings with up to four in the Tyne Estuary up to North Shields Fish Quay on 4th (DMT) and singles at Boulmer on 5th (RB/MB) and Blyth South Harbour on 20th (DMT).

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

The peak count was at least 1,000 at Hauxley on 5th & 16th (JPD / HRS) feeding in stubble. 253 were noted on a WeBS survey of the Tweed Estuary on 21st (MHu), 248 at QE II CP on 28th (CDH) and 215 at the Tyne Estuary up to North Shields Fish Quay on 6th (DMT). Smaller counts of between 121 and 173 were made at Castle Island, Jesmond Dene and Leazes Park with up to 79 at other localities.

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

The feeding flocks of last month remained until 1st with at least 128 off Stag Rocks in small groups with most being adults (AA/MH). Parties went past Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) with 27 adults and 4 juveniles on 12th and 23 on 19th (MWi) and past Newbiggin on 4th (ADM) with 21 adults and one first-winter. Six adults were off Stag Rocks on 12th (CGK) and two adults and a first-winter were at Hauxley on 3rd (HRS). Otherwise two flew N at Snab Point on 6th (BB) and singles were at Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Holy Island, Newbiggin GC and Newton through to 20th.

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

As always the main counts came from Newbiggin with a peak of 27 on 5th (STH/GB/TB/PBu/ABu). Otherwise single adults were seen at Blyth Links, Boulmer, Castle Island and Whitley Bay plus a first-winter at Big Waters on 20th (SPP).

Common Gull *Larus canus*

The main counts involved roosts with 1,500 between Tynemouth and Cullercoats on 28th (DMT) and 1,200 at Derwent Reservoir on 7th (IFo). 270 were at Hyons Wood (Prudhoe) on 15th (BNR), 230 at Haughton Strother GP on 9th (MR) and ca.150 at Morpeth on 18th (JR). Smaller counts up to 71 were noted at several other localities.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

Few birds were left in the county with most having sought warmer climes further south. One or two were found at Backworth, Big Waters, Grindon Lough, Newcastle Manors, Southfield Green and West Hartford.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus intermedius*

One adult was reported at Newcastle Manors (Quayside) on 3rd (BNR).

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

There were several large concentrations with at least 500 at Backworth on 7th (MSH), 500 at Budle bay on 3rd (JMA) and 450 at Black Middens (Tynemouth) on 2nd (JMA). Smaller groups of up to 138 birds were noted at several other localities.

'Northern' Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argentatus*

An adult of this northern race was at the Tyne Estuary up to North Shields Fish Quay on 26th.

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

The first autumn sighting involved a second-winter which was found at Cresswell Pond on 22nd (ADM/MN).

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

The peak count was noted near Holywell Pond on winter wheat with at least 300 present during the month (EG/PG). Other groups were 262 at Castle Island on 20th (DM), 204 at Backworth on 14th (MSH) with most being adults and 133 at the Tyne Estuary on 6th with again most involving adults (DMT). Up to 51 were found at several other localities.

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

One at High Hauxley on 15th (JD/TRD) was seen flying over the goose flock there before heading out over the observers' heads to Coquet Island. The second-latest record for the county with the latest being one at Holy Island on 24th November 1985.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

A juvenile was found in the high-tide roost at Snab Point on 5th (IFo).

Guillemot *Uria aalge*

Small numbers were noted this month with peaks of only nine at Castle Point on 2nd (ADM) and eight at Stag Rocks on 20th and 22nd (CGK/MSH/ADM). Up to five were also noted at Blyth, Cheswick Dunes, Goswick Sands, Holy Island, Meadow Haven, Newton Point, Spittal Bay and The Tweed Estuary.

Razorbill *Alca Torda*

Eight were seen off Stag Rocks on 20th with one there on 22nd (CGK/MSH). The only other report was from Druridge Bay with one on 19th (AJH).

Black Guillemot *Cephus grylle*

One was seen off Snipe Point (Holy Island) on 20th (SR/AH/MJC).

Little Auk *Alle alle*

Five were found on a pelagic trip two miles E of Blyth on 8th (MSK/NECP).

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

Only singles reported with birds at Snipe Point (Holy Island) on 6th (MJC) and Stag Rocks on 20th (CGK/MSH).

Rock Dove / Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

The maximum monthly counts were 61 at North Shields Fish Quay on 6th with 25 at Blyth South Harbour on 20th (DMT) and a single at Beatty Avenue (South Gosforth) on 18th (MJCo).

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

At Low Luddick near Woolsington 17 fed on stubble on 7th (MH), 12 were at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 19th (TB), seven at Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 13th (KWY) with six at Tows Bank S / W Asholme Common on 13th (BNR) and Holywell on 28th (BMo). Three were at Holywell on three dates, at Grindon Lough and in a Walbottle garden, two at Backworth, Warden Law and Airy Holm Reservoir (near Shotleyfield) with singles at four locations in Jesmond Dene and at South Gosforth.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

The largest gatherings were 200 at Mitford on 10th (JMA), around 150 at Heugh Shiel on 16th (TB) and 50 at Powburn also on 10th with 30+ at Mitford Castle on 29th including a nearly all-white bird (ADMc). Three were at Jesmond Dene and South Gosforth whilst in a Tynemouth garden only one could be found all month when normally ten or more are present.

A pair of Collared Doves at Tynemouth
by Colin Bradshaw

**Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto*

A roost in a Dutch barn at East Ord Farm held 42 on 3rd (MHu), 39+ gathered around stables at Callerton Village on 7th (MH) and 25 were at Seaton Delaval on 16th (JR). Gatherings in gardens were noted with 15 at Tynemouth on 3rd (CB), 11 at Cramlington on 9th (LJM) and seven at Dinnington on 7th (PCF). Counts at Hauxley peaked at eight on 9th, four were at Southside (Netherton), two at Holywell Dene and a single at South Gosforth.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Three pulli were ringed in the Warkworth area on 5th (PHa). Elsewhere only singles reported at East Chevington on 4th, Greenhead on 5th, Maiden's Hall Opencast on 7th, Yearle on 9th and 20th, Portgate (Corbridge) and Chesterhope on 12th, Widdrington on 14th, Linden Hall on 15th, roosting in the hide at Holy Island on 17th, Newton on 18th where it nearly collided with the observer's car, Chatton on 19th, Haltwhistle Common on 25th, Clover Hill on 27th and Longhorsley Moor on 30th.

Barn Owl is a **target species** for 2012. Please report all records.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Two were together atop a telegraph pole at Bywell Cottagebank on 18th (BNR) with all other sightings being singles at Dinnington on 2nd, Hemscotthill Links, Chugdon Wood (Ellington) and Middle Stobswood on 6th, Woodhorn on 19th and Ovington all month.

Little Owl is a **target species** for 2012. Please report all records.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Calling birds were evident in the south west of the county with two at Riding Mill on 1st and 26th, Dipton Wood on 16th, Dotland on 22nd and Hexham S on 28th (BNR). Two males called at Ellington on 9th (TB) with all other reports being singles at Fairshaw Farm, Gosforth Park, Grindon Lough, Letah Wood (Hexham), Humshaugh, Gubeon Plantations (Morpeth), Netherwitton, Ordley, Walbottle, Wark (N Tyne) and Rothbury all month.

Tawny Owl is a **target species** for 2012. Please report all records.

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

A single bird was present at Prestwick Carr on 20th and 21st (MH/PCF/CBD/PRM).

Long-eared Owl is a **target species** for 2012. Please report all records.

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Good numbers generally with the peak count at Prestwick Carr of ten on 19th (TRD/JD) and six to nine counted on seven dates during the month. Eight were at Woodhorn on 12th (TB), six at Holy Island on 6th (ADM/MNC) and Longhorsley Moor on 30th (AB/LB) with multiples at these locations throughout the month. Two to three were seen regularly at East Chevington, Ash-Lagoon Bank and Golf Course (Newbiggin), and Holystone-Killingworth with singles at Amble, Cresswell Pond, Hauxley, Seaton Sluice, St Mary's Island, Swallow Pond and Tynemouth.

Short-eared Owl is a **target species** for 2012. Please report all records.



Three views of Short-eared Owls at Prestwick Carr in November.

Left by Peter Fletcher and right two views by Chris Barlow

Swift sp

A bird of this species was seen at Pegswood on 2nd (TRD/JD) with a bird likely to be Common Swift *Apus apus* seen by three observers in the Brierdene/Cemetery Links area of Whitley Bay on 4th (ASJ/MSH/NPD).

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Two were at Branton GP all month (IBDa/KDa) and at Jesmond Dene on 22nd (MJCo) with a single seen at this location throughout the month. Single birds were also seen regularly at Gosforth Park NR and Hauxley NWT with other reports from Big Waters, Corbridge, Haughton Strother GP, Highford (Morpeth), Rothbury and Whittle Burn near Ovingham.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

All reports of single birds from Thrunton Woods on 1st (JD), Molesden near Morpeth on 10th (IRD), Holywell Pond NWT on 10th (PRM), Rothbury on 20th (JD), Whitley Chapel on 27th and Swallowship Wood (Hexham) on 30th (AJH).

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

A count of four at Corbridge on 9th (PRM/EAW) was the peak with three males at Holywell NWT on 10th (PRM) and three at Swallowship Wood (Hexham) on 30th (AJH). Two were at Hauxley on 5th, 6th and 12th (HRS), Prestwick Carr on 11th and 30th (MN/BB), West Ord on 20th (MHu), Jesmond Dene on 30th (MJCo) and occasionally at Scotland Gate throughout the month (SLB/MSK). Single birds visited gardens at Holy Island Village, Beatty Avenue (South Gosforth) and Cramlington with other reports from Big Waters, Blakehopeburnhaugh, Bywell Cottagebank, Castle Island, Cresswell Pond, Dipton Wood E, Harwood, Holywell Dene, QEII CP, Newbiggin, Plessey Woods, Seaton Sluice, Tows Bank South and Walbottle.

A Great Spotted Woodpecker at Dinnington
by Peter Fletcher on 11th November

**Great Grey Shrike** *Lanius excubiter*

A single bird was found at Prestwick Carr on 9th (MH) in the same hawthorns and by the same observer as the last record of this species here on 23rd April 1993! That bird stayed two days, however the current visitor remained until the month end allowing many others to observe it.

Magpie *Pica pica*

Moderate numbers with nine the peak at Holywell Dene on 20th (RJP), eight at Bywell Cottagebank / Short Wood GP on 18th (BNR), six at Heaton Park on 9th (MJCo) and in a Walbottle garden on 20th (KR/LR) with three at Alnwick and Jesmond Dene.

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

A gathering of ten at Tows Bank S / W Asholme Common on 13th included seven going to roost and four were together at Dipton Wood E on 12th (BNR) with three at Humford Mill (Bedlington) on 17th (JR). Two visited a garden at Scotland Gate occasionally during the month and were at College Valley, Jesmond Dene, Norham, Prestwick Carr, Riding Mill, Swallow Pond and Warden with singles at Catcleugh, Cramlington, Jesmond Dene Quarry and Plessey Woods.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

Counts of 276 moving to roost at Grindon Lough / Muckle Moss on 16th and 132 at Tows Bank S / W Asholme Common on 13th (BNR) with 24 at Union Gate near Netherton and one to seven at four locations around Newcastle.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

Just two reports of 500 over Hedgeley on 10th (JMA) and 31 at Union Gate near Netherton on 18th (JR).

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

The maximum count on the Tyne Estuary up to NSFQ was 66 on 26th (DMT) with 40 at Hyons Wood (Prudhoe) on 15th, 22 at Grindon Lough / Muckle Moss on 30th (BNR) and unusually 30 at The Gardens, Monkseaton on 7th (AAM). One to six were at College Valley, Jesmond Dene, Haughterslaw, Makendon, Otterburn Ranges, Potts Durtrees, Quarry House Moor and South Gosforth.



A Carrion Crow at Tynemouth
by Colin Bradshaw

Raven *Corvus corax*

A flock of 21 birds at Otterburn Ranges on 6th were presumed to be feeding in a carcass (JR) with up to six other birds seen in the area possibly from this group. At dusk on 14th six moved S at Haltonlea Fell (SW), two were at Addycombe (Rothbury) on 6th, Kielder Viaduct on 13th with pairs displaying at Ross Castle and Beanley on 22nd. Singles were at six further upland locations.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

More than 15 were found at Corbridge on 9th (PRM/EAW), a peak of 13 at Hauxley on 12th (HRS), 10+ at Craster Willows on 15th (MSH), eight at Swallow Pond on 5th, seven around Holy Island on 8th with around five in the village there on 9th. Four were at Valley Park (Cramlington), three regularly at Scotland Gate and at St Mary's Island, Druridge Pools and Blakehopeburnhaugh, with one to two at these and eleven other widespread localities.

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

The peak counts were 23 at Humford Mill (Bedlington) on 17th, 20 at Hauxley on 5th, 15 at Holywell Dene on 27th and 11 at Seaton Sluice on the same date (JRT/HRS). Seven were at Blakehopeburnhaugh on 18th, six the highest count in a Walbottle garden during the month with three at Jesmond Dene and South Gosforth.

Great Tit *Parus major*

Twenty one were at Holywell Dene on 27th, 14 at Humford Mill (Bedlington) on 17th, nine at Seaton Sluice on 27th (JR), eight the highest count for the month in a Walbottle garden, five at Jesmond Dene on 20th and two at Beatty Avenue (South Gosforth) on 18th.

Coal Tit *Pariparus ater*

Adjacent tetrads at Longhorsley Moor held 25(W) and 12(E) on 30th (AB/LB), 20+ were around Hauxley on 3rd of which three were ringed (HRS), nine at Humford Mill (Bedlington) on 17th (JR) with one to four at Jesmond Dene, Holywell Dene, South Gosforth and Walbottle.

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

The peak count at Prestwick Carr was five on 22nd (IK) with one to three on eight other dates during the month. Two were at Linton Ponds on 12th (STH/IFo), Linden Hall on 13th (NFO) and Mootlaw Quarry (Ryal) on 19th (ALT). Singles visited gardens at Cramlington and Scotland Gate, also at Branton GP, Eshott, Hyons Wood (Prudhoe) and Humford Mill (Bedlington).

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

The only multiple count was of two at Bywell Cottagebank / Short Wood GP on 18th (BNR) with singles at Burnfoot (Linden Hall) on three dates, Longhorsley, Carlisle Park (Morpeth) and Thrunton Woods.

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

The highest counts came from Holy Island with 40 on the Straight Lonnen on 9th and 30 there on the 6th (MJC). Twenty four were at St Mary's on 1st (ASJ), 20 at Beal / Goswick on 1st (MH/AA) and over Hauxley on 5th (HRS), 17 at Bellasis Bridge on 7th (MH) and 15 E at Mootlaw Quarry (Ryal) on 19th (ALT). Three to eight were at Ellington, Holywell Pond, Seaton Sluice and Tynemouth.

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

On 15th a juvenile appeared to fly in off the sea and headed S (MJC/ADM). A very late bird was observed at St Mary's lighthouse around 15.30 on 27th (*per* RWM).

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

27 at Warden on 13th was the largest flock (SW), followed by 20+ at Swallow Pond on 15th (JPD). Counts of 18 came from Bywell, Haughton Strother GP and Prestwick Carr (BNR/MR/PCF) and 17 from Holywell Dene, Longhorsley Moor and Hauxley (JR/A&LB/HRS). 11-16 were noted at Blakehopeburnhaugh, College Valley, Hagg Bank (Wylam), Silverlink Park (North Shields), Tows Bank and Woodhorn and two to ten at a further ten localities.

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*

Singles were at Hauxley RS from 3rd-8th (HRS) and at St Mary's Island / Wetland on 5th (MSH); it or another at the latter locality from 9th-10th (AC/PRM/MSH).

Hume's Warbler *Phylloscopus humei*

One was found in Holy Island village on 15th (MJC).

Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus*

One was at Holy Island Lough on 12th (CMur/VWa/IK) and presumably the same on 15th (MJC).

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

One to two were on Holy Island on various dates from 8th-20th (ADM/MJC *et al.*) and two at Tynemouth on 16th. Singles were also reported from Bywell, Craster Willows, Druridge Pools, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Hauxley RS, Low Newton, Marden Quarry, Slaley Hall and St Mary's Island / Wetland.

Birds showing characteristics of the **Eastern race** *P.c.abietinus* were at the Snook (Holy Island) on 1st (possibly the same as 23rd October) and another on 15th-16th (ADM), the Straight Lonnen (Holy Island) on 8th (MJC) and Holy Island village on 20th (ADM/MJC). Two were at Craster Willows on 15th (MSH).

A bird showing characteristics of the **Siberian race** *P.c.tristis* was on the Straight Lonnen on 8th (MJC).

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

On Holy Island there were several reports from 4th-20th probably involving no fewer than four birds (two males/two females) (ADM/MJC). Four were together at Woodhorn on 5th (GB) and two at Prior's Park (Tynemouth) also on 5th (BMo). Singles were also reported from Bamburgh, Ellington, Hauxley, Tynemouth and well inland at High Brunton (Chollerford) on 15th.

Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus*

The first arrivals appeared on 11th when 18 were at Prestwick Cemetery (PCF), 11 on Holy Island (MJC) and nine S at Prestwick Carr (PCF). 31 visited Scotland Gate on 13th (SLB/MSK) and six to eight were at Budle Bay and Whitley Bay on 16th-17th (JPL/DGB/MSH). Up to 28 were at Horton Drive (Cramlington) on 20th, nine still present on 22nd (LJM) and ten were at Budle Bay on 30th (RNa). One to three were also reported from Big Waters, East Chevington, East Ord, Holywell Dene, Marden Quarry and North Seaton Colliery during the month.

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Four were found in Swallowship Wood (Hexham) on 30th (AJH) and two at County Hall (Morpeth), Hagg Bank (Wylam), South Gosforth and a Walbottle garden. Singles were reported from five localities in Jesmond Dene (MJCo), Dipton Wood, Holywell Pond and Plessey Woods CP.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Eight were noted at Cragside on 19th (MJC) and four at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 6th (TB), Hauxley on 12th (HRS) and Warden Law on 13th (SW). Three were at Swallowship Wood (Hexham) on 30th and one to two at a further ten widespread localities.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Four to eight were noted at Holy Island from 4th-13th with a peak on 4th (ADM/MJC) and eight at Hyons Wood (Prudhoe) on 15th (BNR). The only other reports were of one to two at College Valley, Jesmond Dene and a Walbottle garden.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

The important Holy Island roost produced a peak of 30,000 on 11th, declining to 26,000 by 13th (IK). At Prestwick Carr 10,000 flew SE at dusk on 16th (IK), 3,000 E on 20th and 1,500 E on 15th (PCF). The peak count at the East Chevington roost was 7,500 on 12th (PCF). Elsewhere 1,000 were feeding on the beach at Low Newton on 28th (MSH), 200-300 were reported from Blyth Links, Chollerford and Hauxley and 100-125 at Grindon Lough.



Two views of the impressive Starling flock at Holy Island
19th November by Chris Barlow

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

One to two were reported from eight sites in Jesmond Dene during the month (MJCo). Elsewhere four were found between Makendon-Alwinton (Upper Coquetdale) on 6th (JL) and singles at a further 11 localities including Branton GP and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

A late individual was at Chare Ends (Holy Island) on 8th (MJC)

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

There was a conspicuous arrival during the second week of the month. At Holy Island, 34 on 6th were followed by a major influx on 8th, when 544 were noted across the Island (MJC), declining to 90-100 on 9th (MJC/PH); 60 in the Straight Lonnen on 13th were new arrivals (IK) and 30 were still present on 17th. Numbers at Hauxley peaked at 100 on 12th; a total of 49 were ringed here from 3rd-20th (HRS). Elsewhere on the coast, 60+ were at Craster on 15th (MSH) and 30+ at Bamburgh on 8th (BRS). Inland movement was detected with 90+ at Holywell Pond on 10th, 29 at Longhorsley Common on 30th and 23 at Haughton Strother GP on 17th. One to 17 were reported from a further 13 localities.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

The largest count was 1,000+ at Prestwick Carr on 10th (SPP/ASJ). Flocks of 400 were at Branton GP on 9th (JD), West Heddon on 1st (IK) and Yetlington on 18th (JR). Holy Island held a peak of 333 on 8th (MJC), whilst 200-250 were noted at Coroner's Meadow (R Tweed) on 16th, Derwent Reservoir on 10th and Haughton Strother GP on 23rd. Counts of 100-180 were reported from Bamburgh, Powburn, Ordley and Warden and 60-94 from the College Valley, Corbridge, Harthope Valley, Killingworth, Longhorsley Common, Norham, West Chevington and West Newton. Up to 50 were noted at a further 18 localities.



A Fieldfare at Holy Island by Colin Bradshaw

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

A light coastal influx produced seven at Hauxley (HRS) and five at Newbiggin on 5th (GB) and ten at Holy Island on 8th (MJC). Six were in the College Valley on 19th (JR) and five well inland at Haughton Strother GP on 14th were considered to be immigrants (MR). Three were at Holywell Pond on 10th and a single at Seaton Delaval on 5th.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

Holy Island held a peak of 458 on 8th (MJC), when 140+ were also at Bamburgh (BRS). Inland 120 were at Dipton Wood on 12th and 110 at Hyons Wood (Prudhoe) on 15th; Arcot Pond had 60 on 30th (STH), 40 were at Longhorsley Moor on 19th (A&LB) and 39 at Bywell on 18th (BNR). 20-30 were at Corbridge, Eshott, Warden and West Ord, 15+ at Big Waters and one to eight at a further six localities.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

An enormous flock of 50 was reported from Letah Wood (Hexham) on 4th (AJH). More typical were eight mobbing three Sparrowhawks at High Horton (Blyth) on 16th (LJM), four at Blyth Cemetery on 10th (PRM) and three at Cramlington on 5th (DM). One to two were reported from a further 18 localities, including two potential immigrants at Holy Island on 17th (MJC).

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Coastal falls occurred at Holy Island with peak counts of 21 on 4th, 22 on 8th, 17 on 13th and 33 on 20th (ADM/MJC). A similar pattern at Hauxley produced peaks of 20 on 3rd, 20 on 8th and 19 on 12th (HRS). Elsewhere seven were at Holywell Dene on 27th, six at Blyth Cemetery on 10th, five at St Mary's Island on 10th and one to four at a further seven localities.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

Singles were at Tynemouth on 1st (SPP), Cresswell village on 6th (STH/PJA) and St Mary's Island on 9th-10th and 18th (AC/MSH). At Holy Island an adult male was present from 16th-20th (ADM/MJC *et al.*) and a female/immature on 25th (ADM).

A 1st-winter male of the **Eastern race** *ssp phoenicuroides* was discovered on the beach below the vicar's garden (Holy Island) on 16th, remaining in the area until 21st (ADM *et al.*). During its stay it was 'twitched' by well over 1,000 birders from around the country.



Above the popular 'Eastern' Black Redstart at Holy Island by Tim Dean on 7th November. For comparison below are two contrasting views of a Black Redstart at Tynemouth by Peter Fletcher on 1st November

**Stonechat** *Saxicola torquata*

Up to six were noted at Cresswell Pond / dunes during the month (ASJ *et al.*). Four were at Blyth Links on 10th (PRM), High Hauxley on 6th (JR) and inland near Rothbury on 18th (TBr). Three were reported from Stag Rocks-Budle Point (Bamburgh), Seaton Sluice and Warkworth Gut and two at Birling Carrs, Cocklawburn, Cowden (A68), Druridge Plantation, East Chevington, Hauxley, Low Newton, Makendon (Upper Coquetdale) and Plenmeller. Singles were noted at Holy Island, Ingram Valley, Monks' House Pool, Prestwick Carr and Seahouses.

Stonechat is a **target species** for 2011. Please report all records.

Wheatear *Oenanthe Oenanthe*

Singles were at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 4th-5th (AT/IFo), a different bird at Church Point (Newbiggin) on 5th (STH), Dunstanburgh Castle on 6th (DRW) and St Mary's on 27th (per RWM).

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

Six were at Hyons Wood (Prudhoe) on 15th (BNR) and one at Makendon (Upper Coquetdale) on 18th (JR).

A Dunnock sunbathing at Holy Island
by Colin Bradshaw

**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*

120+ were noted at Cullercoats Bay on 4th (MN), 45 regularly at a Parkside (Cramlington) garden all month (SJL), 20 at Manor Walks Shopping Centre (Cramlington) on 5th (DM) and two at a South Gosforth garden on 18th (MJCo).

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

65 were observed in the Hauxley area on 5th (HRS), 50+ feeding on set-aside at Holywell all month (PGa), 20 on a pheasant feeder at Smallburn (Longhorsley) on 30th (AB/LB), 15 at Lemmington Hall (Edlingham) on 15th (PHa), 11 at a Walbottle garden on 13th (KR/LR), eight at Craster on 13th (TRD/JD), seven S at St. Mary's Island on 8th (ASJ), six at Haughton Strother GP on 19th (MR), four to five at Boulmer on 5th (RB/MB), four at Holywell Pond feeding station on 7th (AMo) and one to three at a further six widespread localities including one at Holy Island Village on 4th – where it is a rarity (ADM).

Blue-headed Wagtail *Motacilla flava flava*

A very late migrant was present on a seaweed bank at Low Newton beach until dusk on 27th (GW/CGK/AC *et al.*).

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Three were in the Newcastle Quayside area on 3rd (BNR), two were occasionally around a garden pond at Tynemouth between 3rd-20th (CB), two at Prior's Park (Tynemouth) on 6th (MH) and West Allotment Pond on 21st (CGK). Singles were recorded at a further 14 widespread localities plus five sites in Newcastle City centre.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrellii*

20+ were found at Cresswell Dunes on 3rd (PRM), 15+ at Whitley Bay beach on 18th (MSH), ten at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 5th (STH) and Prestwick Carr on 12th (PCF), six at St. Mary's Island between 11th-18th (BB/MSH).

White Wagtail *M.a. alba*

A late migrant was noted at Hauxley NR on 15th (EC/JSB).

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

65 were present at Ros Castle on 22nd (MJC), 45 in the St. Mary's area on 14th (ASJ), 40 at Ellington on 19th (TB), six at Hauxley NR on 3rd and 12th (HRS) and S at Newbiggin on 5th (GB), five at the College Valley on 19th (JR) and Plenmeller Common on 19th (MH), four at Goswick on 27th (DM/GB) and one to three at a further six widespread localities.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

25 were at Bondicarrs (Hauxley) on 16th (JPD), 20 between Beadnell Harbour-Budle Point on 18th (ADM), 19 on Holy Island on 6th (ADM/MJC), 19 at Hauxley on 12th (HRS), six at St. Mary's Island on 18th (MSH) and Seahouses on 22nd (ADM), five+ at Whitley Bay beach on 18th (MSH) and one to three at Blyth South Harbour, Budle Bay, Cheswick Dunes, Goswick Dunes and the Long Nanny.

Water Pipit *Anthus spindelotta*

One was at Low Newton on 12th (TRD/JD).

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

98 fed on stubble at Haughton Strother GP on 9th (MR), 40+ at Hemscotthill Links (Cresswell) on 6th (PJA), 15 in the Hauxley area on 3rd (HRS), 13 at Humford Mill (Bedlington) on 17th (JR) and four at Holywell Dene on 17th (JR).

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

On the coast, three were noted at Tynemouth on 8th (DRW), two on the Snook (Holy Island) on 8th (MJC) with one at Chare Ends (Holy Island) on 4th (ADM). Inland, two were feeding at Dipton Wood on 12th (BNR) and one at Addycombe (Rothbury) on 6th (TRD/JD).

Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*

40+ were at Druridge Links on 6th (MSH), 31 visited at Walbottle garden on 6th (KR/LR), 12 at Holywell on 27th (JR) and five at Humford Mill (Bedlington) on 17th (JR).

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Largest flocks involved 100 at Hemscotthill Links (Cresswell) on 3rd (ASJ), 60+ at nearby Druridge Links on 6th (MSH), 40 at Blyth Golf Course on 26th (SJL), 25 at Cresswell Pond on 25th (PRM), 23 at Holywell Pond on 10th (PRM), 15 at Heaton Park (Newcastle) on 20th (MJCo), 12 at Prestwick Carr on 11th (MN), 11 at Hauxley on 6th (HRS) and one to ten at a further seven widespread localities.

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

Light coastal passage was still evident with ten to 20 at Hauxley on 5th (HRS) with 12 there on 12th (HRS), seven at Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 5th (KWY), two at Yarrow Slake (Tweed Estuary) on 8th (BWG) and East Ord on 24th (MHu). Singles were at Prior's Park (Tynemouth) on 6th (CB) and over the Straight Lonnen (Holy Island) on 9th (MJC). Inland, flocks began to build up with 30 at Haughton Strother GP on 2nd (MR) and Harthope Valley on 21st (DGB), ten at High Warden on 13th (SW), six at Holywell Pond on 19th (MSH), four at College Valley on 19th (JR) and two to three at Big Waters, Corbridge and Plessey Woods CP.

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

Wintering flocks involved 200 at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 29th (DGB *et al.*), 100 at Hemscotthill Links (Cresswell) on 3rd (ASJ), 90+ at nearby Druridge Links on 6th (MSH), 80 in the Dunstan Steads area (Embleton) on 18th (MJC), 53 at Smeafield on 20th (CGK/MSH), 50+ at Bamburgh on 8th ((BRS) and Holywell Pond on 10th (PRM), 40 at Straight Lonnen (Holy Island) on 9th (MJC) and Killingworth Waggonways on 19th (BMo), 30 at Seaton Point on 19th (AB/LB) and 18 at Haughterslaw on 19th (JR).

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*

Traditional wintering flocks on the coast involved 70 at Long Nanny (Newton) on 5th (IDR), 60 at Hemscotthill (Cresswell) on 3rd (ASJ), 30 south over Lookout Cottage (Fenham Flats) on 27th (LJM), 28 at Guile Point on 20th (IBDa/KDa), 20+ at Druridge Links on 6th (MSH), 10 at Whiteadder Point (Berwick) on 10th (TBr) and five at Boulmer on 5th (RB/MB). Inland, one was by the roadside on the Otterburn Ranges on 6th (JL).

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis cabaret*

22 were at Prestwick Carr on 28th (PCF), 15 at Druridge Bay CP on 30th (MSH), two at Muckle Moss (Grindon Lough) on 16th (BNR) and Bywell Cottagebank on 18th (BNR) and one at Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 26th (CDB).

Mealy Redpoll *Carduelis (MJC)flammea*

Two were observed at Straight Lonnen (Holy Island) on 11th (MJC) and one at Hauxley on 12th (HRS).

Common Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

14 were at Kellas Plantation (Slaley) on 16th (RMH), ten+ were at Steng Moss (Harwood Forest) on 3rd (MSH) and Wideout Plantation (Edlingham) on 5th (JMA), nine at Cottonshopeburnfoot (Redesdale) on 18th (JR) and Craggside on 19th (MJC) and one to five at a further 13 widespread localities including passage birds over Hauxley, West Chevington and Woodhorn Church.

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Nine were at Grindon Lough on 30th (PRM), eight at Prestwick Carr between 6th-11th (PCF) and Hauxley on 12th (HRS), six at Scotland Gate all month (SLB/MSK) and Craster Willows on 15th (MSH), five at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 5th (DM), Windmill Lane (Cramlington) on 6th (LJM), Spittal (Newbiggin) on 12th (GB) and Haughton Strother GP on 14th (MR). One to three were at a further 24 widespread localities. One was ringed at Hauxley RS on 5th (HRS).

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Coastal wintering flocks involved 14 near Low Hauxley on 30th (MSH), 11 at Seahouses Golf Course on 22nd (ADM), ten at Hemscotthill Links (Cresswell) all month (PJA *et al.*) and Long Nanny (Newton) on 5th (IDR). Birds were mobile and scattered around Holy Island all month with a peak of nine-ten at the Snook on 6th (ADM *et al.*). Eight were in Blyth Harbour on 5th (STH), six at Newbiggin on 5th (IFo) and Spittal Cliffs (Berwick) on 17th (MHu), three at Budle Bay on 27th (CGK/AC) and one to two at a further six widespread localities.

Lapland Bunting *Calcarius lapponicus*

Two were at St. Mary's on 7th (ASJ) and Holy Island on 20th (MJC). Singles were also at Beal Sluice on 1st (AA/MH) and Holy Island on 17th and 27th (ASJ/MJC/IK).

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

50 were noted at Laker Hall near Whittle Dene on 10th (MR), two at Hyons Wood (Prudhoe) on 15th (BNR), 15 at Swallowship Wood (Hexham) on 30th (AJH), five at Hartley West Farm (Holywell Dene) on 12th (RJP) and two at nearby Holywell Pond on 10th (PRM).

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

17 were in the St. Mary's area on 8th (ASJ), seven with Tree Sparrows near Hauxley on 12th (BB), five at Hauxley on 3rd (HRS) and one to three at East Chevington, Holywell Pond and Seaton Sluice Dunes.

ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN**Escapes****Bar-headed Goose** *Anser indicus*

The three individuals seen last month at East Chevington were again present there from 25th to 30th.

Ross's Goose *Anser rossii*

The two birds from last month continued their tour of the county where they were first seen at Budle Bay on 9th (CGK) then moving to Dunstan Hill from 15th to 24th (GW/MSH/SS/KWY) and finally to Holywell Pond on 27th (CS).

Muscovy Duck *Cairina moschata*

Two were on the River Tyne at Elswick Wharf from 2nd to 24th (DM).

Speckled Teal *Anas flavirostris*

The individual seen last month at Marden Quarry remained there with sightings on 11th and 26th (SPP/CDB).

Parakeet sp *Psittacula*

A large parakeet was again seen in the Northburn area of Cramlington on 25th (PJA).

Birds of Unknown Origin**Rose-ringed Parakeet** *Psittacula krameri*

Two were seemingly prospecting a nest hole in Churchill Park (Whitley Bay) from 7th to at least 22nd (AAM/MSH/CGK/CS).

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

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Bamburgh Ringing Station, Berwick Wildlife Group, Hauxley Ringing Station, Natural History Society of Northumbria, North Northumberland Bird Club, Northeast Cetacean Project, Northern Experience Wildlife Tours.

Those observers marked with an asterisk after their name(s) have submitted records online using the club spreadsheet. Copies are available by emailing Dick Myatt at dick@dickmyatt.co.uk

Apologies for any accidental omissions**BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION**

This bulletin was compiled by Lindsay McDougall (Mute Swan to Egyptian Goose, Red Grouse to Black-necked Grebe), Graeme Bowman (Ruddy Shelduck to Ruddy Duck), Trevor Blake (Honey Buzzard to Crane), Ian Forsyth (Oystercatcher to Skua), Tim Dean (Ivory Gull to Puffin, Escapes, Hybrids and Unknown Origin, List of Contributors, Highlights), Peter Fletcher (Feral Pigeon to Red-rumped Swallow), Mike Richardson (Cetti's Warbler to Pied Flycatcher), Eddie Crabtree (Dunnock to Corn Bunting), Julie Roper/Dan Turner (WeBS Coastal Counts) and Steve Holliday (WeBS Inland Counts). Thanks again to Ann McKeown for typing the section Dunnock to Corn Bunting. Thanks to David Sanders of NNBC for providing data. Proof reading was by Mike Smith.

Edited by Steve Barrett NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com

Distributed by Paul Stewart

We need a **volunteer** to arrange postage of bulletins. Our printer is in North Shields. Is there a member (who receives a postal bulletin) and lives at the coast available for an evening's work each month? Please contact any committee member or e-mail Steve Barrett at NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com

BULLETIN SECTION WRITERS

A writer, for 'Swans to Geese', will be required in 2012 as Lindsay McDougall will reduce his section to 'Grouse to Grebes'. Any volunteers from the WeBS people? Please contact Steve Barrett NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com

RECORD SUBMISSION

Please send all record cards to Tim Dean, 2 Knocklaw Park, Rothbury NE65 7PW, to arrive on, or preferably before, the 8th of the month following that in which the records were collected. Please write cards legibly to ensure that your sightings are correctly recorded.

E-mail: Members are encouraged to e-mail their records on an Excel-style spreadsheet. Please e-mail Dick Myatt at dick@dickmyatt.co.uk for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and Grid references: The use of standard location names and the inclusion of grid references greatly increases the value of records in subsequent analyses. A 1km square grid reference is the ideal e.g. NY8067 for Grindon Lough, but 2km square references (tetrads) are also acceptable e.g. NY86D in this case. A list of localities and their tetrad grid references (tetrad/Locality List) can be downloaded from the 'Resources & Downloads' section of the Club website at <http://www.ntbc.org.uk> – the use of these names, wherever possible, would be highly appreciated.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Please keep submitting your articles, photographs, sketches and illustrations for the bulletin. Thanks again to those who have supplied the excellent photographs. Please send to Steve Barrett at Sscmagpie@aol.com

ELECTRONIC BULLETIN

The NTBC bulletin can be received electronically or as hard copy. The electronic bulletin arrives earlier than the printed version, it is in colour and we save the cost of printing and stamps. Ask for an e-mailed bulletin from: jo.bentley@waitrose.com

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS 2011

Annual subscription is a bargain £23 and is now overdue. For membership enquiries please contact jo.bentley@waitrose.com The Form is available on the Club web-site.

BIRD CLUB COMMITTEE

Your Club welcomes any help in the running of the Club. Please see any committee member. The current committee members are listed on the Club web-site.

NTBC WEB SITE

The Club website is an excellent resource for all interested in birds in the north east. There are numerous interesting sections, including a photograph gallery, site information and trip reports together with extensive reference information for birding in our area. The site is at www.ntbc.org.uk

If you have any ideas or things you would like to see or hear about on the site please let Chris know on 0751 582 5024 or e-mail christopher.knox@o2.co.uk

NTBC SIGHTINGS PAGE

The club sightings web page gives listings of birds seen locally. Adding a sighting is simple. A short e-mail is all that is needed. If anyone would like to be added as a contributor please contact Alan Tilmouth at ntbcorg@gmail.com The sightings page can be found at <http://ntbcsightings.posterous.com>

INDOOR MEETINGS

The next indoor meeting will be at Northern Rugby Club, McCracken Park, Great North Road, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 2DT on Thursday 12th January at 7pm.

Please note the venue.

SIBERIAN DREAM

Graham Bell will describe his life-long quest for the nesting site of the Ross's Gull.

Members may recall that Graham was a founder member of the Bird Club and, in fact, contributed to the very first bulletin in 1958.

FIELD TRIPS

The next Club field trips are;

19th Feb to Ross Back Sands and on 25th March to Kielder.

Please contact Trevor Blake for more information. trevor.1958@live.co.uk

QUIZ re-issue

The format of Graeme's Christmas Quiz went awry in the October bulletin so it is being attached to this bulletin again. There is a prize so please send your entry direct to Graeme Bowman. Entries should be submitted by the end of January.

ATLAS NEWS

Sponsorship of species in aid of the Atlas publication is progressing well. So if you want 'own' your favourite bird, contact Steve Lowe at zappa99@live.co.uk

LINDISFARNE N.N.R. WILDFOWL & WADER LOW TIDE COUNT 27th November 2011

A synchronised wildfowl and wader count at Lindisfarne this winter was carried out for the BTO on Sunday 27th November 2011. Unfortunately, although it was dry and sunny with blue skies there was a very strong west north west wind blowing (perhaps up to 40mph gusting even higher!) which made counting conditions difficult to say the least in exposed areas of the reserve. Complete coverage of 14 tetrads, comprising 50 one x one km squares, in the reserve area was, however, achieved and a *sample extract* of overall totals from the count results is provided below together with corresponding totals from the last November synchronised count in 2005.



Care should be taken when comparing totals as in the earlier count one tetrad was not counted. The strong wind obviously affected some species with, for example, a very low total of Golden Plover when 3000+ had been present in Budle Bay alone during the preceding two weeks or so. Birds of prey, sometimes so obvious on the reserve, were represented by sightings of Peregrine in six tetrads and Merlin in two with odd Sparrowhawk and Kestrel. Also just outside of the count area 300 Barnacle and 150 Pink-footed Geese were present on fields.

All data will be supplied to the Low Tide Counts team at the BTO based on 1km x 1km squares and also to Natural England for their records.

	<u>19th Nov 2005</u>	<u>27th Nov 2011</u>
Mute Swan	14	15
Whooper Swan	68	0
Pink-footed Goose	1515	89
Eurasian W-F Goose	0	108
Barnacle Goose	3	29
Brent Goose (dark bellied)	124	260
Brent Goose (pale bellied)	2079	1327
Brent Goose (unassigned)	0	590
Shelduck	1180	1179
Wigeon	1483	1885
Gadwall	0	7
Teal	1311	670
Mallard	494	273
Pintail	74	57
Shoveler	12	0
Pochard	1	0
Tufted Duck	0	2
Eider	1097	260
Long-tailed Duck	28	31
Common Scoter	3	222
Velvet Scoter	0	9
Goldeneye	8	17
Red-breasted Merganser	27	22
Goosander		2
Red-throated Diver	40	6
Black-throated Diver	1	0
Great Northern Diver	8	0
Gannet	11	6
Cormorant	50	21
Shag	40	51
Little Egret	0	4
Grey Heron	23	9
Little Grebe	1	0
Red-necked Grebe	3	1
Slavonian Grebe	22	10
Moorhen	9	5
Coot	12	5
Oystercatcher	858	666
Ringed Plover	58	112
Golden Plover	361	172

	<u>19th Nov 2005</u>	<u>27th Nov 2011</u>
Grey Plover	265	404
Lapwing	844	261
Knot	1010	2025
Sanderling	71	122
Dunlin	1070	2282
Common Snipe	21	2
Woodcock	1	0
Black-tailed Godwit	4	0
Bar-tailed Godwit	438	1011
Curlew	742	882
Greenshank	1	1
Redshank	475	406
Turnstone	61	85

Many thanks are due to the following, rather wind-blasted, observers who took part in this latest count!

P. Allott, G. Bowman, T. A. & M. L. Cadwallender, M. J. Carr, T. R. Cleeves, E. Crabtree, A. Curry, M. Davison, J. C. Day, T. R. Dean, J. Dunn, M. Hepple, M. S. Hodgson, S. Holliday, A. Janes, I. Kerr, C. Knox, L. J. McDougall, D. McKeown, A. Middleton, L. Robson, C. Scrimgeour, T. Watson

Mike Hodgson

CRC NEWS

It was agreed at the County Records Committee meeting on 10th December that three subspecies would be removed from the Subspecies section Category C as of 1st January 2012 and hence will not in future need descriptive notes for inclusion in the Annual Report 'Birds in Northumbria'. These are as follows:-

'Continental' **Cormorant** – *Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis*

'Scandinavian' **Rock Pipit** – *Anthus petrosus littoralis*

'Nordic' **Jackdaw** – *Corvus monedula monedula*

It has been comprehensively proved by several dedicated observers that '*sinensis*' Cormorants are widespread now in the county. A comprehensive identification paper is being compiled for the website as detailed examination of the gular angle is necessary for definitive identification.

'*Littoralis*' Rock Pipits are thought to be relatively common winter visitors but are only easily identifiable in Spring when they attain breeding plumage in early March. Most county records involve birds seen in March and early April.

'*Monedula*' Jackdaws with definitive neck collars are occasional visitors mostly in winter and early Spring. Other races except our own British race would still require notes for inclusion in the Annual Report.

The CRC would always welcome comments regarding species in Category A, B & C and whether it is still necessary to request descriptions. The species lists are on the County Records Committee section on the NTBC website and also in the Annual Report under the County Recorder section.

Tim Dean

DESCRIPTIONS REQUIRED

I would welcome any outstanding county rarity descriptions from 2011. These are all species where notes are required for acceptance into the Annual Report 'Birds in Northumbria'. The list of species requiring descriptions is given on the NTBC website www.ntbc.org.uk under the County Records Committee section and the report form can be downloaded via the Resources and Downloads section. This section of the NTBC website has been recently updated with links to show the current position taking into account the decisions made at the CRC meeting of 10th December 2011. Currently only a third of the rarities and local rarities apparently seen during 2011 have been submitted to the CRC. Of the 105 accounts that have been forwarded 97% have been accepted. However the worrying trend continues where some birders seemingly believe that a phone call to Birdguides / Rare Bird Alert is all that is required to see their sighting recorded for posterity. Hopefully the long winter nights will inspire people to buckle down to some documentation and I look forward to a deluge of reports.

Tim Dean

NEW SITES

Sightings are being received for the following 'new' sites.

Please use the following designations for your records.

Maiden's Hall Lake

NZ238991

A large lake on former opencast east of minor road between Maiden's Hall and Woodside Farms ca.1km south-east of HM Acklington Prison.

East Stobswood Pool

NZ233933

A new pool west of A1068 on former opencast, south of Stobswood opposite Northwood Farm.

West Stobswood Pools

NZ225954

A new pool north-east of A1068 on former opencast, opposite West Stobswood.

COASTAL WEBS COUNTS: NORTHIMBERI AND

[illegible]

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

<http://www.ntbc.org.uk/>

Bulletin 2011 No 12

MONTHLY SUMMARY – DECEMBER

6th February 2012



HIGHLIGHTS

Bewick's Swan
Tundra Bean Goose
Taiga Bean Goose
Eurasian White-fronted Goose
Green-winged Teal
Lesser Scaup
Greater Yellowlegs
Grey Phalarope
Sabine's Gull
Iceland Gull
Glaucous Gull
Short-eared Owl
Great Grey Shrike
Hooded Crow
Shore Lark
Desert Wheatear

Two at East Chevington and Maiden's Hall Lake
County record of 68 at Maiden's Hall Lake on 12th
Only one report, a single at Maiden's Hall Lake on 12th
County record of 331 at Maiden's Hall Lake on 3rd
Male at East Chevington and Druridge Pools
Juvenile female remained at Marden Quarry all month
Last month's county first stayed through to 14th
Single at Boulmer on 3rd
Late bird off Emmanuel Head on 17th
Singles at East Chevington and Amble
Singles at North Shields and Cresswell
Peak of thirteen at Prestwick Carr
One at Prestwick Carr all month
Single at Howick on 18th
Single at Alnmouth on 6th
Confiding first-winter male at Newbiggin from 4th

CONTENTS

Next Indoor Meeting "Birding in Oman" on 9th February
Field Trips to Ross Back Sands and Kielder
Druridge Bay Coal and Coast Project
Issue of BIN 2010 and BIN 2011 request
Coots ringing project
Kittiwakes on the Tyne update
North Sea Wreck
Prestwick Carr Viewing Platform
Target Species for 2012 are 'owls'
Constitution revision and Committee
Atlas Project Manager



The long-staying Desert Wheatear at Newbiggin
by Colin Bradshaw

WEATHER

1st to 6th: The first few days saw changeable conditions. There were spells of rain for most areas, heavy in places, early on 1st and again on 3rd. Between the bands of rain, it was often fine and dry in eastern England. These showers were wintry at times in the north, with accumulations of snow on the Pennines on 4th and 5th. It was also often chilly by night, with a widespread ground frost on 2nd in particular.

7th to 15th: This period was characterised by a sequence of depressions moving across the north of the UK, often bringing very windy conditions. The 7th was generally showery across western parts, with hail, thunder and upland sleet or snow, while eastern areas stayed mainly dry. A squally band of rain moved eastwards on 8th, with gales or severe gales for many places.

16th to 18th: An unstable north-westerly flow became established, bringing showers of rain, sleet and snow first to the north then to many other areas and again giving local accumulations.

19th to 20th: A transition to the much milder conditions that predominated towards the end of the month. After a cold start on 19th in eastern areas, a band of rain spread from the west. This lasted much of the day and brought a return to near-normal temperatures. The 20th was largely dry with bright or sunny spells.

21st to 31st: The last 10 days saw predominantly mild and unsettled conditions, with spells of wet and windy weather interspersed with brief cooler interludes. There were also a number of misty, drizzly days with widespread low cloud and hill fog, although eastern areas saw bright or sunny spells developing at times. The 28th and 29th were windy, particularly in northern England. Later on 29th it became quite cold and stayed chilly into 30th, but warmer air returned to give a very mild New Year's Eve.

CLASSIFIED LIST

The following account consists of unchecked reports. The species/subspecies marked * require descriptions.

A complete list of all sightings that need notes is included in the NTBC website www.ntbc.org.uk under the County Records Committee section and in Birds in Northumbria 2009 page 224.

The Inland and Coastal Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) tables are at the rear of the bulletin. These contain counts additional to those in the Classified List.

TARGET SPECIES

The target species for 2011 were Gadwall, Snipe and Stonechat. Please report all records for these species.

The target species for 2012 are all the owls and these being nocturnal, are thought likely to be under-represented in the 2007-11 Atlas. Please report all records in as much detail as possible. The Club is sensitive to the vulnerability of these species to disturbance and persecution, and will be particularly cautious about what is actually published, above all about nesting and roosting sites. Please address any questions or concerns to Tim Dean or Dick Myatt.

Swan species *Cygnus sp.*

At Newcastle Airport 12 flew S on 5th (IF).

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

The largest gatherings were 96 at Killingworth Lake on 31st (LJM), 60 at QEII Lake on 19th (CDH), 12 at Roddam Quarry Lake on 1st (JMA) and 11 at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 20th (DM). One to seven were noted at Alnmouth Links, Arcot Pond, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Grindon Lough, Hauxley NR, Linton Ponds, Little Benton Pond, Prestwick Carr and on the Tyne at Newcastle Business Park.

Bewick's Swan *Cygnus columbianus*

Two adults were at Maiden's Hall Lake on 6th (MSH/TW) and two were on East Chevington South Pool on 12th (IFo).



Elegant Whoopers at East Chevington
by Tim Dean on 12th December

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

At Duddo 60 flew overhead on 30th (CMur/VWa) and four flew S at Newbiggin on 5th (IF). The peak count in the Ellington/Warkworth Lane area was 83 on 20th (TB/ADM Mc *et al.*) with the peak count in the Cresswell Pond/Bell's Pond area being 54 on 11th where two juveniles were noted on 15th/17th (MSH/ADM Mc). Numbers at Longhirst Flash peaked at 32 on 15th (ADM Mc *et al.*). Big Waters hosted 13 on 1st (PRM) whilst counts of 11 came from Tweedmouth on 2nd (RHB), Newton Pool on 15th (MSH) and Alnmouth Links on 20th (JMA). One to nine were seen at Branton GP, East Chevington North Pool, Grindon Lough, Hauxley, Holy Island, Holywell Pond, where one was attacked by a Mute Swan, and Monks' House Pool.

Grey Goose species *Anser sp.*

At Alnmouth 300 flew S over the sea on 18th (CDH).

***Taiga Bean Goose** *Anser fabalis fabalis*

A single was at Maiden's Hall Lake on 12th (MSH).

***Tundra Bean Goose** *Anser fabalis rossicus*

The largest flock of recent years was at Maiden's Hall Lake with a maximum count of 68 on 12th (MSH *et al.*). Elsewhere at least 19 were at Bell's Farm (Cresswell) on 31st (MSH) and 13-15 at Prestwick Carr from 1st - 3rd (MSH/PCF/ASJ). Three were at Woodhorn Flashes on 9th with one remaining until 30th (TB *et al.*). A group of nine were at a reclaimed opencast site near Ulgham 11th (MSH). Two were at Monks' House Pool on 2nd (MSH/JPL) and two were at Longhirst Flash on 11th/12th (MSH).

Two un-raced birds were at Bothal Pond on 30th (TF/JFa).



Two Bean Geese with Pinkfeet
Bothal Pond
by Tariq Farooqi
30th December

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Light movement was noted. At Blyth Harbour 200 flew S on 17th (STH/PJA), 90 flew S at Woodhorn Flashes on 3rd (STH), 66 flew SW at Humshaugh on 29th (SW). At East Chevington North Pool 50 flew S on 18th (DM/STH/GB/PJA) and 20 flew NW at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 4th (DM). Large numbers remained throughout the month with peak counts of 3,000+ at Doddington on 2nd, 2,000+ in the Cresswell Pond area on 2nd and nearby at Hemscott Hill on 6th/23rd/27th (JSB/EC), 1,500+ at Druridge hamlet on 29th (MSH) and 1,000+ near Ulgham at a reclaimed opencast site on 11th (MSH). Smaller gatherings were 300 at Beal Road Ends on 6th, 250 at Maiden's Hall Lake on 9th (JMcl/IF), 250+ at Holywell Pond on 13th and New Shoreston on 15th, 200 at Monks' House Pool on 2nd, 150+ at Old Hartley on 24th, 150 at Bothal Pond on 30th and 126 at Grindon Lough on 12th. One to 12 were seen at Castron, Derwent Reservoir, Harper's Heugh (Budle Bay), Low Newton and Whittle Dene reservoirs.

Eurasian White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons albifrons*

A new record count for the county was achieved on 3rd December when 331 were present in the West Chevington/Maiden's Hall Lake area (ADM). Up to 288 continued to be reported at this location throughout the month (AA/MH/EC/JSB/MSH *et al.*). Large numbers were also present at Newton Pool with a peak count of 204 on 15th (MSH/JRT *et al.*). Maximum counts elsewhere were 60 at East Chevington on 1st (IRD), 30 at Monks' House Pool on 2nd (MSH), 25 at Grindon Lough on 3rd (PRM), 22 at the reclaimed opencast site near Ulgham on 11th (MSH), 15+ at Bell's Farm (Cresswell) on 31st and 10+ at Caistron on 27th (MSH). One to seven were noted at Derwent Reservoir, Druridge, New Shoreston, Powburn, Prestwick Carr, Whittle Dene Reservoirs and Woodhorn Flashes.

Greenland White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons flavirostris*

Four flew S over Chugdon Wood (Ellington) 31st (TB). Two were at Grindon Lough on 3rd (PRM) and an adult and first winter were at New Shoreston on 15th (MSH). A neck-collared bird which had been marked in Co. Wexford, Ireland, in March 2003 and last reported in winter 2006/2007 was seen at Monks' House Pool on 2nd (MSH). Singles were also at West Chevington on 9th, Low Newton on 15th, Druridge on 20th, Caistron on 27th and Woodhorn Flashes on 30th.

At Branton GP numbers not assigned to any race rose from two on 15th/18th to 21 by 30th (IBDa/KDa). Eight were also at Tweedmouth on 2nd (RHB).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Peak counts were 470+ at Powburn on 2nd (MSH), 300 during the month at Newton Pool (JPL), 256 at Monks' House Pool on 2nd (MSH), 247 at Harper's Heugh (Budle Bay) on 15th, 200+ at Caistron on 27th and 200 at Woodhorn Flashes on 30th (all MSH). At Whittle Dene Reservoirs 190 were present on 4th/8th (PCF/PRM), 186 were at Derwent Reservoir on 8th (PRM), 160 were in winter wheat at Carterway Heads on 9th (IFo), 106 at Maiden's Hall Lake, 76 at Bell's Farm (Cresswell) on 30th and 61 at Backworth on 15th. One to five were noted at East Chevington North Pool, Hartley West Farm (Holywell Dene), Hauxley NR, Prestwick Carr and QEII Lake.

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

At Wark 630+ flew WNW on 11th (PRM) and two flew S at Church Point, Newbiggin on 18th. Peak counts were 478 at Grindon Lough on 3rd (SJH), 212 at Bothal Pond on 30th (SWA), 116 at Derwent Reservoir on 8th (PRM) and Maiden's Hall Lake on 11th (MSH/TAC/MLC), 75 at Killingworth Lake on 31st (LJM), 59 at Fontburn Reservoir on 27th (TRD/JD) and 30+ at Caistron on 27th (MSH). Elsewhere 23 were at Hedgeley GP on 2nd, 17 at Maiden's Hall Lake on 4th, 12 at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 20th and one at Hauxley NR on 19th.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

The peak count at Budle Bay was 485 on 4th with 250+ still remaining on 20th (CGK/PS/SWA *et al.*). 12 were at Maiden's Hall Lake on 11th/12th (MSH/TAC/MLC), five at Bell's Farm Cresswell on 30th/31st, two at Big Waters on 30th and singles at Caistron, Grindon Lough and Seaton Sluice.

Dark-bellied Brent Goose *Branta bernicla bernicla*

On 17th 80 were near the bungalow at Crooked Lonnen (Holy Island (IK)). Singles were at Monks' House Pool (juvenile) on 2nd and Maiden's Hall Lake on 4th (MSH).

Pale-bellied Brent Goose *Branta bernicla hrota*

On 22nd 353 were at Fenham Slake (IBDa/KDa). Two were in Holy Island Harbour on 1st.

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Eight were at Holy Island causeway on 1st (JMA) and one at Monks' House Pool on 15th (MSH).

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

Cresswell Pond held a peak of 695 on 18th (JRT), about 300 were at Grindon Lough on 1st (SJH), 170 at Bothal Pond on 30th (IFo), 126-146 at Big Waters (GB), Gosforth Park NR (NHSN) and Hauxley Reserve (HRS), 100 at Amble Braid, 72-84 at Derwent and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, 30-46 at Low Newton, Maiden's Hall Lake and QEII Lake. Four to 16 were also at Arcot and West Allotment Ponds.

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Peak counts were 18 at East Chevington on 18th (DM *et al.*), 17 at St Mary's Wetland on 5th (MSH), 14 at Marden Quarry on 3rd (AC), 12 on the 'R. Wansbeck' on 18th (JL), ten at Ladyburn Lake (IFo), seven at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN) and six at Big Waters (GB). Three to four also visited QEII Lake, Swallow Pond and Woodhorn Flashes. Gadwall was a **target species** for 2011.

Teal *Anas crecca*

Largest counts were 313 at Grindon Lough on 1st (SJH), 300 at Holy Island including 105 at the Lough (JPL/DGB/HRB/IK), about 300 at Derwent Reservoir on 12th (RMH), 195 at Big Waters on 24th (GB), 191 at East Chevington on 18th (JRT), 162 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs (JRT), 156 on the R. Tyne between Elswick Wharf-Newcastle Business Park (DM) and 100-133 at Cresswell Pond and Druridge and Newton Pools. Counts of 56-79 came from Arcot Pond and Castle Island, and 18-40 from Gosforth Park NR, Hauxley Reserve, Linton Ponds and West Hartford. Display was noted at Big Waters on 11th.

Green-winged Teal *Anas carolinensis*

A drake was at East Chevington on 4th (CB) and Druridge Pools on 20th.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Three figure counts involved 161 at Derwent Reservoir on 13th (IFo), 153 at Whittle Dene Reservoir on 24th (SWA) and 102 at Grindon Lough on 1st (SJH). Other peak counts were 93 at Newcastle Leazes Park (DM), 84 at Airy Holm Reservoir (IFo), 60-61 at Hauxley Reserve (HRS) and West Allotment Pond (CGK), and 31-49 at East Chevington, QEII Lake, Wark and Watersmeet (Warden). Nine to 20 were at eight further sites.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

An 'annoying' count of 99 came from Fenham Flats on 12th (AA/MH). Three were at East Chevington on 11th and 18th (GB/IRD/STH *et al.*) and one on 22nd. A pair was at Derwent Reservoir on 6th (IFo) and singles at Hauxley Reserve and Ladyburn Lake.

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Eight were at Gosforth Park NR during the month (NHSN), seven were at Monks' House Pool on 2nd and 15th (MSH/JPL), seven at Swallow Pond on 6th (LJM), five at Holy Island Lough from 4th (IK), four at Big Waters and two to three at East Chevington, West Allotment Pond and Woodhorn Flashes.

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

27 were at Ladyburn Lake on 11th (STH/PJA/IFo), 17 at Killingworth Lake on 22nd (GB), seven at Bothal Pond on 12th (IFo), four to five at East Chevington (DM *et al.*) and QEII Lake (CDH), and two at Marden Quarry and Woodhorn Flashes.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Killingworth Lake held a peak of 163 on 22nd (GB) with 102 still present on 31st (LJM). Other peak counts were 68 at East Chevington on 18th (JRT), 58 at QEII Lake on 19th (CDH), 56 at Ladyburn Lake on 12th (IFo), 33 at Cresswell Pond and 14 at Newcastle Leazes Park. One to eight were also at Castle Island, Derwent and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, Grindon Lough and Jesmond Dene.



A Scaup at Marden Quarry
by Colin Bradshaw

Scaup *Aythya marila*

Ten (three drakes) were at Fenham Flats on 12th (AA/MH), four at East Chevington on 24th (IRD) and two there regularly between 11th-22nd (ADM/IRD/JD *et al.*), and one at nearby Ladyburn Lake on 4th, 18th and 30th (CB/SW/JRT).

Lesser Scaup *Aythya affinis*

The juvenile found in October 2011 remained at Marden Quarry all month (AC *et al.*).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

65 were at Blyth Harbour on 17th (STHG/PJA), 45 off Cresswell on 17th (MN), 24 at Cullercoats Bay on 23rd (MN), 15-21 at Druridge Bay, Newbiggin and the Tyne Estuary-North Shields Fish Quay, eight at North Blyth and two at Amble weir.

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

Varying numbers were reported from Stag Rocks, with peaks of 30 on 31st (CMur/VWa) and 24 (22 drakes; some displaying) on 12th (MH/AA) and 20 were at nearby Ross Back Sands on 23rd (JL). Two were at Beadnell Bay from 18th-31st (JPL) and one was at East Chevington north pool between 7th-30th (AA/ADM/SW *et al.*).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

About 40 were at North Shore, Holy Island from 6th-15th (ADM), and 40 were at Stag Rocks on 30th (CMur/VWa). The only other reports were of two at Beadnell Bay and more unusually two on East Chevington north pool on 7th (ADM) and one on 22nd (TRD/JD).

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

Two flew N at Holy Island on 17th (IK). Three were at Beadnell Bay on 31st (JPL).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

The largest concentrations were 52 at the Wansbeck Estuary on 31st (JR), 26 at Tweedmouth on 11th (DGB/RHB), 22 on the 'R. Wansbeck' on 18th (JL), 21 at Bakethin Reservoir on 18th (MD/AM), 20 at Beadnell Bay all month (JPL), 20 at East Chevington on 30th (IFo), 11-14 at Branton GP, Castle Island, Grindon Lough and QEII Lake, and eight to ten at Big Waters, Holy Island and Ladyburn Lake. Three to five were also at Bothal Pond, Derwent and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, and Druridge Pools, and one to two at Boulmer, Hauxley Reserve, Jesmond Dene, Killingworth Lake, Tyne Green and Wark.

Smew *Mergellus albellus*

A 'redhead' was regularly reported from East Chevington north pool between 7th (AA/MH) – 24th (IRD/JRT *et al.*).

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

12 were at the 'River Wansbeck' on 18th (JL), nine off East Chevington on 20th (MH/AA) when nine were at Druridge Bay CP (MSH), seven at Cresswell Pond on 26th (IRD) and two to six there on 1st and 11th (IRD/STH *et al.*), six at Holy Island (DGB/ADM), five at Castle Island (DM *et al.*), three at Beadnell Bay and Warkworth, and singles at Tynemouth and the Wansbeck Estuary.

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

50 were at Roddam Quarry Pond on 1st (JMA), 13 at Killingworth Lake on 22nd (BMo), ten at Marden Quarry on 18th (CB), eight to nine at Branton GP, Jesmond Dene and QEII Lake, six at Arcot Pond, and three to four at Blakehope-burnhaugh, Derwent and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, Hepple, Thrum Mill (Rothbury) and Warden. One to two were also at Airy Holm and Fontburn Reservoirs, Castle Island, Hexham, Maiden's Hall Lake, Pauperhaugh and Wark.



A drake Goosander at Marden Quarry
by Colin Bradshaw

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

The peak count at Plenmeller Moor was 26 on 6th (SJH). This number was also noted on Hedgehope Hill on 30th (IRD). Two were at Threestone Burn on 2nd.

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

The sole record was of two males and a female at Plenmeller on 6h (SJH).

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

On 1st eight were at Roddam Quarry Pond and five at Roddam (JMA), whilst seven were at Doddington on 6th (MSH).

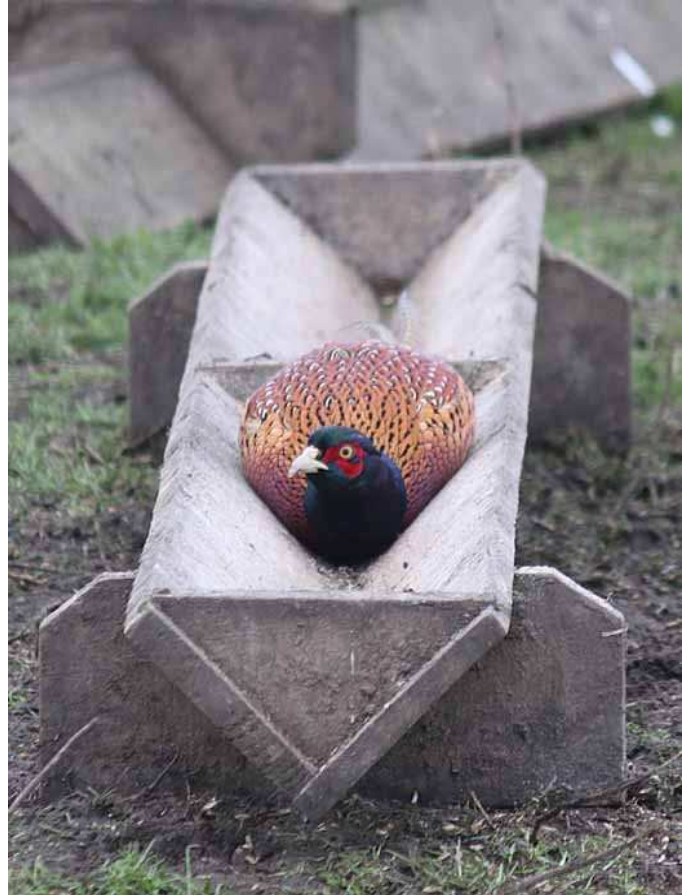
Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

The largest gatherings were at Maiden's Hall Lake where 22 were present on 30th and 20 on 2nd (JSB/EC/TB), 12+ at Druridge Pools on 9th (ADM), 12 at Bell's Farm Pond (Cresswell) on 11th (STH/PJA/IFo), 11 in fields adjacent to Gosforth Park NR throughout the month (NHSN), at Cresswell Pond on 2nd (TB) and Prestwick Carr on 30th (MH/AA) and ten at Alnmouth on 6th (JD). One to seven were seen at Backworth, Boulmer, Ewart, Whittle Dene Reservoirs and Woodhorn Flashes.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

Two were seen at Hartley West Farm (Holywell Dene) on nine dates during the month (RJP) and singles were noted at Castle Island, Valley Park (Cramlington) and in an Old Hartley garden.

A cock Pheasant relaxes
Big Waters
Peter Fletcher
12th December

**Red-throated Diver** *Gavia stellata*

Five flew S at North Blyth on 21st (PRM). At Ross Back Sands 6+ were present on 23rd (JL) and six were at Buston Links on 15th (AT). Counts of four came from Holy Island on 6th (ADM), Alnmouth on 20th (AB/LB) and Blyth Harbour on 29th (STH/MHp/TRC). One to two were seen at Beadnell Bay, Boulmer, East Chevington, St Mary's Island, Stag Rocks with a juvenile being rescued unharmed after being trapped in a scrap of fishing net at Ouse, Holy Island.

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*

At least three were on the sea at high tide at Ross Back Sands on 23rd (JL).

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

Three flew N at Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) on 4th (IK) and two flew N at North Blyth on 21st (PRM). Two were off Stag Rocks on 4th (CGK/PS) and on the sea at high tide at Ross Back Sands on 23rd (JL). Singles were at East Chevington North Pool from 10th-18th (JRT/STH *et al.*), Cresswell Pond on 18th (JRT) and Ladyburn Lake on 20th (JSB/EC).

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

Three adults flew N at Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) on 4th (IK), two flew N at North Blyth on 21st (PRM) and singles flew N at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 9th and Football Hole (Newton) on 10th. Two were off Stag Rocks on 4th.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

The peak counts were 91 in Blyth South Harbour on 11th, 66 at North Shields Fish Quay on 31st, (DMT), 42 at Amble Harbour on 23rd (STH), 18 at QEII Lake on 19th (CDH) and 17 at Millennium Bridge (Newcastle) on 22nd (DM). Smaller gatherings were seven on the Tyne at Newcastle Business Park on 30th, six at Castle Island on 18th/31st and five at Tyne Green, Hexham on 31st. One to four at East Chevington North Pool, Elswick Wharf, Hedgeley GP, Prestwick Carr, Wark and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Colour-ringed "Yellow ZR6" had been ringed as a chick at Rutland Water on 11th June 2011 (DMT).

***Continental Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis*

One was at Marden Quarry on 31st (AC).

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

The peak roost count at Blyth South Harbour was 46 on 17th (STH/PJA). Six were at Tynemouth on 27th (DRW).

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

Two birds were again present all month at Gosforth Park NR with some observers reporting three birds being present (NHSN). A single was at East Chevington North Pool on 18th (ASH/JR).

The well reported Bitterns at Gosforth NR
Right by Alan Davis on 27th December and
below by Colin Bradshaw

**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*

One flew W at Tealhole Point, Fenham Flats on 12th (MH/AA) and a single was on Holy Island on 22nd (IBDa/KDa).

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

The peak counts were seven at Hartley West Farm (Holywell Dene) on 22nd (RJP) and five at Maiden's Hall Lake on 11th (MSH) and on the Tyne from King Edward VII Bridge and Newcastle Business Park on 30th (DM). One to two were seen at Arcot Pond, East Chevington North Pool, Exhibition and Leazes Parks (Newcastle), Newcastle Great Park, Red Row, Roddam Quarry and Stannington.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

The highest counts were ten at Castle Island on 18th (DM/STH/GB/PJA) and five at Hedgeley GP on 2nd (MSH). One to three were seen at Amble Weir, Berwick Old Bridge, Hepple, Holy Island Lough, Ladyburn Lake, Seaton Sluice, The Spital (Hexham), Wark and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Three were at Buston Links on 15th (AT), two were in Beadnell Bay on 18th (JPL) and singles were at East Chevington on 22nd and QEII Lake on 31st.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

Only two singles were noted, in the Sound at Holy Island on 6th (ADM) and off Ross Back Sands on 23rd (JL).

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

The largest gatherings were 14+ at Ross Back Sands on 23rd (JL) and 13 at Stag Rocks on 12th (AA/MH). Two were on the sea at North Blyth on 31st (CMur/VWa) and a single off Green Shiel excavations (Holy Island) on 13th.

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Three birds were seen north of the dam at Cronkley (Derwent Reservoir) on 12th (RMH); two birds including one with the remains of an orange tag on its right wing were at Low Waskerley on 26th (IFo). Single birds were seen at Apperley Dene on 6th (RMH) and at West Mickley on 8th (SWA).

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

A late record involved a single bird flying along the line of Jesmond Dene being mobbed by corvids on 4th (DWHB)

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

Two birds were at one site during the month and single birds were at three other sites.

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

Again only one record, this of a single bird at near Detchant on 14th (JHa).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Two birds were at Holywell Dene and at Scotland Gate throughout the month (RJP/SLB/MSK) and two were at Arcot Pond on 4th (LJM/STH/PJA) and Warkworth on 25th (MN). Single birds were at 20 further sites during the month, including birds with prey such as a Coal Tit *Periparus ater* at Rothbury on 19th (JD) and a Brown Rat *Ratus ratus* at Old Hartley on 12th (RJP).

A Sparrowhawk
Dinnington
by Peter Fletcher

**Common Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*

Prestwick Carr peaked with six birds on 1st (MSH/ASJ); West Chevington had three birds on 30th (MSH). One or two birds were noted at 16 sites.

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Six birds were between St Mary's Island and Newbiggin on 3rd (ASJ), Prestwick Carr had a maximum of five birds on 20th (MN). Three were at West Chevington on 31st (SRB), and two birds were at Wooperton on 2nd (JMA), Holy Island on 6th (ADM) and West Hartford on 17th (STH/PJA). Single birds were noted at 12 further sites.



A Kestrel
West Chevington
by Colin Bradshaw

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Single birds were at Stag Rocks on 4th (CGK/PS), Holy Island Causeway on 6th (ADM), Bamburgh on 19th (DGB) and a bird was chasing a Nuthatch *Sitta europaea* that flew out of a tree top at Humshaugh on 29th (SW) and another single was at Duddo on 30th (CMur/VWa).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Single birds were noted at nine inland sites and at 11 coastal sites during the month.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Three were at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN) and two were at Backworth (CGK) on several dates throughout the month. Single birds were at Druridge Pools on 20th (MSH), East Chevington on several dates (ADM/EC/JSB) and Warkworth Lane on 27th (TB).

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

On the 6th 28 birds were at Silverlink Park LNR (CGK), 26 were at Druridge Bay CP on 18th (JRT), 17 were at QEII CP on 19th (CDH) and at Backworth on 27th (CGK) and 12 birds were at Woodhorn Flash on 29th (STH). One to ten birds were at ten further sites during the month.



A Moorhen
Gosforth NR
by Colin Bradshaw

Coot *Fulica atra*

119 birds at Killingworth Lake on 31st (LJM) was the highest count, 96 were at QEII CP on 19th (CDH), 89 at East Chevington on 30th (Ifo) and 52 were at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN). Woodhorn Flash had a maximum of 51 birds on 3rd (STH) and one to seventeen were at Arcot Pond, Castle Island, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Leazes Park (Newcastle) and at The Spital (Hexham).

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Totals were rather modest: 60 in Cullercoats Bay on 23rd (MN), 56 at Newbiggin on 21st (PRM), 31 at Berwick Cricket Field on 1st and two at Hauxley NR on 19th.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Again the roost on the warehouse roof at Blyth South Harbour held the most - 101 on 11th (DMT); elsewhere 47 on the Blast Beach (Newbiggin) on 21st (PRM), up to 32 in Druridge Bay and three at Boulmer.

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

St Mary's had 1,000 on 7th (ASJ), Low Newton 800 on 15th (MSH), around 500 were at Prestwick Carr on 15th (MH/AA) with 400 at Holy Island on 16th, 300 at Cresswell Pond on 10th and 184 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 21st. Up to 80 were noted at Boulmer, Derwent Reservoir, East Chevington and the Tyne at Elswick Wharf/Newcastle Business Park.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

A count of 27 at Newbiggin on 21st (PRM) was good for the location; one was at Boulmer on 14th.

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

The peak at Cresswell Pond reached 767 on 24th (IRD) and Derwent Reservoir regularly attracted 450-500 (IFo/RMH); 425 were at St Mary's on 10th (ASJ). Beadnell Bay, East Chevington, Elswick Wharf and Prestwick Carr had 200-350 at times and smaller numbers occurred at Arcot Pond, Causey Park, Grindon Lough, Hauxley and Holy Island.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

At Fenham Slake 1,030 were noted on 22nd (SJH). The peak at Newbiggin was 107 on 21st (PRM) and 55 were at St Mary's on 7th.

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

The peak at St Mary's was 146 on 5th (MSH), 77 were at Snab Point on 20th (ASJ) and the most at Newbiggin was 68 on 5th (ASJ); also 45 were noted in Druridge Bay on 15th (JMA).

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

Stag Rocks held 111 on 7th (ADM) and 60+ were at Low Newton on 10th (EC). Elsewhere, 19 were at Tynemouth on 27th, ten in Cullercoats Bay on 23rd with up to four at Newbiggin. Four flew into Cresswell Pond, where the species is very unusual, towards high tide on 11th.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Apart from 125+ at Newbiggin on 21st (PRM) and 80 at Amble Braid on 25th (MN), low numbers were reported at Boulmer, Cresswell Pond and the Tyne at Newcastle Business Park.

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

West Hartford had 21 on 4th and 15 late in the month (PJA/STH) and 18 were at Cresswell Pond on 2nd (TB). Four were found at Prestwick Carr on 1st and one or two at Arcot Pond, Castle Island and Holy Island.

Snipe was a **target species** for 2011.

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Three were seen at Lambley Viaduct on 22nd (SW) and two at Arcot Hall GC on 26th (DM). Singles were discovered at Bedlington, Gosforth Park NR, Holy Island, Horsley, Kilham, Newbiggin, Rothbury, Seaton Delaval, Thrunton Wood and Yearle.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Three appeared at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 31st (TB); earlier one was at Bell's Farm flash on 11th (PJA/IFo/STH) and at Cresswell Pond on 12th (IRD).

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Four were at East Chevington on 22nd (TRD/JD), two or three occasionally at Newbiggin and one at Boulmer on 14th.

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Three sites accounted for the majority of reports: 112 at St Mary's on 7th (ASJ), 104 at Tyne Riverside CP (Newburn) on 18th (PCF) and 100 on Holy Island on 1st (JMA); also 69 fed on several dates in fields at Whitley Bay. Small numbers were noted at Druridge Pools, Newbiggin and Holywell Dene.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Three were still at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 8th (PRM) and one was on a roadside flash near Longhirst Flash on 12th (MSH).

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

A late report concerns two at Holy Island harbour pool on 19th November (JRT).

***Greater Yellowlegs** *Tringa melanoleuca*

The first-winter found in November remained in Druridge Bay for another two weeks. Reported sightings were at East Chevington North Pool on 2nd (TB), in the NE corner of Ladyburn Lake also on 2nd (CDB), at Snab Point on 4th (ADMc), East Chevington North Pool and Chevington Burn mouth on 7th (AA/MH), East Chevington North Pool on 9th (ADMc) and at Bell's Farm flash on 11th/12th (STH/PJA/IFo et al.). It was finally seen flying over and around East Chevington North Pool on 14th (EC/JSB).

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

St Mary's had 148 on 7th (ASJ), Newbiggin 111 on 21st (PRM) and 80 were noted in Cullercoats Bay on 23rd (MN); 45 were at Berwick North Pier on 8th. At Elswick Wharf 29 were present on 30th and one to three at Arcot Pond, Backworth, Bothal Pond, East Chevington and West Hartford.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

The high-tide roost at Blyth Harbour, on the roof of the 'yellow shed', contained 80 on 20th (JSB/EC) and 34 were at Newbiggin on 21st (PRM), the most at that location. Otherwise 20 at Cresswell Pond on 11th and six at Berwick Old Bridge on 8th were the only others reported.

***Grey Phalarope** *Phalaropus fulicarius*

One flew in at Boulmer on 3rd (RCra/AJ) and stayed for about an hour and a first-winter appeared at Broad Sands (Cresswell) on 10th (ADMc).

Sabine's Gull *Xema sabini*

A late adult flew N at Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) on 17th showing well (IK).

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

Very few records received indicating the low numbers now found in winter. Three were at Tynemouth on 11th (DRW) with two at the Tyne Estuary up to North Shields Fish Quay on 10th with singles there on other dates (DMT). Few were noted at the previously regular site at Blyth South Harbour with two on 17th and one on 27th (STH/PJA/EC/JSB).

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

The roost at Derwent Reservoir saw the peak count with at least 2,600 on 8th (PRM) with another roost count of 635 made at the sea roost between Tynemouth and Cullercoats on 22nd (DMT). Other concentrations included 243 on the River Tyne between King Edward VII bridge and the Business Park on 30th (DM), 230 at QEII CP on 19th (CDH) and 220 at the Seghill Tip on 27th (CGK). Otherwise groups of up to 164 at many localities. The Latvian-ringed individual was back at Blyth Quayside on 5th and the Lithuanian bird present in the last two winters was back at St Mary's Island on 24th (MSH).

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

The prime hot spot of Newbiggin accounted for the majority of sightings with the peak being 15 individuals on 29th (STH). There were 11 there on 21st aged as six adults, two second-winters and three third-winters (PRM) with lower counts on other dates. Elsewhere single adults were noted at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) on 5th and possibly the same individual at Cullercoats Bay on 6th (MN) plus a second-winter at Derwent Reservoir on 8th (PRM) and a first-winter at Backworth on 31st (CGK).

Common Gull *Larus canus*

The Derwent Reservoir roost held an impressive 16,000 birds on 8th (PRM) with a sea roost count of 545 between Tynemouth and Cullercoats on 22nd (DMT). Otherwise up to 65 noted at a number of localities.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

Few birds were left in the county with most having sought warmer climes further south. Two adults were found at West Hartford on 4th (LJM) with other singles at Holywell Pond on 13th (MSH) and Castle Island on 31st (JR). The wintering adult was present at Southfield Green (Cramlington) all month (DM).

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

The main count was at the Backworth/Seghill Tip on 27th with 3,400 present on 27th (CGK *et al.*). At least 1,000 were noted feeding in one field at New Shoreston on 2nd (MSH). The regularly counted sites contributed 259 at the Tyne Estuary up to North Shields Fish Quay on 11th and 120 at Blyth South Harbour on 11th (DMT). 100 were also noted at Castle Island on 18th (DM). Otherwise up to 41 at a number of localities.

'Northern' Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argentatus*

At least 25 adults of this Northern race were found at Backworth on 31st with 11 there on 26th (CGK). The only other report was one at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 8th (PRM).

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoideus*

A second-winter was found at East Chevington on 11th and then moved to Druridge Bay CP the same day (JWP/RC). Also a first-winter was found at Amble Harbour on 19th (TW).

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

A first-winter was found at the Black Middens Rocks on 23rd and later located at North Shields Fish Quay the same day (DMT/Gmi). At Snab Point a first-winter flew N on 17th (ADMc) and was probably responsible for a further sighting at Hemscott Hill (Cresswell) on 24th (TF/JFa).

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

The peak count was made at Backworth/Seghill Tip where 175 were present on 31st (CGK). At the Tyne Estuary up to North Shields Fish Quay a count of 147 on 4th included 69 first-winters (DMT). 206 were noted at Castle Island on 18th (DM/STH/PJA/GB) with 100 at Cullercoats Bay on 23rd (MN) and a peak count of 78 including 32 first-winters at Blyth South Harbour on 26th (DMT). Otherwise up to 43 at several localities.

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis* (Correction)

The record at High Hauxley on 15th November (JD/TRD) in the last bulletin was previously reported as the second latest report for the county but it has been pointed out that four later reports exist i.e. 22nd November 1975 at Seaton Sluice, 24th November 1985 at Holy Island, 27th November 2001 at Blyth and the latest at Budle Point on 8th December 2001.

Guillemot *Uria aalge*

Small numbers were noted with a peak of 13 at Tynemouth on 27th (DRW) and at least ten at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 12th (MH/AA). Otherwise four were at North Blyth on 21st (PRM) and two at Blyth South Harbour on 29th (DMT) plus a single off Newbiggin on 21st (PRM).

Razorbill *Alca Torda*

Seven were at Tynemouth on 27th with at least four at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 12th (MH/AA) with three there on 1st (CMur/VWa) plus a single at East Chevington on 22nd (TRD/JD).

Black Guillemot *Cephus grylle*

A distant sighting in the Sound at Holy Island on 13th (ADM) was only deemed a possible report due to the gale force conditions making views difficult.

Little Auk *Alle alle*

Late passage resulted in seven N at Emmanuel Head on Holy Island on 3rd (IK) with three N at St Mary's Island on 5th (MSH) and singles at Budle Point on 4th (CGK / PS) and again at Emmanuel Head N on 17th (IK).

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

The only sighting was at Newbiggin with three N on 4th (PRM).

Rock Dove / Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

The peak counts were 84 at Blyth South Harbour on 11th and 56 at North Shields Fish Quay on 23rd (DMT).

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

The three largest counts all occurred on 4th with 14 at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) (TB), nine at Lincoln Hill (SW) and four the peak count for the month in a Walbottle garden (KR/LR). Three were at Beatty Avenue (South Gosforth) on 19th with singles at two locations in Jesmond Dene on 11th and 18th (MJCo), at Aydon on 13th and Dinnington on 30th.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

More than 500 were at Smeafield on 2nd (MSH) with 200 at Prestwick Carr on 3rd (PCF) and Aydon on 13th (RB/MB). 150 were at Alnmouth Links on 20th, 100 at Ilderton on 2nd and 50 at Thirston on 1st (JMA) with 16 at Jesmond Dene and three at South Gosforth (MJCo)

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

There was a large gathering of 34 at Druridge Lane on 2nd (TB). 12 visited a garden feeder together at Northburn (Cramlington) on 26th (LJM) with one to three at Matthew Bank, Jesmond Dene and in gardens at Old Hartley and Walbottle.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

The resident pair was noted regularly at Holy Island throughout the month (IK) and a single was present at Yearle (DGB/RHB). All other reports were of single birds near the A1 at Haggerston, Scremerston and Stannington, near the A68 at Portgate (Corbridge) and at Bamburgh, Boulmer, Chatton, Lynemouth, Monks' House Pool, Park End, Preston. Barn Owl is a **target species** for 2012 Please report all records.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Only one report of two at the established site of Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 4th (TB). Little Owl is a **target species** for 2012. Please report all records.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Two birds were calling at Wark (N Tyne) on 6th and a male there on 30th (PRM) with one present throughout the month at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN). All other reports were singles seen or heard at Stannington, Spindlestone, Walbottle Hall on two dates and a road casualty at Causey Park, Morpeth on 4th. Tawny Owl is a **target species** for 2012. Please report all records.

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

Two were at Yearle on 4th (SVM/AJM) with singles on a roadside sign near the A1 roundabout at Stannington on 10th (RWM/MIM) and hunting at dusk near the A189/A1068 Linton roundabout on 26th (JR). Long-eared Owl is a **target species** for 2012. Please report all records.

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

The bumper season continued with the peak count of 13 at Prestwick Carr on 6th (MH/AA/JSB/EC) matching a late report from last month when 13 plus a Long-eared Owl were disturbed by a predator on 14th (SWA). Elsewhere five were at Holy Island on 2nd (IK) and at Ash Lagoon (Newbiggin) on 20th (ASJ) with four at both locations on two other dates and at Cresswell Pond on 8th (AAM) and East Chevington North Pool on 30th (IFo). Three were at Backworth from 27th-30th, West Hartford on 30th with two at Lough House Heighleygate, Outchester near Bamburgh, Plenmeller Moor on three dates and Callerton subsidence area. One to two were seen at most of the above locations on various dates plus Ellington, Harlow Hill, Killingworth, Longhoughton, Low Newton and Woodhorn. Short-eared Owl is a **target species** for 2012. Please report all records.



Short-eared Owl at Prestwick Carr by Brian Bullough

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Four were found in Jesmond Dene on 20th with two there on 11th and 18th (ASJ/MPF/MJCo). A single was seen regularly at Gosforth Park NR all month and at Hauxley NWT & Branton GP on 2nd, Holywell Dene on 7th, Blyth South Harbour on 11th & 17th, Castle Island on 18th and Thrum Mill (Rothbury) on 26th.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Only two reports of singles at Rothbury on 11th and 24th (JD) and Lucker on 12th (JHa).

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

The peak count was five on the River Wansbeck at Bothal Sawmill (Morpeth) on 6th (IRD) with four or more during the month at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN) and pairs regularly in gardens at Lower Heddon (DG-M), Old Hartley (RJP) and Scotland Gate (SLB/MSK). Singles were seen regularly on garden feeders at Rothbury, Stannington, Holy Island Village and Yearle with sightings from a further 13 widespread localities.



Above Short-eared Owls at Prestwick Carr by John Clark on 6th December

Left a Great Spotted Woodpecker at Gosforth NR by Colin Bradshaw

Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor*

The single bird remained at Prestwick Carr throughout the month with presumably the same bird seen north of Big Waters on 29th but returning to Prestwick Carr by lunchtime on 30th (PCF *et al.*). Single birds were also found at Bloody Bush (Kielder) on 1st and Aid Moss on 27th (MD/AM).

A late report for 22nd November of a probable returning bird at Tarsset Forest (MD/AM).

Magpie *Pica pica*

A gathering of 11 was at Heaton Park Wood (Jesmond Dene) on 11th (MJCo) and six the highest monthly count in a Wal-bottle garden on 4th (KR/LR).

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Three was the highest count at Bothal Sawmill on 22nd (TB) with two occasionally visiting a Scotland Gate garden during the month and at Arcot Pond, Ellington, Jesmond Dene, Prestwick Carr, Stannington, Thrunton Woods and Happy Valley (Wooler). Singles were at six further widespread locations.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

Two hundred were at Stannington on 2nd (JMA), around 150 were with Rooks at High Leatham (Berwick) on 11th (TBr) with the peak counts in a Walbottle garden of 12 on 25th (KR/LR) and seven at Jesmond Dene on 18th (MJCo).

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

The largest flock was around 250 at High Leatham (Berwick) on 11th (TBr), 200 at Roddam and Stannington on 2nd with 50 at Alnmouth links on 20th (JMA).

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

The Tyne provided the greatest attraction with 124 in the Estuary up to the Fish Quay on 25th (DMT), 36 between Fish Quay and Black Middens Rocks on 27th (CDH) and 13 between Elswick Business Park and Newcastle Business Park on 30th (DM). Three were at Jesmond Dene on 11th and a pair fed on scraps in a Walbottle garden on 25th.

Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix*

A single was at Howick Haven on 18th (IRD).

Raven *Corvus corax*

A pair displayed over a confidential nest site on 29th (IK) with other sightings of two at Lamb Hill (The Cheviots) on 2nd (IRD), Alnwick Moor on 4th (IBDa/KDa), Fontburn Reservoir on 27th (TRD/JD), Thrunton Woods on the same date and a single at Hedgehope Hill on 30th.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

A maximum count of only three at Prestwick Carr on 23rd (PCF), two at Wark (North Tyne) on 5th and Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 6th (PRM) with singles at two locations at Jesmond Dene on 18th and at Valley Park (Cramlington), Leazes Park, Newcastle Business Park and in a Woolsington garden where it was regarded as unusual.

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

On 30th 21 were found in Holywell Dene (ASJ) with 16 at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN), nine in a Barns Park (Cramlington) garden on 11th (DM), six the highest count in a Walbottle garden on 4th (KR/LR), four at Beatty Avenue (South Gosforth) on 19th and three in Jesmond Dene on 1st (MJCo).

Great Tit *Parus major*

An impressive 32 found in Holywell Dene on 30th with 12 the peak at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN), 5 the highest count in a Walbottle garden on 4th (KR/LR) and in Jesmond Dene on 11th with two at Beatty Avenue (South Gosforth) on 19th (MJCo).

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

Four was the peak count during the month in an Old Hartley garden (RJP), three at Barns Park (Cramlington) on 11th (DM), two at Beatty Avenue (South Gosforth) on 19th and singles at four locations in Jesmond Dene on 18th (MJCo).

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

Two were at Prestwick Carr on 3rd and 31st (PCF), in the observer's garden at Lower Heddon on 21st & 23rd (DG-M), Mount Pleasant on 23rd (SWA) and Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 31st (TB). Singles visited a Scotland Gate garden during the month and at Sleafy Hall on 5th.

A Willow Tit at Prestwick Carr
by Peter Fletcher on 15th December

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

Two at Plessey Woods CP on 29th (TB) with singles at Borough Woods (Morpeth) on 20th and Wark (North Tyne) on 19th (PRM).

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

West Chevington attracted 35 on 17th (MN) and 23 were flushed from stubble at Lowmoor Crossing (Fenham-le-Moor) on 12th (MH/AA), nine were at St Mary's on 3rd and a one at Dam Dykes (Cramlington) on 4th.

**Shore Lark** *Eremophila alpestris*

One was heard and seen in flight at Alnmouth on 6th (JD).

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

Some large tribes were noted with 31+ at Wark (North Tyne) on 31st (PRM), 24 at Dipton Foot on 23rd (RMH) and 21 at Humshaugh on 18th (SW). Flocks of 15 were reported from Healey, Leazes Park (Newcastle) and Newburn and ten at Lower Ouseburn (Byker), Netherton Park and Newcastle Business Park. Counts of four to seven came from Barns Park and Valley Park (both Cramlington), Jesmond Dene, Old Hartley, Walbottle and Yearle and two at Wark Burn.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Singles were in willows at the entrance to Druridge Pools on 2nd (M.H.Snaith) and again on 28th (CDB), at Cresswell Pond on 8th (AAM) and at Holy Island (Crooked Lonnen) on 5th (IK), the latter showing some characteristics of the **Siberian race** *P.c.tristis*

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

One was reported at the entrance to Druridge Pools on 2nd (M.H.Snaith)

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

A total of four (male and three females) were noted in a Morpeth garden during the month (TF/JFa). Elsewhere singles were reported from gardens at Heddon-on-the-Wall, Hexham, Monkseaton, Old Hartley, Tynemouth and Woolsington and another at Seahouses.

Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus*

Nine flew S at Hauxley NR on 2nd (TB) and two were at Chibburn Farm (Widdrington) on 11th (STH/PJA/IF).

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

A total of four (from four localities) were noted in Jesmond Dene (MJCo), three at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN) and two at Arcot Hall GC, Holywell Dene and Lower Heddon. Singles were also reported from Mickley, Powburn, Rothbury, Walbottle and Wark (North Tyne).



Above - two bark lovers at Gosforth NR
a Nuthatch and a Tree Creeper both photographed by Colin Bradshaw

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Birds were reported from a total of 11 localities, including two at Arcot Hall GC, Jesmond Dene and Wark (North Tyne).

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Eight at West Hartford on 30th included six roosting in a tree trunk (PJA). Singles were also reported from Jesmond Dene, Old Hartley, South Gosforth and Walbottle.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

Roost counts included 10,000 at Holy Island Lough on 2nd, declining to ca. 6,000 by Xmas (IK), 1,000+ at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN) and up to 500 preparing to roost at Prestwick Carr on 10th, the latter declining to 120 by 21st (PCF). Elsewhere 500 were reported from Longframlington on 2nd, 300 at Stanington on 2nd and 60 at North Charlton on 1st (JMA).

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

In Jesmond Dene singles were reported from Armstrong Bridge, Benton Bank Bridge and Coleman's Field (MJCo). Singles were also noted at Branton, Holywell Dene, Warden, Wark (singing) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Sizeable gatherings included 42 along a one km stretch of the Holywell Waggonway on 14th (ASJ), 20+ at The Granary (Fenham Flats) on 2nd (MSH), 18 at Aydon on 13th (RB/MB) and 16 at Prestwick Carr on 10th and a Walbottle garden on 11th (PCF/KR/LR). 11 visited a Tynemouth garden on 24th (ASJ) and seven were at the Wansbeck Estuary on 31st (JR). One to four were noted at a further four localities.



Two winter thrushes at Prestwick Carr
A Fieldfare and a Blackbird
both photographed on 15th December by Peter Fletcher

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

750+ at Fenham-le-Moor on 12th was by far the largest gathering of the month (MH/AA). Elsewhere 200+ were reported from Prestwick Carr on 3rd (PCF) and 100 at Barmoor on 1st (JMA). Counts of 50-80+ came from Aydon, Derwent Reservoir, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Longframlington, Roddam and Wark (North Tyne) and 20-40 from Alnwick, Arcot Pond, Ashington, Budle Bay, Harwood Head, Healey, Humshaugh and Yearle.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Only two birds were reported this month; singles at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 12th and Jesmond Dene (Banqueting Hall) on 6th and 9th.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

62 were at Arcot Lane on 4th (DM), 60 at Backworth on 4th (MN), 50+ at Fenham-le-Moor on 12th (AA/MH) and 45 at Hexham on 5th (AJR). Flocks of 25-35 were reported from Ashington, Bradford Kaims, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Jesmond and Valley Park (Cramlington). One to ten were noted at a further seven localities.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

11 at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 12th (DM) and eight at Cresswell Pond on 26th (IRD) were the highest counts. Three were noted at Harwood Head on 27th and one to two at Aydon, Branton GP, Jesmond Dene, Walkerville and Wark (North Tyne). Singing birds were noted at four of these locations from 12th.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Only four reports were received; three at Jesmond Dene on 11th (MJCo) and a Walbottle garden on 25th (KR/LR) and singles at Chapel House and South Gosforth.

Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*

Six (three pairs) were noted at Warkworth Gut on 2nd (JSB/EC) and up to three at Cresswell Pond from 8th -11th (AAM *et al.*). One to two were also reported from Alnwick Moor, Backworth, East Chevington, Low Newton, Ross Back Sands and Stag Rocks (Bamburgh).

Stonechat was a **target species** for 2011.

Wheatear *Oenanthe Oenanthe*

A very late bird found on the beach north of Seaton Point (Boulmer) on 13th (ADMc) was still present on 14th (ADM).

Desert Wheatear *Oenanthe deserti*

A first-winter male found at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 4th remained in the area into the New Year (D.Elliott *et al.*).



The popular Desert Wheatear at Newbiggin
left posing for Colin Bradshaw and right flying by Adriana Buskin

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

Four visited a Walbottle garden on 4th (KR/LR). Two were at Heaton Park (Newcastle) on 18th and a South Gosforth garden on 19th (MJCo).

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Gardens proved popular this month with 42 at Northburn (Cramlington) on 23rd (LJM), 40 at Marden Estate (Tynemouth) all month (ASJ), 30 at Ridsdale all month (MD/AM) and 25 at Battlesteads Hotel (Wark) on 25th (CB).

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

80+ were at New Shoreston on 2nd (MSH), 31 at Branton all month (IBDa/KDa), 30 amongst a mixed flock feeding on un-harvested barley at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 11th (TBr), 11 at a Walbottle garden on 18th (KR/LR), nine at a Lower Heddon garden all month (DG-M), eight on feeders at Battle Steads Hotel (Wark) on 25th (CB) and Black Callerton on 30th (MH/AA) and one to three at Holystone, Holywell, Lincoln Hill and Old Hartley.

A Tree Sparrow
by Brian Bullough

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

One-three were at Jesmond Dene on 11th (MJCo). Two were at Wark on 31st (PRM). Singles were also noted at Newcastle City Centre on 1st-2nd (DM), St. Mary's Island on 1st (MSH), Holywell Dene on 9th and 20th (RJP), Tynemouth on 11th (DRW), Seaton Point (Boulmer) on 14th (ADM), Horton Burn (Cramlington) on 25th (GMi) and Newbiggin on 30th (IFo).

Pied Wagtail *Montacilla alba*

15+ were at St. Mary's Island on 1st (MSH), ten+ between Seaton Point-Longhoughton (Boulmer) on 14th (ADM) and four at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 5th (CDB).

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

30 were observed between Seaton Point to Longhoughton (Boulmer) on 14th (ADM), 13 at St. Mary's on 19th (ASJ), six at Prestwick Carr on 21st (PCF), five at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 11th (STH/PJA/IFo), two at East Chevington on 18th (DM/STH/GB/PJA) and West Hartford on 31st (STH).



Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Ca.30 were found between Seaton Point-Longhoughton (Boulmer) on 14th (ADM), 15 at Holy Island between 6th-13th (ADM), seven at Newbiggin on 21st (PRM), six at St. Mary's Island between 1st-19th (MSH/ASJ), four at Hadston Scars (Druridge Bay) on 15th (AT), two at Cullercoats Bay on 23rd (MN) and singles at Alnmouth on 6th (JD) and Blyth Harbour on 29th (STH).

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

80 were feeding at a Ridsdale garden all month (MD/AM), 40+ were at New Shoreston on 2nd (MSH), 12 at Paddy Freeman's playing field (Jesmond Dene) on 29th (MJCo) and a South Gosforth garden on 19th (MJCo).

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

Numbers remained low all month. Ten visited a Ridsdale garden all month (MD/AM), eight+ at Grindon Hall on 3rd (PRM) and Holystone on 20th (DRo), three at Branton between 24th-26th (IBDa/KDa), two at Aydon (Corbridge) on 13th (RB/MB) and a Rothbury garden on 26th (JD). Singles were also at Craggside, a Heddon-on-the-Wall garden, Sleafy Hall and Yearle.

Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*

11 were at Tyne Riverside CP (Newburn) on 18th (PCF) and six at a Walbottle garden on 18th (KR/LR).

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Largest winter flocks involved 100 at Hemscotthill Links (Cresswell) on 10th (ASJ), 50 at Beadnell Bay all month (JPL), 25 at East Chevington on 15th (JMA), 21 at Yearle on 3rd (DGB), 20+ at Doddington on 2nd (MSH), 18 at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 1st (DM) and one -15 at a further seven widespread localities.

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

50 were at Branton GP on 17th (IBDa/KDa), 22 at Silverlink CP (North Shields) on 29th (CGK), 20-21 at Wark between 11th-29th (PRM), 12-15 at Morpeth between 28th-29th (TB) and one to five at Newbiggin, an Old Hartley garden, a South Gosforth garden, Wooler Common and Yearle.

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

285 were observed at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 19th (DGB) and 90+ at Hemscotthill Links (Cresswell) on 10th (ASJ).

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*

20 at Cresswell Links on 2nd was the only record (TB).

Redpoll sp.

32 at Gosforth Garden Village on 31st were predominantly Lesser Redpolls, *C. caberet* with at least five Mealy Redpolls, *C. flammea* amongst them (MLC).

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis caberet*

25 at East Chevington on 15th (JMA) and 20 at Morpeth on 16th were the only flocks. One-two were also present at Addycombe (Rothbury), Dam Dykes (Cramlington), Harwood Head/Burn, Healey, Pegswood, West Hartford, Wooler Common and Yearle.

Common Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

Another great winter was recorded at Kielder Forest during month with flocks of 10-30 in the area (MD/AM). 150+ with many singing and collecting nest material were at Harwood Head/Burn on 27th (MSH). Elsewhere, 25 were at Thrunton Woods on 27th (JD/IBDa/KDa), 20 at The Wanneys on 27th (MD/AM), 15 at Bakethin Reservoir on 18th (MD/AM), Healey on 23rd (RMu) and Redesdale on 31st (MD/AM), 14 at Wooler Common on 24th (TRD/JD), 13 at Battlesteads Hotel (Wark) on 25th (CB) and two at Addycombe (Rothbury) on 9th (TRD/JD).

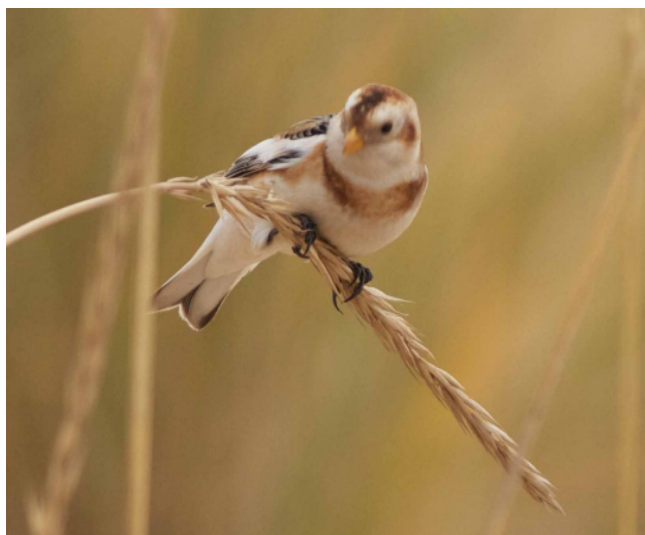
Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Ca.20 were at Prestwick Carr on 14th (SWA), 12 at Lincoln Hill on 29th (SW), ten at Northburn (Cramlington) on 30th (PJA), eight at Scotland Gate all month (SLB/MSK) and Longhorsley on 3rd (AB/LB), seven at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 31st (DM), four at Craggside on 18th (JD/TRD) and Wooler on 31st (SVM/AJM). One to three were also noted at a further 18 widespread localities.

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Ten were at Hemscotthill Links (Cresswell) on 24th (TF/JFa), six at Blyth South Harbour on 11th (DMT) with four still there on 27th (JSB/EC) and a well watched individual at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) between 4th-5th (ADM/ASJ/PJA *et al.*). Inland, four were found at Wedder Hill (the Cheviots) on 27th (IRD).

A Snow Bunting at Blyth South Harbour
27th December by John Clark



Lapland Bunting *Calcarius lapponicus*

Two were noted at St. Mary's Island on 27th (AC).

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

100 were amongst mixed flock feeding on un-harvested barley at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 11th (TBr), 50+ at Lowmoor Crossing (Fenham-le-Moor) on 12th (MH/AA) with 30 there on 16th (DGB/RHB), 35 at Doddington on 24th (TRD/JD) and Warkworth Lane on 27th (TB), 18 around the farm at Cresswell Pond on 18th (JL) and nine at Big Waters on 30th (PCF).

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

14 were observed at Warkworth Lane on 27th (TB), ten amongst the mixed feeding flock at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 11th (TBr), eight at St. Mary's on 30th (ASJ), two at Arcot Pond on 4th (DM) and a Dinnington garden on 21st (PCF) and one at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 31st (DM).

ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN**Escapes****Bar-headed Goose** *Anser indicus*

The three individuals seen last month at East Chevington were again present up until 2nd and were then noted at the new Maiden's Hall Lake from 4th to 9th.

Muscovy Duck *Cairina moschata*

Two were again on the River Tyne at Elswick Wharf from 5th to 30th (DM).

Speckled Teal *Anas flavirostris*

The individual seen last month at Marden Quarry was found again on 3rd (CDB).

Hybrids**Canada Goose x Greylag Goose** *Branta canadensis x Anser anser*

One was at Killingworth Lake on 31st (LJM).

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Hauxley Ringing Station, Natural History Society of Northumbria, North Northumberland Bird Club, Northern Experience Wildlife Tours.

Those observers marked with an asterisk after their name(s) have submitted records online using the club spreadsheet. Copies are available by emailing Dick Myatt at dick@dickmyatt.co.uk

Apologies for any accidental omissions.**BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION**

This bulletin was compiled by Lindsay McDougall (Mute Swan to Egyptian Goose, Red Grouse to Black-necked Grebe), Graeme Bowman (Ruddy Shelduck to Ruddy Duck), Trevor Blake (Honey Buzzard to Crane), Ian Forsyth (Oystercatcher to Skua), Tim Dean (Ivory Gull to Puffin, Escapes, Hybrids and Unknown Origin, List of Contributors, Highlights), Peter Fletcher (Feral Pigeon to Red-rumped Swallow), Mike Richardson (Cetti's Warbler to Pied Flycatcher), Eddie Crabtree (Duncock to Corn Bunting), Julie Roper/Dan Turner (WeBS Coastal Counts) and Steve Holliday (WeBS Inland Counts). Thanks again to Ann McKeown for typing the section Duncock to Corn Bunting. Thanks to David Sanders of NNBC for providing data. Proof reading was by Mike Smith.

Edited by Steve Barrett NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com

Distributed by Paul Stewart.

We need a **volunteer** to arrange postage of bulletins. Our printer is in North Shields. Is there a member (who receives a postal bulletin) and lives at the coast available for an evening's work each month? Please contact any committee member or email Steve Barrett at NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com

RECORD SUBMISSION

Please send all record cards to Tim Dean, 2 Knocklaw Park, Rothbury NE65 7PW, to arrive on, or preferably before, the 8th of the month following that in which the records were collected. Please write cards legibly to ensure that your sightings are correctly recorded.

E-mail: Members are encouraged to e-mail their records on an Excel-style spreadsheet. Please e-mail Dick Myatt at dickmyatt.co.uk for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and Grid references: The use of standard location names and the inclusion of grid references greatly increases the value of records in subsequent analyses. A 1km square grid reference is the ideal e.g. NY8067 for Grindon Lough, but 2km square references (tetrads) are also acceptable e.g. NY86D in this case. A list of localities and their tetrad grid references (tetrad/Locality List) can be downloaded from the 'Resources & Downloads' section of the Club website at <http://www.ntbc.org.uk> – the use of these names, wherever possible, would be highly appreciated.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Please keep submitting your articles, photographs, sketches and illustrations for the bulletin. Thanks again to those who have supplied the excellent photographs. Please send to Steve Barrett at NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com

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The Club website is an excellent resource for all interested in birds in the north east. There are numerous interesting sections, including a photograph gallery, site information and trip reports together with extensive reference information for birding in our area. The site is at www.ntbc.org.uk

If you have any ideas or things you would like to see or hear about on the site please let Chris know on 0751 582 5024 or e-mail christopher.knox@o2.co.uk

NTBC SIGHTINGS PAGE

The club sightings web page gives listings of birds seen locally. Adding a sighting is simple. A short e-mail is all that is needed. If anyone would like to be added as a contributor please contact Alan Tilmouth at ntbcorg@gmail.com. The sightings page can be found at <http://ntbcsightings.posterous.com>

INDOOR MEETINGS

The next indoor meeting will be at Northern Rugby Club, McCracken Park, Great North Road, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 2DT on Thursday 9th February at 7pm. Please note the venue.

Birding in Oman by Mike Watson. An insight into the avian delights of the sultanate.

Then on 8th March we have **The Black-tailed Godwit** by Jenny Gill followed on 12th April by the ever popular **Members' Night**.

FIELD TRIPS

The next trips organised by Trevor Blake are:

Ross Back Sands on February 19th and

Kielder on 25th March.

Please contact Trevor Blake for more information: trevor.1958@live.co.uk

NTBC COMMITTEE NEWS

The committee feel that the Club constitution is becoming outdated. Below is the amended 'Aims' section. Please pass any comments to the Club Chairman at tomandmurielcadwallender@hotmail.com

“Aims and Objectives

Research: to co-operate with and promote national and local scientific ornithological enquiries and to study and record the birds of Northumberland and Tyneside and to publish results on any such research.

Conservation: to support and work in co-operation with others, either individuals or organizations, in the conservation of and for the benefit of birdlife and nature conservation in the county.

Education: to promote interest, understanding and appreciation of ornithology in Northumberland and Tyneside through the organization of field outings, lectures and indoor meetings.

Publication: to produce an annual report on the birds of the county to be known as Birds in Northumbria, a regular bulletin and other publications where appropriate and approved by the Committee.”

ATLAS PROJECT MANAGER

With fieldwork complete and data verification continuing the committee recognises that we are about to embark on one of the largest single projects the club has attempted, turning all of the effort into a County Atlas of Wintering and Breeding Birds. We believe that to ensure the project runs smoothly a Project Manager will be key, we are therefore seeking an individual from within the club's membership who may be able to spare a few hours per month to help draft and monitor a project plan. Ideally someone with project management experience with good communication skills who can help co-ordinate the various strands of the project until it's completion. If you wish to discuss this further (without commitment) please contact Tom Cadwallender or Alan Tilmouth.

COMMITTEE

The Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club Committee in February 2012 is;

Chairman

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Honorary Treasurer/Membership

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Tel: (0191) 2527438
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NEWCASTLE/GATESHEAD KITTIWAKE UPDATE

The Guildhall, Newcastle Quayside

This site has been used by breeding Kittiwakes since 2007 and held 27 AON (Apparently occupied nests) in summer 2011. Between 17th-20th January (2012) the window ledges of the upper eastern elevation were cleared of old nests and spikes - then the elevation was netted to stop nesting. The work was carried out by Rentokil as arranged by Newcastle City Council. The City Council was genuinely concerned about this Grade 1 Listed Building and obligations to their tenants. It is to be seen whether the Kittiwakes move onto ledges on the southern elevation.

Tyne Bridge, North abutment (also termed 'buttress' or 'tower') area, Newcastle quayside

This site has been used by breeding Kittiwakes since 1996 and held 317 AON in summer 2011. Following a conversation on 24th January it was confirmed that the City Council has no plans at present to deter the nesting gulls from this site.

A Kittiwake eyes the Newcastle Quayside
A 2005 photograph by Steve Barrett

The Baltic, Gateshead.

Kittiwakes returned here in 2004, after some years of discouragement when the site was netted during conversion to an Arts Centre. In summer 2011 the site held 53 AON. On 20th January a member of staff from the Baltic stated:

"They are a projected species ... they were here before us ... it is more their building than ours".

The staff now make a feature of the nesting Kittiwakes on the building - which are viewable from the Level 4 terrace. During summer 2011 they installed a 'Kittiwake cam' so the birds' activities could be watched from inside the building on a screen. During the nesting period a walkway is closed, on their property, directly beneath the nesting ledges (on the north face) to protect the public from falling matter.

This is a lovely acceptance of the birds and should be a great example to others!

The RSPB film unit is planning a new production about Kittiwakes and intends to visit Newcastle Quayside during 2012 as part of this project.

Dan Turner

NORTH SEA WRECK

There is a wreck ongoing in the southern North Sea with mainly Razorbills involved (and a few other species, such as puffins, LBBGs and Kittiwakes). Could seawatchers please look out for AND report ship-following Razorbills in the wake of nearshore vessels to Kees Camphuysen (kees.camphuysen@wxs.nl). Kees is a long-time seabird researcher in The Netherlands. 'They are desperate to get food at the moment and many vessels are currently followed by Razorbills'.

Any reports....much appreciated!

In addition - please keep a weather eye open for beached Fulmars - collect those with complete abdomens and report to me so they may be transferred and stored a.s.a.p. Any Northeast England beached Kittiwakes and Puffins should also be collected please - and let me know, so they may be transferred and stored. If you know of particular seawatchers who ought to be informed, please pass this message on. Please also forward such sightings (as indicated above) to myself - for our NEBBS Group records.

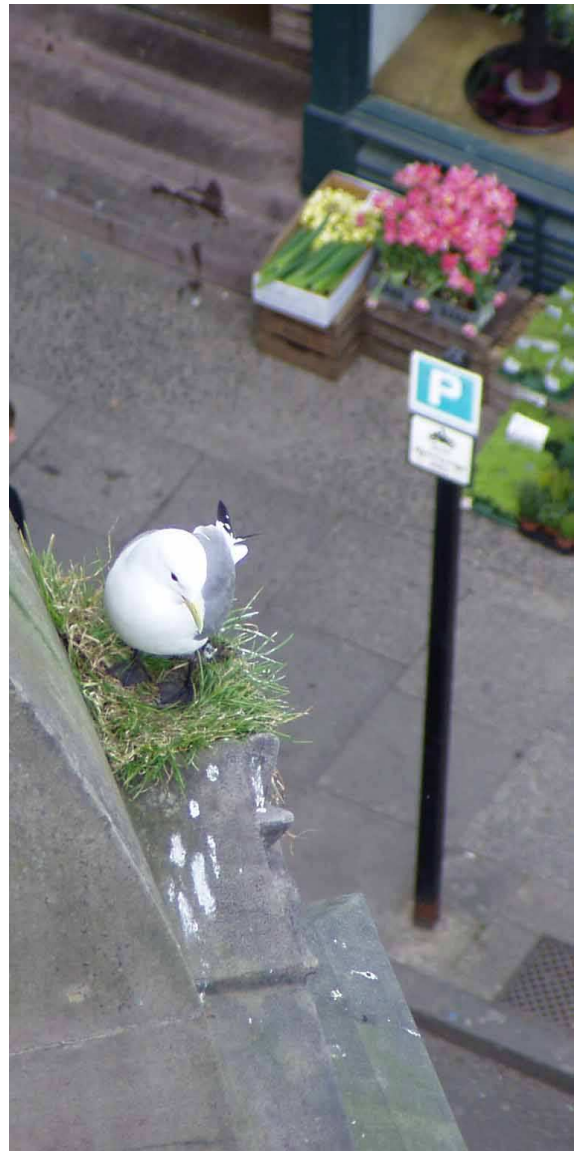
Many thanks,

Dan Turner (NEBBS Co-ordinator)

North Shields

[Tel 0191 257 6680](tel:01912576680)

dan.m.turner@btinternet.com



BIRDS IN NORTHUMBRIA**BIN 2010**

Each member will, as usual, be issued with a free copy of BIN. Those attending the February indoor meeting can pick up a copy and save postage costs for the Club. And while you're about it why not take your pal's copy as well.

BIN 2011 - Request for photographs and authors**Photographs:**

Photographs are always welcome for consideration. All members are free to submit images (taken within the county during 2011) to the editor.

Please send as jpeg image attachments to one or more e-mails, or copy to a disc and send to the address below.

Authors:

If there are any budding authors out there willing to write up a few species for Birds in Northumbria 2011, please contact the editor at the address / email below.

The job is not as onerous as it may appear, as most of the data is sourced from the monthly bulletins which are cut and pasted under separate species headings.

Mike Richardson
49 Crofts Ave
CORBRIDGE
Northumberland
NE45 5LY

E-mail: mike@49crofts.entadsl.com

NEW COOT COLOUR-RINGING PROJECT IN NORTHUMBERLAND

This winter I have been colour-ringing Coot, mainly at Killingworth Lake on North Tyneside. 30 hand-caught birds have had colour rings added so far. The rings are white with three black alpha-numeric characters and are normally added to the bird's left leg. This fieldwork links in with extensive colour-ringing of Coot that began in the North West several years ago.

If you come across any colour-ringed Coot I'd be very grateful to hear of your sightings at Killingworth or elsewhere.

Please e-mail the details to andyrickeard@hotmail.com

Many thanks.

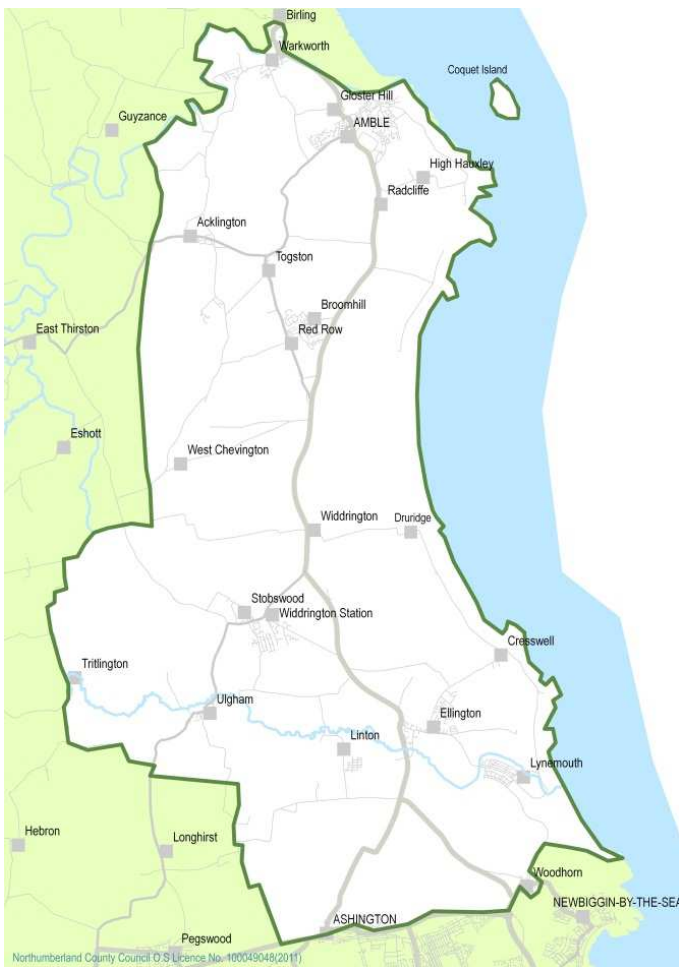
Andy Rickeard



"Connecting communities, coast, countryside and culture"

The Druridge Bay Partnership has been successful in attracting a Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) grant to develop the Project by writing a Landscape Conservation Action Plan for the area. This covers a five-year programme which will focus on the two key themes of **managing the landscape** to protect and enhance the area's natural and cultural heritage and build resilience against climate change, while **connecting communities with this landscape** through events, interpretation, training and volunteering.

The 'Coal and Coast' project covers over 116 square kilometres (45 square miles) including Coquet Island and stretches from Amble to south of Lynemouth on the coast and inland as far as Ulgham, Tritlington, Stobswood, Acklington and Morwick.



Managing the landscape

The Landscape Partnership will deliver projects in a series of corridors which start on the coast and then go further inland, which are:

- **Coquet Island** - one of the most important islands on the North East coast, supporting a 30,000-strong colony of nesting sea-birds every year, and the RSPB will continue to ensure that the habitat is free from unnecessary disturbance and predation, while seeking to secure safe feeding grounds for the birds around the island and surrounding coastline.
- **The Beach and Dunes** – allowing the dunes to react naturally to the forces of coastal erosion that will affect the main sweep of Druridge Bay as well the potential for increased risk of flood events. It is important to work with these while recognising the need for defence of settlements and businesses. Druridge Bay displays natural characteristics that will help in reacting to climate change with the dune systems here, if given breathing space and room to spread, being able to move back inland
- **Behind the Dunes** - The flood zones inland of the dunes and upstream of the Hauxley Reserve also have potential for habitat creation but need to be managed to ensure that flooding does not threaten settlements

- **Farmland** – it is now recognised that restoration of former open-cast sites has left a poor quality landscape which is neither inspiring nor welcoming. Later restoration schemes have shown more imaginative design particularly in areas of recreational or environmental end-use. Land subsidence following pit closures is leading to the appearance of new ponds in the farmland to the north of Cresswell.
- **Open-cast sites** – restoration of sites at Steadsburn and Stobswood will include habitat development and access opportunities that will increase biodiversity and amenity use.

Connecting communities and the landscape

Involving people and communities in shaping these projects is critical to the success of the Landscape Partnership in producing a comprehensive but achievable Landscape Conservation Action Plan. Although there is a wealth of knowledge and expertise that exists within the Partnership, what's really important is that we develop and deliver projects that make a real difference on the ground. That has to involve people who live and work in the area, and those who come to enjoy it.

The 'Coal and Coast' Project has potential projects that can be developed, which include:

Community archaeology, oral history, recording of biodiversity, cultural heritage and the landscape, as well as working with schools, farmers and landowners

Volunteering to manage habitats, work with local communities and visitors

Using the system of public rights of way and agreeing permissive routes to give access opportunities throughout the area

Increasing interpretation such as CCTV footage and the Druridge Bay website

Developing the RSPB's 'SeeBirds and Wildlife' Project to increase awareness and interpretation of Coquet Island and the Northumberland Coast

Establishing training and development programmes, including apprenticeships.

HLF has earmarked £1.81 million for delivering the project from 2012 – 2017 that will be released on successful submission of the Project's Landscape Conservation Action Plan (LCAP) by February 15th 2011, which will include an indication of match funding for the first two years of the project. The overall project budget for the five years is £4,038,205, and projects will be delivered against the 4 HLF Landscape Partnership Grant Themes (and a further Overheads Theme) of:

- 'Conservation and Restoration of the Natural and Built Heritage' (approximately 21% of the project budget)
- 'Improving Community Participation' (17%)
- 'Access and Learning' (10%)
- 'Training and Skills' (22%)
- Staff Costs and Overheads (30%), including a team of Project Manager, Natural Heritage Officer, Cultural Heritage Officer, Volunteer Co-ordinator, part-time Training Co-ordinator and part-time Admin. and Communications Officer.

Core funding includes contributions from Northumberland Wildlife Trust (£100k), Northumberland County Council (cash and in-kind contributions up to £115k) and a landfill tax credit payment for 2011/12 of £15,000. Volunteering contributions can be counted as match funding and are projected to be the equivalent of at least £87,250 each year. Project contributions already agreed include RSPB (£6k), Northumbria University (£39k), Environment Agency (£90k through Local Flood Levy), Forestry Commission Woodland Grant Scheme (£108k), NCC Access (£30k), Local Transport Plan (£60k). Further grant applications are being prepared or have been submitted to the Crown Estate, UK Coal Community Funds, SITA, Biffa, the Esme Fairbairn Foundation and through wind turbine community funds.

HLF have also agreed to accept as match the added value of land restoration projects on opencast sites by UK Coal if these are either voluntary (i.e. they do not result from conditions attached to consent for mineral extraction and subsequent restoration and which are therefore not a legal requirement) or are enhanced schemes which deliver more environmental or access benefit than required by planning consent and associated conditions. A conservative estimate of this in-kind contribution is £55,000 in the first year of the project.

The Druridge Bay Landscape Partnership Board, which is developing the project and is made up of public, private and voluntary sector organisations led by Northumberland Wildlife Trust, is keen to involve further partners in project development and delivery, including Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club.

For further details on the Project, contact:

Steve Scoffin
 Druridge Bay Development Manager
 c/o Northumberland Wildlife Trust
 Garden House
 St Nicholas Park
 Gosforth
 Newcastle upon Tyne
 NE3 3XT
 T: 0191 284 6884
 M: 07523 036280
steve.scoffin@northwt.org.uk

PRESTWICK CARR

Raised Viewing Platform

Northumberland Wildlife Trust is considering the erection of a raised viewing platform, facing south over our tenanted land at Prestwick Carr.

This will hopefully enhance the viewing experience in the absence of a dedicated hide. Two locations are presently proposed;

Adjacent the two main access gates along the wobbly road
East Gateway

Meetings with Newcastle City planning officials have indicated a preference for the further east gateway, which is also our preferred option. However, we would welcome comments from club members regarding the platform before we proceed further.

Interpretation Panels

We are also replacing some of the aged interpretation panels along the southern boundary at these points as part of the ongoing involvement on the Carr by NWT.

Site Management

In terms of management news, we intend to continue with the grazing and rush-cutting regimes this year as well as scraping some of the more dense patches to assist diversity of habitats on the Carr. This will improve the feeding and breeding opportunities for the targeted bird species such as snipe, lapwing and reed bunting. Some additional blocking of internal ditches has been completed recently.

Access

There is no public access onto Prestwick Carr, other than along the public rights of way, particularly when the red danger flags are displayed. However, many people do not realise that this also applies even when red flags are not flying as the current MoD signage is misleading. We are in the process of clarifying wording and signage for the site. This will also aim to restrict insensitive parking in gateways and on bridges, issues that have been raised by the MoD and farmers who need access to their land at all times.

One point of note this winter has been the extra number of certain raptor species on the Carr. Whilst this is acknowledged as being largely beneficial and positive for the Carr, their presence has also created a number of issues for both locals and land owners in the area. In particular, there have been some incidents of trespass from the public rights of way.

Thankfully these have been in the minority but in some cases the police have become involved. It is obviously in the interests of all that we maintain good relations with all our partners on the Carr and with the neighbouring communities. Could we ask any users to abide by these restrictions and pass the information on to other people you know that may use the site.

Please feel free to contact me at the Trust if you wish to chat about anything on Prestwick Carr.

Kevin O'Hara - Living Landscapes – Prestwick

kevin.ohara@northwt.org.uk

[0191 2846884](tel:01912846884)

Second option least preferred

Preferred location



NWT boundary

COASTAL WeBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND

December 2011

Site	Berwick North Shore		Berwick Little Beach		Tweed Estuary		Tweed: At By-Pass Rd		Horncliffe		Spirit - Cockburn		Lindisfarne NNR (including Budle Bay)		MLC		Budle Pt - Seashouses		Seashouses - Beadnell		Beadnell - Howick		Howick - Boulmer		Boulmer - Alnmouth		Alm Estuary		Alnmouth South		Coquet Estuary		Ambie - Chevington		KVB		N.BUDS		P.P.		F.F.																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																						
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INLAND WeBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND

Version:

Year: 2011
Month: DECEMBER

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