

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2015 No 1

MONTHLY SUMMARY – JANUARY

4th March 2015



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WeBS coastal December 2014 and January

Outstanding Records, descriptions needed

BIN 2014 request for photographs

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NE Butterfly Atlas 2015

CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Tundra Bean Goose

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Jack Snipe

Pomarine Skua

Little Auk

Iceland Gull

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Great Grey Shrike

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Rose-coloured Starling

Several sightings of up to five individuals.

Up to four at Warkworth Lane and Bothal Pond.

An adult was in the Pinkfoot flock south of East Chevington from 26th.

A male was present at Druridge Pools from 3rd to 10th.

A major county find for the month at Cheswick Dunes from 20th. 2nd county record.

Up to three at Gosforth Park and a popular individual at Swallow Pond.

Singles at Bamburgh, Seahouses harbour and East Chevington.

Up to 11 on Holy Island. Higher count than in recent winters.

Wintering individual at Cresswell Pond.

Several sightings this month at a number of sites.

Unusual winter sighting on 19th.

Still present this winter in numbers with sightings at several locations.

Up to three seen at North Shields Fish Quay and surrounding area.

Two first-winters found at North Shields Fish Quay.

The wintering bird at West Hartford stayed throughout the month.

A flock of 21 at Heaton on 28th in a quiet month for the species.

A wintering bird at Prudhoe proved understandably popular.



The Prudhoe Rose-coloured Starling
by Tim Dean on 22nd January

NORTHUMBRIA BIRD ATLAS

The hard work by Tim Dean, his team and club members is approaching completion. The Atlas is now with the printer and members will be able to obtain a copy (or copies) at the Indoor Meeting on April 9th. This is an impressive 512-page production and is available for £25 (plus post). More details will be issued in the near future.

INDOOR MEETINGS

NTBC indoor meetings are held at Northern Rugby Club, McCracken Park, Great North Road, Newcastle, NE3 2DT starting at 7.00pm and generally finish between 9.00pm-9.30pm.

12th March Tales of the unexpected

How miniature tracking devices are revolutionising our understanding of bird migration.
Phil Atkinson, Head of the international research team at BTO.

FIELD TRIPS

12th April Langholm for Harriers

Any members who are interested in the above field trip please email Steve Anderson seaswan@btinternet.com

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 2012 page 236.

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.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

The largest gatherings involved 93 at QEII CP Lake on 18th (CDH), 55 at Killingworth Lake on 22nd (LJM), 29 at Big Waters on 18th (GB), 24 at the Tweed Estuary (MHu), and ten to 15 at the Coquet Estuary, East Chevington, Ladyburn Lake, Low Newton and West Ord. Seven to nine were also at Newcastle Leazes Park, North Blyth and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, and two to three at eight further sites.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

58 were at Loanend (Horncliffe) on 25th (MHu), 34 (nine juveniles) at Fenham Mill on 18th (DM/STH), 26 at West Ord on 19th (MHu), 24 at Warkworth Lane on 1st (TRD/JD), 22 (three juveniles) at Warkworth on 30th (TRD), and 20 at Birling Carrs on 26th (JPD/AWS). Counts of ten to 14 came from the Coquet Estuary, East Chevington, Low Newton and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Singles were also at Greenlee Lough and Linton Ponds.

Bean Goose *Anser fabalis*

Four fed with Pink-footed Geese at Druridge on 20th (TRD). A group of three may have accounted for sightings at Warkworth Lane on 11th (JPD/STH *et al.*), West Chevington on 14th (TB), and near Bothal Pond on 15th (AT). Singles were at Old Hartley on 4th (JPD/MPF/AWS), Seaton Sluice on 10th (STH) and 26th (GPK), and Holywell on 23rd (SPP). All reports were of the 'Tundra' *rossicus* race.

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

North-bound birds involved 144 at Cocklawburn on 6th (MHu), 80-100 at Tynemouth on 17th (SPP), and ten to 29 at Cramlington and Heddon-on-the-Wall, while 200 flew S at Tynemouth on 13th (KWY), and 120 S at Cramlington on 4th (STH). In Druridge Bay, peak counts were ca 4,000 at East Chevington on 26th (JPD/TRD *et al.*), ca 3,000 at Druridge on 8th and 11th (TRD/JD/ASJ), and 2,500 at Cresswell on 24th (TB), while 2,000 were nearby at Felton Lane on 24th (TB). In the north of the county, 2,750 were at Prendwick on 2nd (AJR), about 2,000 at Budle Bay on 8th (JMA), 1,000 at Cheswick Sands on 26th (JPD/MPF/AWS), and 500 at Elwick (CGK *et al.*). Up to 600 were in the Holywell Dene-Seaton Sluice area during the month (RJP *et al.*), 220-300 at Berwick, Cheswick and West Chevington, and 115 at Low Newton. One to 12 visited Big Waters, Broomlee Lough, Gosforth Park NR and Grindon Lough.

White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*

Reports of Greenland *flavirostris* race birds involved four at Bothal Pond on 15th (AT), two at Ellington on 3rd (TB *et al.*), two (one adult) at Warkworth Lane on 1st and 3rd (GB/TRD/JD *et al.*) and one there on 2nd (PHH), and one at East Chevington on 20th (AA/MH). Single Eurasian *albifrons* race birds were at Big Waters on 2nd (GB), East Chevington on 6th (JPD/MPF/AWS) and Low Newton scrape on 21st (TRD).



Two Greenland Whitefronts
(an adult and a young bird) at
Warkworth lane
with a juvenile Whooper
by Tim Dean on 1st January

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

30 flew W at Cramlington on 25th (DM). Peak counts were 600 at Farnham Moor on 6th (IRD), about 300 at East Chevington on 17th (TD), 220 at Budle Bay on 3rd (ASJ), 215 at Big Waters on 4th (GB), 168 at Derwent Reservoir (IFo), and 90-126 at East Holywell, Embleton Bog, Haughton Strother GP, Low Newton and Yarrow Slake. Counts of 11-22 came from Bothal and Swallow Ponds, Gosforth Park NR and Grindon Lough, and one to eight were at Cocklawburn, the Coquet Estuary and Warkworth Lane.

Ross's Goose *Anser rossii*

One was at East Chevington on 26th (JPD/MPF/AWS).

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Numbers at Grindon Lough varied through the month from as few as three up to a peak of 260 on 13th (MRS *et al.*). Other peak counts were 103 at Killingworth Lake on 22nd (LJM), 80 at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN), 56-57 at Colt Crag Reservoir (MR) and Warkworth Lane (TB), and 18-38 at Big Waters, Killingworth Lake, Newcastle Leazes Park, QEII CP Lake and Swallow Pond. Two to nine were at Bothal Pond, the Tweed Estuary and West Ord.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

A flock in the Budle Bay-Elwick area peaked at 500 on 3rd (TB/MSK/SLB/GMi) and 600 on 26th (JPD/AWS), with 120-300 noted on several other dates. The only other report away from this area was of three amongst Pink-footed Geese at East Chevington on 11th (JL).

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

Records of pale-bellied *hrota* race birds involved 400 at Budle Bay on 27th (TRD) and 100 there on 11th (JPD/AWS), 400 at Fenham Flats on 6th (TRD/JD), and 100 at Holy Island on 23rd (TRD), and one flew N at St Mary's on 31st.

A group of 40 dark-bellied *bernicla* race birds were at Holy Island on 23rd (TRD/JD), and one was at Fenham Flats on 18th. Four un-raced birds flew N at Seahouses on 3rd (TB *et al.*).

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

At Seaton Sluice, six flew N on 31st and three N on 19th (SSWT), while four flew N at St Mary's on 31st (JPD/MPF/AWS). Fenham Flats held 918 on 3rd (ASJ), 12 were at the Blyth Estuary on 27th (IFo), and one to two at Bothal Pond (TB) and Newburn (PRM). Further inland, one was at Haughton Strother GP on 1st (MR).

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

A total of 45 flew N at Seaton Sluice on 27th (SSWT). Cresswell Pond held a peak of 1,000 on 27th (IFo) and 400-639 on several further dates (JMA/TRC *et al.*). Peak counts elsewhere were 507 at Big Waters on 18th (GB), 507 at Grindon Lough on 19th (PRM), 200-207 at Low Newton (JMA) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs (SR), 160-193 at Bothal Pond (TD) and Derwent Reservoir (IFo), and 112 at Colt Crag Reservoir. Counts of 16-30 came from Gosforth Park NR, Linton Ponds and QEII CP Lake.

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

One flew N at Seaton Sluice on 31st (SSWT). The largest gatherings were 40 at East Chevington on 18th (DM/STH), 31 at Caistron on 17th (JD), 29 at East Chevington on 27th (IFo), 27 at Ladyburn Lake on 18th (IFo), 27 at Swallow Pond on 16th (JPD/AWS), 21-25 at Arcot Pond (DM) and Big Waters (GB), and 15-18 at the Blyth Estuary (LJM), Holywell Pond (GPK), and QEII CP Lake (CDH). Six to nine were at Bothal Pond, Lynemouth Flash and St Mary's Wetland, while three to four were at Cresswell Pond and Gosforth Park NR, and one to two at Colt Crag and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, Grindon Lough and Low Newton. A drake at Low Cocklaw, Berwick on 1st-2nd was unusual for the locality (BWG/TBr).

Teal *Anas crecca*

A count of 776 on a partly frozen Big Waters on 18th was a record for the site (GB). Peak counts elsewhere were 465 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 18th (SR), 306 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 21st (MR), 292 at Grindon Lough on 19th (PRM), 255 at Derwent Reservoir on 25th (IFo), and 118-158 at Arcot Pond (DM), the Blyth Estuary (LJM), Bothal Pond (TD) and Elswick (DM). Counts of 50-81 came from Linton and Swallow Ponds, Lynemouth Flash and St Mary's Wetland, while ten to 35 were at Airy Holm Reservoir, Castle Island, Cresswell Pond, Gosforth Park NR, Haughton Strother GP, Low Newton and West Hartford.

Green-winged Teal *Anas carolinensis*

A drake was at Druridge Pools on 3rd (TB/TF/JFa/IJ *et al.*) and 8th (TRD/JD).

A Green-winged Teal
Druridge Pools
by Jonathan Farooqi
3rd January



Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Peak counts were 267 at Derwent Reservoir on 12th (IFo), 193 at Big Waters on 18th (GB), 123-125 at Airy Holm and Whittle Dene Reservoirs (IFo/SR), and 103-104 at Colt Crag Reservoir (MR) and Killingworth Lake (DM). Groups of 52-62 were at Cocklawburn Pond, East Chevington, Grindon Lough, Marden Quarry, Newcastle Leazes Park and the Tweed Estuary, while 20-46 were at Bothal and Linton Ponds, Jesmond Dene and QEII CP Lake.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

Moderate numbers at Fenham Flats included peaks of 40 on 6th (TRD/JD) and 78 on 13th (AA/MH). Away from this core area, three to four were at Grindon Lough on 7th and 19th (PRM/SW), two at Budle Bay on 3rd (CGK *et al.*), two at Druridge Pools on 1st (IRD), and singles at Colt Crag Reservoir and East Chevington.

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Swallow Pond held a peak of 16 on 5th (GPK), 11 were at Holy Island on 3rd (SR/AH), seven to eight at Big Waters (GB) and Bothal Pond (TD), and five to six at Arcot Pond (LJM), Cresswell Pond (IFo), Gosforth Park NR (NHSN), Killingworth Lake (GPK) and Linton Ponds (CDH). Two to three were also at Druridge and Monks' House Pools, Holy Island Lough, QEII CP Lake and Warkworth Lane Ponds.

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Highest counts were 29 at Holywell Pond on 23rd (SPP), 22 at Killingworth Lake on 30th (ASJ), 11 at Swallow Pond on 3rd (JPD/MPF/AWS), 11 at Widdrington Moor Lake on 22nd (AT), and four at Bothal Pond. One to two were also at Arcot Pond, East Chevington and Ladyburn Lake.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Largest counts were 185 at Killingworth Lake on 2nd (DM), 151 at Ladyburn Lake on 18th (TB), 85 at East Chevington on 18th (DM/STH), and 60-78 at QEII CP Lake (CDH) and Swallow Pond (CGK *et al.*). Counts of 20-33 came from Holywell and West Allotment Ponds, and Newcastle Leazes Park, while 12-18 were at Ashington, Big Waters, Bothal Pond, Haughton Strother GP, Newcastle Exhibition Park and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Scaup *Aythya marila*

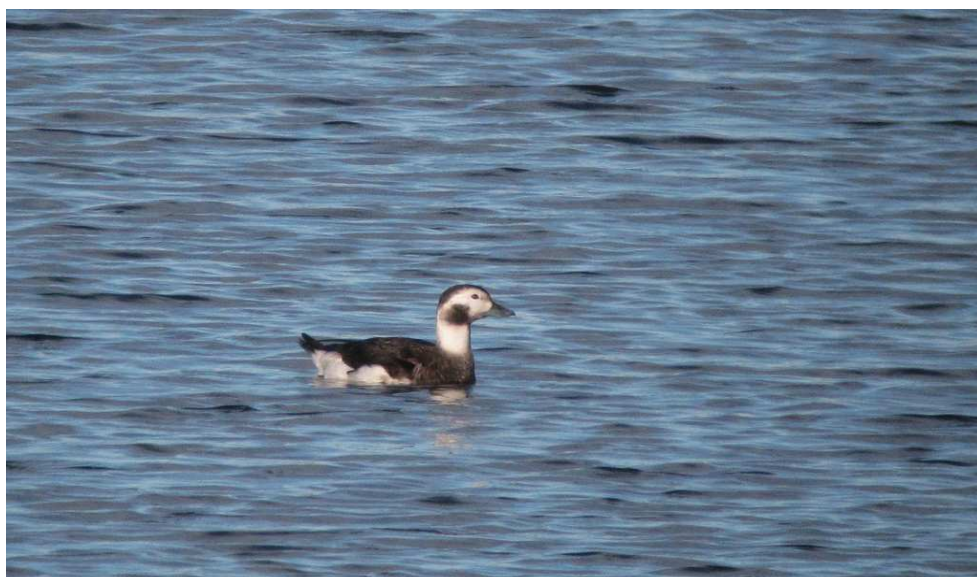
One flew N at Seaton Sluice on 27th (SSWT). Three (two drakes) were at East Chevington on 3rd (TF/JFa) with presumably the same three at nearby Ladyburn Lake on 18th (TB), and one to two at these sites on several dates between 3rd-23rd (EC/JSB/IJ *et al.*). Two were at Druridge Pools on 24th (PCF). Inland, a first-winter drake was at Haughton Strother GP between 1st-6th while an adult drake was present between 21st-27th (MR), and a drake was at Sweethope Lough on 30th (PRM). A female visited Swallow Pond on 3rd (JPD/MPF/AWS).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

Moderate counts included 48 at Blyth Harbour on 31st (PCF), 42 at North Blyth on 21st (AT), 37 at the Tyne Estuary-North Shields Fish Quay on 23rd (DMT), and 20-26 at Berwick North Shore, Low Newton, Meadow Haven (Berwick), Seahouses Harbour and Whitley Bay. Two to seven were also at Budle Bay and the Tweed Estuary.

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

One flew N at Seaton Sluice on 31st (SSWT). Numbers in the Stag Rocks area peaked at 42 (37 drakes) on 30th (MH), with five to 34 throughout the month (AA/TB/EC *et al.*). A group of 21 displayed at Holy Island Harbour on 17th (IK), 20+ were off Goswick Sands on 4th (JL), 12 at Cheswick Sands on 26th (JPD/AWS), and three at Beadnell (TB *et al.*). Two were at East Chevington on 3rd (IJ) and one on the north pool regularly up to 22nd (TB/AT *et al.*). The long-staying drake at Derwent Reservoir remained all month (IFo).



A long-tailed duck on fresh water at East Chevington 3rd January by Jonathan Farooqi

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

About 800 were off Cheswick Sands on 26th (JPD/MPF/AWS) and about 800 at Stag Rocks on 30th (EC/JSB). Counts of 400 at Cocklawburn on 23rd (TRD) and 150 at Goswick Sands on 4th and 21st (TRD/JL) may have involved mobile birds from the above concentrations. A group of 20 was at the Tweed Estuary on 2nd (JMA) but there were no reports south of Bamburgh.

Black Scoter *Melanitta americana*

A drake was amongst Common Scoters at Cheswick on 26th-27th (JPD/TRD/MPF/AWS). On the latter date it was seen to be attacked by two different female Common Scoters (TRD).

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

On 31st, seven flew N at St Mary's (JPD/MPF/AWS) and five N at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). One was with Common Scoters at Cheswick on 27th (TRD).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

A total of 12 flew N at Seaton Sluice between 19th-31st (SSWT) and ten moved N at St Mary's on 31st (JPD/MPF/AWS). Peak counts were 112 at the Tweed Estuary on 16th (MHu), 82 at Tweed Dock, Berwick on 2nd (MHu), 58 at East Chevington on 11th (JL), and 11-20 at Big Waters (DM *et al.*), Caistron (JD), Grindon Lough (PRM), Killingworth Lake (GPK), Low Newton (AJR), and QEII CP Lake (CDH). Seven to eight visited Bolam Lake and West Ord, and three to four at Berwick North Shore, Bothal and Cresswell Ponds, Hauxley Reserve, Ladyburn Lake and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. One to two were at nine further sites. Two Otters panicked 43 birds on East Chevington north pool on 25th (IK).

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Ten were at Goswick Sands on 4th (JL), ten at Cocklawburn on 23rd (TRD), eight off East Chevington on 17th and 20th (TRD/STH), six at Ladyburn Lake on 20th (TRD), and four to five at Budle Point-Stag Rocks, Budle Bay, Cheswick, and Meadow Haven (Berwick). One to two were also at Berwick North Shore, Boulmer, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, East Chevington north pool, Spittal Bay, and the Tweed and Wansbeck Estuaries. More unusual was one at Kielder Water on 18th (MD).

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

Two flew N at Seaton Sluice on 31st (SSWT). A total of 23 (eight drakes) was counted on the River Tyne between Wylam-Hagg Bank on 3rd (MH), ten were at Killingworth Lake on 2nd (GB/DM), six to seven at Kielder Water (MD) and Wallington* (AJR), and three to four at Airy Holm Reservoir, Jesmond Dene, Newcastle Leazes Park, QEII CP Lake, Tyne Green, Wark and West Allotment Pond. One to two were also at/over Chollerford, Corbridge, East Chevington, Gosforth Park, Marden Quarry, Morpeth, Newcastle Exhibition Park, Rothbury and the Tweed Estuary.

*included a drake displaying to six females.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

The only record was of three seen at Ingram (Breamish Valley) on 25th (TRD).

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

An excellent count of 200 seen in the Harthope Valley on 18th was the highest during the month (JPD/AWS/TDag). 62 were between Wooler Common and Wester Tor on 30th (MJC) and 24 were recorded at Wooler Common during a 5km walk to Broadstruther on 24th (MH). One to two birds were also noted at Alnwick Moor and Belford Moor.

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

Only scattered reports of small numbers, with five at Spartylea on 5th being the highest count (CN). One to two were also recorded at Birdoswald, Greenhead Bank, Staward and Winnows Hill.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Well reported this month, mainly from the east of the county. Peak counts were nine at Hemscott Hill (Cresswell) (TB/MSK/SLB/GMi) and Fenham-le-Moor (DM/GB/LAR) on 3rd and Beal Point (Lindisfarne NNR) on 23rd (TRD). Eight were at West Chevington on 14th (TB)) and Linton Lane NWT on 15th (AT). Seven were seen at Milkwell (Corbridge) on 8th (RB/MB), Big Waters on 18th (GB) and Ellington on 30th (TB). One to six birds were noted at East Chevington, Fulbeck, Gosforth Park NR, Hebron, Hemscott Hill Links (Cresswell), Holywell Dene, Pegswood, Pegswood Community Park, Prestwick Carr and West Ord.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

The only record was of five birds at Hartley West Farm near Holywell Dene on 15th (RJP).

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

Seaton Sluice Watch Tower recorded 12 flying N and six S between 24th-31st (SSWT). The peak count was of 40+ on the sea off Goswick Sands on 4th (JL) and 15 were at Cocklawburn on 23rd (TRD). The only other double-digit count was ten off Bamburgh Wynding (including eight amongst Scoters) on 30th (MH). Elsewhere during the month, one to four birds were at Cheswick, Cocklawburn, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, St Mary's Island, Snab Point (Cresswell), Spittal Bay (Berwick) and Stag Rocks.

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*

Single birds were recorded flying N at St. Mary's Island on 16th and 25th (SPP) and flying N at Seaton Sluice on 26th (SSWT). One was at Stag Rocks with Slavonian Grebes on 21st (TRD) and one at East Chevington was well-reported between 11th-17th, even sitting on the North Pool on 11th (STH/JL *et al.*).

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

Only single birds reported through the month. One was flying S at Emmanuel Head (Holy island) on 23rd (TRD). At other localities one was off Stag Rocks on 3rd (ASJ/GB *et al.*), 11th (JPD/AWS) and 21st (TRD), St. Cuthbert's Isle (Holy Island) on 17th (*per* IK), and an individual that was unusually well inland at Haughton Strother GP, near Humshaugh on 19th (MR).

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

Birds returned to several breeding locations during the month with peak counts of 18 on cliffs to the rear of Tynemouth Priory on 17th (SPP), 16 paired up on Cullernose Point (Craster) on 30th (TRD) and 11 at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 18th (IJ). Eight were at Bamburgh Castle on 3rd (GB/DM/LAR) and Bamburgh GC on 18th (BCFT). One to five were seen during the month at Beadnell, Berwick North Shore, East Chevington, Holy Island, Newbiggin and Snab Point (Cresswell).

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

Passage counts were 23 flying N in seven hours at Seaton at Sluice on 31st (SSWT) and one to three past Bamburgh Wynding and Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) during the month. 26 were at St. Mary's Island on 31st (JPD/MPF/AWS).

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

The peak counts were 79 at North Shields Fish Quay on 4th (DMT) with 52 there on 1st (DM/STH/PJA/IFo), 45 on 27th (SPP) and 42 on 7th (JMA). 22 were roosting in Larch opposite the church at Bywell on 5th (MH), with 12 there on 3rd. 19 were at Whittle Dene on 18th (SR), 13 at QE11 Country Park on 3rd (DM/STH/PJA/IFo) and 11 at Tyne Riverside (Newburn) on 11th (PRM). One to ten were recorded at Berwick North Shore, Big Waters, Chollerford, Elswick Wharf (Newcastle), Holywell Dene, Ladyburn Lake (Druridge), Low Newton Haven, Millenium Bridge (Newcastle), North Shields Fish Quay, Prestwick Carr, River Coquet (Rothbury), the River Tweed Estuary, Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay), Wark (North Tyne), and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Three adults of the continental *sinensis* race were at North Shields Fish Quay on 27th (SPP) while another was seen on the River Coquet at Warkworth on 8th (IR).

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Impressive numbers were offshore at Stag Rocks with ca.180 there on 21st (TRD). 20 were at Seahouses on 27th and ten at Holy Island on 23rd (TRD). The only other reports were of five in Spittal Bay (Berwick) on 9th and a single bird seen during a WeBS count at the River Tweed Estuary on 16th (MHu).

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

Birds were present throughout the month at Gosforth Park NR with a peak of three seen on 15th (NHSN/IK). The Swallow Pond individual seen in December remained until at least 10th (SPP).

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

The peak count in the Lindisfarne NNR area was five at Fenham Flats on 4th (JL). Up to four were noted at the reserve on five further dates. Elsewhere up to three were at Horton Burn (Cramlington) during the month (LAR/DM *et al.*) and singles at Bedlington, Beehive Flash (Earsdon), Cresswell Pond and Holywell Dene/Seaton Sluice area.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

The peak count was 14 at the River Tweed Estuary during a WeBS count on 16th (MHu). At Arcot Pond the maximum count during the month was five on 4th (LJM). One to four birds were seen at Berwick North Shore, Holywell Dene, Jesmond Dene, Killingworth Lake, Leazes Park (Newcastle), Low Newton Flash, Milkwell (Corbridge), in gardens of Otterburn Court (West Monkseaton), QE11 Country Park, Wark, West Hartford and Whittle Dene Reservoirs

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Widely reported this month with peak counts of six at East Chevington and five at Hauxley on 27th (IFo). Four was the monthly maximum at Airy Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield) on 3rd (IFo), East Chevington on 4th and 18th (STH/TH), Druridge Bay CP on 18th and on the River Wansbeck at Ashington on 19th and 20th (TB). One to three birds were at 15 other localities.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps Cristatus*

Two were at Whittle Dene on 13th (SR) and at Caistron, where noted as "very unusual in winter", on 17th (JD). Singles were seen at Widdrington Moor on 6th (JPD/MPF/AWS), offshore at Druridge on 17th (TF/JFa), and amongst a Scoter flock off Cocklawburn on 23rd and Cheswick on 27th (TRD).

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

One flew N at Seaton Sluice on 19th (SSWT). One was at Holy Island, offshore adjacent to the "Vicar's Garden" on 3rd (ADMc).

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

This month produced records from only two locations. The highest counts were of six feeding offshore at St Cuthbert's isle (Holy Island) on 17th (IK) and at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 21st (TRD). Up to four were also reported by other observers around Holy Island during the month (SR/AH/TRD) and up to two regularly offshore at Bamburgh (MH/AJR *et al.*).

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigrocollis*

All reports were of single birds, with many cards submitted for the individual present at East Chevington from 3rd-27th (TB/MSK/SLB/GMi *et al.*). Elsewhere, singletons were seen regularly through the month at Seahouses Harbour, Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) and Whitley Bay.



A Black-necked Grebe gets up close to Tim Dean
Seahouses Harbour on 3rd January

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Single birds were seen flying alongside the A1 at High Clifton Farm (Morpeth) on 20th (MH/AA), Derwent Reservoir (JPD/MPF/AWS) and Stagshaw on 21st (AM).

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

A ring-tail was seen at a confidential site in the South East throughout the month (PHH/IJ *et al.*) and other single ringtails were seen at two other confidential sites on 17th (MH) and 19th (PRM).

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

A single bird was seen in potential breeding area on 4th (IRD) and other single birds were noted near Grindon Lough on 26th (PRM) and near Wallsend on 27th (Dro).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Two birds were seen at Haughton Castle on 3rd (SW) and two different birds were seen in a Cramlington garden in ten minutes also on 3rd (STH). Single birds were at 19 sites during the Month.

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Eight birds were seen at Slaley Forest on 24th (JPD/ASW) and seven birds were seen at Harehope/Bewick Moor are on 17th (MH) and seven were also at Felton Lane on 24th (TB). Five birds were also noted in the Harthope Valley on 18th (JPD/ASW) and at Haughton Strother GPs (Humshaugh) on 29th (MR). Four birds were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 11th (STH), Whittle Dene on 13th (SR) and at Grindon Lough on 19th (PRM). One to three birds were seen at over 30 sites.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Up to three were heard or seen at Gosforth Park NR throughout the Month (NHSN) and up to three birds were at Swallow Pond on several dates (JPD/ASW). Two birds were seen at Cresswell Pond on several dates (ADM/DM/STH). Single birds were either seen or heard at Backworth on several dates (CGK/GPK), Big Waters, Blyth Estuary, Druridge Pools, East Chevington North Pool, Hadston, Prestwick Carr, QEII CP and Woodhorn Flash.

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

29 birds were at Druridge Bay CP on 18th (TB/DM/STH), 20 were at Killingworth Lake on 2nd (DM) and 17 were at Big Waters on 25th (GB), 14 were at Woodhorn Flash on 21st (AT), 13 were at Hauxley NWT on 16th (PCF) and 12 birds were at Haughton Strother GPs (Humshaugh) on 19th (MR). 11birds were at QEII CP on 18th (CDH). One to eight birds were at Arcot Pond, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Hauxley NWT, Holywell Pond, Hoppen Kiln Flash (Bradford Cairns), Jesmond Dene (Newcastle), Leazes Park (Newcastle), River Blyth Estuary and Wallington Hall.

Coot *Fulica atra*

Swallow Pond once again had the highest count which peaked at 183 birds on 5th (SPP *et al.*) and 179 were at QEII CP on 18th (CDH). Also 97 birds were at Killingworth Lake on 22nd (LJM), 44 were seen at Big Waters on 1st (GB *et al.*) and 30 birds were at East Chevington on 1st (TRD/JD). One to sixteen birds were also seen at Arcot Pond, Cocklawburn Pond, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Haughton Strother GPs (Humshaugh) and Leazes Park (Newcastle).

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

The WeBS count at Berwick North Shore totalled 124 on 13th (MHu). To the south, 70 were in Cullercoats Bay on 17th (MN), 66 at nearby St Mary's on 27th (ASJ), 50 at Low Newton flash on 8th (JMA) and 33 at Hauxley NWT on 27th (IFo). Apart from a further 28 at Low Newton Point on 8th (JMA) and 16 on the Tweed Estuary on 16th (MHu) it was single digit reports from a small number of locations which included the inland sites of Arcot Pond, Haughton Strother GP, Riding Mill (in display on 5th) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

Large numbers continued to winter at Newbiggin where 2,000 were noted on 7th (TRC). Wintering flocks elsewhere included 1,500 on Holy Island on 16th (IK) and 1,000 at Blyth Links on 29th (TB). Groups of 200-350 were also noted at Budle Bay, Grindon Lough, Low Newton flash, Prestwick Carr and St Mary's; 45-96 were logged at Bothal Pond, Cocklawburn, Druridge Lane, Hauxley NWT, Newcastle Town Moor and Scremerston Station, with 25 were seen at Hazlerigg. A male was giving a territorial call amid the snow on Otterburn Ranges on 24th (JL).

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

As usual Budle Bay attracted most reports with a high of 22 on 3rd (ASJ), though the Blyth Estuary also did well with 14 on 19th and ten on 28th (TRC). The WeBS count at Berwick North Shore produced eight on 13th (MHu) and seven were at Boulmer on 4th (RB/MB). Elsewhere, one to three were noted at Amble, Beadnell (Collith Bay), Low Newton, Newbiggin and the Tweed Estuary.

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

Wintering flocks grew in numbers from last month, with ca.900 at Druridge Pools on 27th the largest (EC/JSB), followed by 700 in Budle Bay on 3rd (ASJ) and 620 at Grindon Lough on 11th (PRM). Haughton Strother GP held 350 on 27th (MR), 170 passed N over Cramlington on 6th (STH) and 75 flew NW over nearby West Hartford on 4th (LJM). Groups of 100-150 were seen at Blyth (Laverock Hall), Blyth Links, Cocklawburn, the Coquet estuary, Derwent Reservoir, Pegswood and St Mary's Wetland, and 50 were noted at Cresswell Pond and Pegswood on two occasions. Smaller numbers were noted at six additional locations.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Ferguson's factory roof in Blyth Harbour held 109 roosting birds on 19th (LJM) and the WeBS count at Berwick North Shore totalled 64 on 13th (MHu). Some 26 were noted on the Blyth Estuary on 27th (IFo) and 22 was the peak at St Mary's on 27th (ASJ). One to five were noted five further coastal spots.

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Cocklawburn held 114 on 14th (MHu) and the WeBS count at Caistron numbered 98 on 17th (JD); 75 were on Blyth Links on 21st (TB) and 72 were just to the south on Whitley Bay Links on 27th (ASJ). The maximum at Cresswell Pond was 54 on 27th (IRD) and 14-23 were at Berwick north shore, Ellington, Low Newton flash, the Tweed Estuary and West Ord. One to five were seen elsewhere including an inland returnee at Grindon Lough on 26th (PRM).

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

A regular presence throughout the month at Holy Island Rocket Fields included 11 on 3rd (SR/AH) and nine at month end (IK). Two flew past the hide at Fenham-le-Moor on 18th (STH/DM) and singles were at Cresswell Pond on 17th (ADMc) and on the Blyth estuary on 27th (IFo).

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Single-figure reports were the norm this month and included eight in Budle Bay on 6th (TRD/JD) and at Berwick north shore on 13th (MHu), six at the Blyth Estuary, Cocklawburn and the Tweed Estuary and five from both Low Newton and the Holy Island causeway.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

The WeBS count at Berwick north shore realised 58 on 13th (MHu) and counts of ten came from Seahouses on 6th and St Mary's on 13th (TRD/JD). Six to nine were reported from the Amble, the Blyth Estuary, the Tweed Estuary and Whitley Bay (Rockcliffe) whilst six on Cresswell Pond on 1st was somewhat unusual for this site (TRD/JD). Low single-figure reports also came from a further eight typical coastal locations.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

A count of 120 in Budle Bay on 27th (TRD) was the highest by far, excluding the monthly Lindisfarne WeBS survey, and one to two were noted at Cresswell Pond, Low Newton and Newbiggin.

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

A lone wintering bird was seen at Cresswell Pond on 1st (TRD/JD), 3rd (TB/MSK/SLB/GMi) and 27th (IRD).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Berwick north shore held 82 on 13th (MHu), 65 were at St Mary's on 27th (ASJ), 50 at Newbiggin on 22nd (MN), 40 at Boulmer on 30th (TRD), 30 at Cresswell on 3rd (TB *et al.*) and 16 at Beadnell on 26th (IRD). Reports of two to five were also made at Blyth harbour, East Chevington, Low Newton and the Tweed Estuary, whilst at Cresswell Pond, two on 20th (TRD) and three on 27th (IRD) were somewhat untypical.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

A good wintering population on the Blyth Estuary provided counts of 302 on 19th (LJM) and 257 on 27th (IFo) whilst elsewhere totals included 80 at Boulmer on 30th (TRD), 60 at East Chevington on 20th (TRD), 56 at Cresswell Pond on 7th (TRC), 50 at Budle Bay on 6th (TRD/JD), 36 at Berwick north shore on 13th (MHu) and 20 at St Mary's on 13th (TRD/JD). Two to ten were also seen at Fenham-le-Moor, Hauxley NWT, Holywell Pond, Low Newton and the Tweed Estuary.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

Falling numbers at Stag Rocks saw a peak of ca.40 on 18th (BCFT) and 15 were found to the south at Low Newton on 21st (TRD). Six were in Cullercoats Bay on 17th (MN) and one to four were also seen at Berwick north shore, Newbiggin, St Mary's, Seahouses, Seaton Sluice and Whitley Bay (Rockcliffe) during the month.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Noted on three occasions at Whittle Dene Reservoirs with three on 13th the maximum (SR), otherwise one on a small stream at Bothal on 3rd was the only report (TB/MSK/SLB/GMi).

Redshank *Tringa tetanus*

Winter gatherings included 110 in a high-tide roost at Blakewell (Tweedmouth) on 2nd (MHu), 100 at Cullercoats Bay on 17th (MN), 82 on the Tweed Estuary on 16th (MHu) and 70 at St Mary's Island on 17th (KWY). Regular counts on the Seaton Sluice Estuary (Holywell Dene) produced a peak of 30 on 25th (RJP), 22 were at Whitley Bay (Rockcliffe) on 26th (IJ) and 17 were at Berwick north shore on 13th (MHu). A single was also seen at Bothal Pond on 18th (TD).

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyptes minimus*

Three reports from West Hartford involved peaks of two on 3rd and 6th (TB/MSK/STH *et al.*) and a single was noted on four occasions at Backworth (CGK/GPK). Further singles were also found at Bothal Pond on 18th (TD), Grindon Lough on 26th (PRM), Haughton Strother GP on 19th (MR) and St Mary's Wetland on 31st (TRC/DRW/IJ).

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Apart from two at Grindon Lough on 26th (PRM), it was a case of lone birds being reported from the following sites: Arcot Pond, Berwick (Castle Hill – resting in garden shrubbery), Dipton Mill, Gosforth Park NR, Holywell Dene, Newcastle city centre (found dead on pavement on 3rd), Prestwick Carr and Sweethope Lough.

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

St Mary's held 75 birds on 3rd (IJ), 42 was the monthly maximum at Haughton Strother GP on 6th (MR) and 40 were at the Long Nanny on 26th (IRD). Some 14-19 were found at Backworth, Druridge Pools and West Hartford, and 11 flushed from a snow-covered field at Derwent Reservoir on 31st was an 'unusual winter record' for here (IFo). Single-figure reports included nine at Cresswell Pond on 20th (TRD) and one to four at eight additional sites.

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

A juvenile flew N at Seaton Sluice on 19th (MHp/BB).

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

Two flew N on the last day of the month at Seaton Sluice (SSWT) and, on various dates throughout the month, singles were noted at Bamburgh, East Chevington (offshore) and Druridge Pools (AA/GB/TRD/JD/IJ/MH *et al.*)

Guillemot *Uria aalge*

A passage of 175 Auk *sp* in seven hours, the majority Guillemots, moved N at Seaton Sluice on 31st (SSWT) and at Seahouses, 20, in small groups, moved S from the Farnes on 27th (TRD); one or two were noted also at Bamburgh, Boulmer and Cocklawburn.

Razorbill *Alca torda*

During the month only five were recorded at Seaton Sluice, three moving N and two on the sea (SSWT). Three were at St Mary's Island on 3rd (IJ) with one or two at Bamburgh, Stag Rocks (TRD/JD).

Little Auk *Alle alle*

Continuing the good run of sightings this winter, nine flew N at Seaton Sluice on 31st with three moving N there on 19th (SSWT). Also on 31st, at nearby St Mary's Island, 20 were seen, 15 N and five S in eight hours sea-watching (JPD/MPF/AWS) and two single birds flew N at Bamburgh on 30th (MH).

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

Only three records of singles, comprising two at Bamburgh Stag Rocks on 3rd, seen by different observers, probably involving a single individual (GB/DM/LAR/ASJ) and one in the River Tweed Estuary on 16th (MHu).

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Counts were 540 in the gull roost on the River Tweed Estuary on 9th (MHu), 439 at the QEII CP Lake on 18th (CDH), 260 at Killingworth Lake on 2nd (DM) and smaller gatherings of 50-170 elsewhere at Arcot Pond, Bothal Pond, Exhibition Park, Jesmond Dene, Leazes Park, the River Tyne Estuary up to the North Shields Fish Quay (NSFQ) and Whitley Bay.

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

One record only, a single in the River Tweed Estuary, on 22nd (BWG).

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

The highest counts came as usual from the species' favoured winter haunt, Newbiggin, with a maximum 14 (13 adults/sub-adults, one first-winter) on 22nd (MN *et al.*) and three to six at Newbiggin, Spital Burn from 21st-27th (AT *et al.*). One to two elsewhere were at Castle Island, St Mary's Island, Swallow Pond and Widdrington Moor Lake (TRC/SPP/JPD/AWS/JL).

Common Gull *Larus canus*

A large roost at Kielder Water on 18th held around 2,800 (MD) and on 29th, a gathering of 800+ was recorded at Haughton Strother GP (MR). Three-figure counts of 120 came from Corbridge on 25th (RB/MB), a maximum this month of 109 on the River Tyne Estuary on 17th (DMT) and smaller flocks elsewhere of 30-60 were at Grindon Lough, QE II CP Lake and the River Tweed Estuary with up to 15 at eight other locations.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

Records of over-wintering adult(s), (probably relating to only one individual) came from two Cramlington locations, Northumberland Business Park on 1st-3rd (DM) and Northburn on 7th (LJM).

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

The highest count this month on the River Tyne Estuary, up to the NSFQ, was ca.915 on 6th (DMT) whilst 92 were at the QE II CP Lake on 18th (CDH) and 86 from a WeBS survey in the River Tweed Estuary on 16th (MHu). Smaller gatherings of 10-30 were at Berwick North Shore, Killingworth Lake, Leazes Park and Whitley Bay with one to four at five other localities. An adult bird of the Northern race, *ssp argentatus*, was at the NSFQ on 11th with a first-winter individual there on 11th and 23rd (DMT).

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoides*

First-winters were recorded at NSFQ on dates from 1st-17th including at least two, possibly three, individuals on 13th (DM/DMT/SPP *et al.*) and at the Black Middens on 27th (SPP) and St Mary's Island on 31st (JPD/AWS). A second-winter bird was at the NSFQ intermittently from 2nd-13th (DMT/SPP *et al.*) and adult bird(s) were at Swallow Pond on 6th, 16th-17th and 24th (JPD/AWS/GBK/SPP).



A first-winter Iceland Gull at North Shields FQ by Tim Dean on 13th January

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

A first-winter frequented the NSFQ on 1st-2nd (DM/SPP/DMT *et al.*) with a different first-winter there on 3rd-4th (DMT/IJ/PHH) and elsewhere, first-winters were at Holy Island on 26th and St Mary's Island on 31st (JPD/MPF/AWS). A possible Viking Gull – hybrid Glaucous/Herring - was at NSFQ on 13th (PHH).

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

The peak count on the Tyne Estuary up to the NSFQ this month was 157 (69 first-winter) on 18th (DMT *et al.*) whilst 32 were at Budle Bay on 3rd (DM *et al.*) and ten in the River Tweed Estuary on 16th (MHu). One to nine were at Berwick (North Shore), Grindon Lough, the River Tyne at Elswick Wharf and West Hartford.

Rock Dove *Columba livia*

Two small groups of 43 at Denton Park Shopping Centre on 23rd (PCF) and four at Rockliffe (Whitley Bay) on 26th (IJ).

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

A peak of 20 at Haughton Strother GP (Humshaugh) on 27th (MR) and reported regularly at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) with seven on 1st increasing to 15 on 31st (TB). Five were at Big Waters on 1st (GB), four at Jesmond Dene on 4th (MJCo) and one to three at eleven widespread locations including gardens at Old Hartley and South Gosforth.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

Large gatherings of 1,000 at Milkwell (Corbridge) on 30th (RB/MB), 200 at Linton Lane NWT on 15th (AT), 100 at Big Waters on 18th (GB), 74 flying in off sea at East Ord (Berwick) on 28th (MHu), 17 at Jesmond Dene on 25th and four at South Gosforth on the same date (MJCo).

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Just one report of 13 feeding on the roadside at A1068/A192 intersection on 2nd (LJM).

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Evergreen roosts in a Holy Island garden hosted three on 16th (IK), two inspected a nest box at Holystone (Wallsend) on 9th but didn't return (DRo) and two were at Widdrington Moor on 17th (IJ). Reports of singles from 15 widespread localities is encouraging for the season ahead assuming the weather remains benign.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

The established site at Shiremoor held two all month (CGK) and two were at Derwent Reservoir on three dates from 4th to 10th (IFo). Singles were at Druridge Lane on 3rd, Prestwick Carr on 6th and Stagshaw on 27th.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Three were at Holywell Dene on 13th (JPD/AWS) with two there on 3rd (IJ) and two males called at Sweethope Lough on 30th (PRM). Singles called all month at Earsdon Village and Rothbury (CGK/TRD/JD) with one perched daily at a garden nest box at Stamfordham (EC). Singles were seen or heard at Belford Moor, Bothal, Dinnington, Killingworth Lake, Humshaugh, Morpeth and Scotland Gate.

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

Two sightings of singles on 3rd at Felton Lane (TB/MSK/SLB/GMi) and Swallow Pond (JPD/MPF/AWS) with one to two birds heard around dusk at the latter location on 5th (SPP).

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

One to two birds hunted daily after dark at Prestwick Carr between 4th and 9th (PCF/STH) with two at Hartleyburn Common on 19th (SW) and one found by bird race teams in the dunes and being chased by young cattle at Hemscott Hill (Cresswell) on 3rd (CGK/MSH/MJC/AC&TB/MSK/SLB/GMi).

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

The only multiple sighting was two at Thrum Mill on 5th (JD) with possibly two at Gosforth Park NR and adjacent pool and Horton Burn (Cramlington) where singles were seen regularly (NHSN/LJM/DM/GB/LAR). Singles were also at Bedlington, Old Bridge (Berwick), Dilston (Corbridge), Holywell Dene, Jesmond Dene, Mitford, Morpeth, Seaton Sluice, Rivers Meet (Warden) and Wallsend Hall.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Present all month at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN/MJC), at Swallow Pond on 3rd, Devil's Water on 11th (CN), West Hartford and Holystone woods on 4th (JPD/AWS/IRD), Rothbury and Harthope Valley on 18th (TRD/JD/JPD/AWS).

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Six including two drumming birds were at Wallington on 17th (MJC), three at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 1st & 18th rose to five on 24th (TB) with two drumming and chasing at Valley Park (Cramlington) and St Nicholas Park (Gosforth). Two were also at Jesmond Dene, QEII CP and R. Wansbeck between Morpeth and Bothal with singles at seventeen other widespread localities.

Ring necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

Two flew over Heaton Park on 14th and 27th (TW) and one was at North Seaton on 3rd (ADM/RF/HG).

The photograph in the [December 2014](#) bulletin was by Jack Bucknall.

Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor*

The over-wintering bird at West Hartford was present all month being reported by numerous observers (LJM *et al.*). Another bird was found on 22nd in Scots Pines adjacent Tuthill Moss (Harwood Forest) (ADMc).

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Six birds were at Widdrington Moor on 3rd (IJ) and five birds were seen at the following locations:- Seaton Sluice dunes on 27th (ASJ) and Sweethope Lough on 30th (PRM). Four birds were also seen at Widdrington Moor Lake (STH/TB *et al.*) throughout the month and at Prestwick Carr on 24th (MN). Three birds were at West Hartford on 25th (LJM), Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 30th (PRM) and at Once Brewed on 31st (PRM). 61 records were received of one to two birds at 46 sites.



A Kestrel at Prestwick Carr
22nd January by Tim Dean

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Two birds were on the North Shore at Holy Island on 25th (SR/AH) and a female flew over the causeway at Holy Island on 23rd (TRD). An adult male was at a confidential site on 24th (MH) and other single birds were also noted at two inland sites on 27th and 30th (MR/PRM).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Two birds were seen at Fenham Flats on 3rd (CGK/MSH/MJC/AC) and on Holy Island on 16th (IK), a pair was at an inland site on 16th (MR). Single birds were seen at eight sites on or near the coast during the month and at two inland sites. A bird was opposite Newcastle Business Park on 21st (DM).

A gleaming Magpie

Gosforth NR

by Colin Bradshaw

Magpie *Pica pica*

A peak count of 34 at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 1st (DM), 16 at Prestwick Carr on 28th (PCF), seven at Jesmond Dene on 4th (MJCo) and four at Heaton Park on 12th (JMA) with one to two at South Gosforth, Holystone (Wallsend) and Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay).



Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

On 25th five were at Ellington (TB) with four at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN), three on feeders in a garden at Stamfordham all month (EC) at Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth) on 5th (STH) and Swallow Pond on 29th (JPD/AWS). Two were at Arcot Pond, Jesmond Dene and Northumberland Park (North Shields) all month with singles also at Big Waters, Caistron, Holywell Dene and Wylam.



A Jay at Wylam by Tim Dean on 22nd January

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

A roost flock of 80 was at Warkworth on 5th (JMA), 56 at Prestwick Carr on 17th (PCF), 11 at Jesmond Dene on 11th and three in the observer's garden at South Gosforth on 31st (MJCo).

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

Largest counts of 250 at Warenford on 8th, 150 at Warkworth, 100 at Cresswell Pond and Longhirst, all on 5th and 50 at Haydon Bridge on 24th (JMA) with 21 at Budle Bay on 3rd (DM/GB/LAR).

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

A pre-roost gathering of 22 at Morpeth Common on 27th (IRD), 21 at North Shields Fish Quay on 11th (DMT), 16 there on 7th, 15 at Low Newton Flash on 8th (JMA) and one to five at Jesmond Dene and South Gosforth.



A Carrion Crow at Seahouses
by Janet Dean on 7th January

Raven *Corvus corax*

Three were at Linhope Spout (Upper Breamish Valley) on 25th (TRD), two at Kylvie on 3rd (CGK/MSH/MJC/AC) and a pair at Wooler Common on 24th (JL). A first site record of one over Swallow Pond on 29th (JPD/AWS) with one over Holystone (Wallsend) on 20th (DRo) and singles also at Bowden Doors near Belford, Grindon Lough and Ross Sands.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

More than ten were at Swallow Pond on 29th with four there on 16th (SPP/JPD/AWS), five at North Seaton Colliery on 30th (PG), four at Jesmond Dene (MJCo) and at Devil's Water (CN) on 4th, three at Druridge Bay on 18th and Sweethope Lough on 30th (DM/STH/PRM). Two were at Milkwell (Corbridge), Holywell Dene, St Mary's Island, Prestwick Carr and Ross Village with singles at four other locations.

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Feeders at Gosforth Park attracted 30+ during the month (NHSN), and 13 on feeders at Colliersdean Caravan Park (Widdrington Moor) on 20th (MH/AA), ten at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 1st (DM), six in the observer's garden at South Gosforth on 31st and three in Jesmond Dene on 18th (MJCo).

Great Tit *Parus major*

At Prestwick Carr 11 visited feeders on 24th (PCF) with eight on feeders at Colliersdean Caravan Park (Widdrington Moor) on 20th (MH/AA), eight at Jesmond Dene on 25th (MJCo), six at the feeding station at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 1st (DM) with more than five singing at Gosforth Park NR on 25th (MJC) and three at South Gosforth on 14th (MJCo).

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

Four were at Jesmond Dene on 4th (MJCo), one to three in an Old Hartley garden during the month (RJP) with singles at South Gosforth, Grindon Lough and Wark (N.Tyne).

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

Feeding stations at Big Waters and Prestwick Carr attracted two regularly during the month (GB/PCF *et al.*) with two at Arcot Pond on 4th (STH) and East Cramlington NWT (LJM). Singles were also at Holywell Dene on 14th (RJP), Derwent Reservoir on 24th (IFo) and County Hall (Morpeth) on 29th (MJC).



A Willow Tit at Prestwick Carr
by Tim Dean on 22nd January

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

Two were at Scotch Gill Woods on 3rd (TB/MSK/SLB/GMi) and Mitford Village on 7th (ADMc) with singles regularly at the former site and at Rothbury (TRD/JD) with one at Whiteadder Water (Berwick) on 27th (TBr).

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Cramlington winter wheat fields attracted the largest counts with 28 at Beaconhill on 4th (STH) and 25 on 18th (DM). Elsewhere three birds sang at Marshall Meadows on 23rd and singles were at Cocklawburn, Cresswell, Holywell Dene and Lindisfarne NNR.

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

The largest gathering was of 22 at Tyne Green (Hexham) on 7th (AJH). Up to 12 visited a garden in Rothbury throughout the month and counts of ten came from Holywell Dene and Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay). Nine were at Horton Burn (Cramlington) on 5th, eight at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 13th, seven at Jesmond Dene on 4th and six at Derwent Reservoir on 3rd and at Rothbury (riverside) on 25th. Two to five were noted at a further 15 widespread inland localities.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Only two individuals were reported this month, with singles at Newcastle City Centre on 16th (PRM) and at Marden Estate (Tynemouth) on 22nd (ASJ).

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Two (male and female) regularly visited a feeding station at Jesmond during the month (IK). Two males were also seen regularly at Whitley Bay (ASJ) and likewise a male and female at Marden Estate (Tynemouth) (ASJ). A female at Northburn (Cramlington) on 14th was joined by a second from 18th, both birds remaining to the end of the month (LJM). Elsewhere, singles were noted at Corbridge on 16th, Cresswell Pond on 5th, Felton and Holywell Dene on 3rd, a South Gosforth garden on three dates, Tynemouth on 19th and 22nd and Warden on 31st.

Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus*

A party of 21 flew W, in a blizzard, over Chillingham Road (Heaton) on 21st, heading towards Heaton Park, from where there was no further sign (ADM).

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Eight were at Wallington Hall on 17th (MJC). Up to four were noted at Gosforth Park NR throughout and four were at Jesmond Dene on 25th. Two to three were at Humshaugh on 3rd-4th and two at Holywell Dene on 4th and Widdrington Moor on 20th. Singles were reported from a further 11 localities, including a 'singing' bird at Prudhoe on 29th.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Five were found at Wallington Hall on 17th (MJC). Elsewhere two were noted at Holystone (Wallsend), Holywell Pond, Prestwick Carr and Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth) and singles at a further 12 localities, including a Stamfordham garden. More unusual behaviour involved birds climbing a stucco wall at Newton Red House (Mitford) and picking food from lichens on gravestones at Simonburn.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Six between Wooler Common and Wester Tor on 30th included a bird at 440m a.s.l (MJC). One to two were reported from a further four localities.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

The regular roost at Holy Island Lough increased, after a decline in December, to 10,000 on 16th; it was also noted that the roost has been maintained for longer than usual this winter (IK). Elsewhere numbers were less impressive, with 250 at Big Waters on 1st and 100-150 at Christon Bank, Corbridge, Cresswell Pond and Haughton Strother (Humshaugh), the latter feeding with Fieldfares; 50 were also at Low Newton.



A Starling in Winter sunshine
Janet Dene
6th January
Seahouses

Rose-coloured Starling *Pastor roseus*

This early surprise find, albeit a rather dull individual, was in Prudhoe gardens from at least 18th until the end of the month (TF/JFa *et al.*)

**Dipper** *Cinclus cinclus*

Three were in the Harthope Valley on 18th and up to two at Hedgeley, Holywell Dene and Jesmond Dene during the month. Singles were also reported from Bedlington (Furnace Bridge), Blakehopeburnhaugh, Corbridge, Haughton Castle (North Tyne), Mitford, South Gosforth (Ouse Burn), Thrum Mill, Wark (North Tyne), Whiteadder Water (Berwick) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

The maximum count from a Corbridge garden was 15 on 17th (MR). A foraging flock of 13 was on 'the green' at Bamburgh on 30th, ten were at Linton Lane on 15th and seven at Corbridge (Milkwell) on 13th. Five were in the observer's garden at South Gosforth on 31st, three at Jesmond Dene on 4th and a male was in song at sunrise in Chapel House Estate on 17th.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

A large flock of 235 was at Haughton Strother (Humshaugh) on 21st (MR) and 300 were at nearby Keepersshield on 24th (SW). Other sizeable gatherings included 170 at West Ord on 5th, 150 at Corbridge (Milkwell) on 17th, 120 at Prestwick Carr on 17th, 112 at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 1st and 110 at Grindon Lough on 19th. Flocks of 50-80 were also reported from Angerton Steads, Chatton, East Holywell, Shadfen and Swallow Pond, with 30-46 at Big Waters, Uppertown (Simonburn) and West Allerdean. One to 25 were noted at a further nine localities.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Four were noted between the railway crossing and the tower hide at Fenham-le-Moor on 3rd (DM/GB/LAR). Singles were also reported from Boulmer on 4th, Holywell Dene on 3rd and in full song at Corbridge (Milkwell) from 14th-29th and Leazes Park on 19th.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

150-200 were at Humshaugh on 3rd-4th (SW). Counts of 85-90 came from Holystone (Wallsend) on 5th, Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 1st and Tarsset Burn on 26th, while 70 were at East Holywell on 25th and 50 at Angerton Steads and at Corbridge on 20th and 30th respectively. Smaller gatherings of 30-40 were reported from Big Waters, Bothal Pond, Cramlington (Beaconhill and Whitelea), Earsdon and Shadfen. One to 28 were noted at a further 15 localities.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Seven at Earsdon on 21st was the largest gathering. Five were at Lynemouth and Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 24th and 30th respectively and three at Tarsset Burn on 26th. Elsewhere were two at Budle Bay on 3rd and at Jesmond Dene on 4th with singles reported from Big Waters, Cocklawburn, Corbridge and Newcastle City Centre, where a singing male was noted at St Nicholas Cathedral on 8th.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

11 were at Prestwick Carr on 4th (PCF), six at Cocklawburn on 22nd, four at Ross on 18th, three at Jesmond Dene on 25th and singles at South Gosforth and St Mary's Island.

The photograph in the December 2014 bulletin was by Jack Bucknall.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

One remained at Sandy Bay (Newbiggin) from December 2014, to at least 27th (GB/AT/STH/ADM/LAR/DM) and another was at Amble (Pan Point) on 24th (TW).

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

Peak counts were as follows;

Site	Peak count	Date	Observer	Site	Peak count	Date	Observer
Coastal:				Lynemouth (Bewick Drift)	1	10th	TB
Cocklawburn	4 (2 pairs)	22nd	MHu	Hauxley NR	1	27th	IFo
Holy Island	4	25th	SR/AH	Hemscott Hill (Cresswell)	1	3rd	IJ
Bamburgh	3	3rd	ASJ	Wansbeck Estuary	1 (male)	3rd	DM/GB/LAR
Blyth (Gloucester Lodge Farm)	3	17th	LJM				
Druridge Pools	2	4th/24th	AT/TRD/JD				
East Chevington (Chevington Burn)	2 (a pair)	17th	TD	Inland:			
Low Newton (Church)	2 (a pair)	8th	JMA	West Hartford	4	17th	STH
Low Newton (Flash)	2 (a pair)	8th	JMA	Prestwick Carr	2 (a pair)	17th/24th	PCF/GB
St Mary's Island	2 (a pair)	25th	SPP	Hepburn Moor	1 (female)	24th	MH
Cresswell Pond	1	9th	TB				

Duncock *Prunella modularis*

There were only two reports this month with one to three birds visiting an Old Hartley garden and a single reported in a Gosforth garden during the month.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

A large flock of 80 at a roost at Cramlington High School on 27, with 32 noted in two hedgerow roosts at Chapel Park Estate on 25th(DM/MH). 22 also in Cramlington at the Old Library on 27th(DM). 20 were in Blyth, near Asda supermarket, on 10th (JMA).

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

The largest group this month was of 19 birds at a Corbridge garden on 12th (MR). Elsewhere, 12 at Lucker on 3rd, ten+ at Big Waters feeders, eight were at Cresswell and two at Ellington on New Year's Day (TD/JD), four at Holystone, Wallsend on 24th and three also at Corbridge, with two at Pegswood and Tynemouth during the month and a single on two dates at Wark.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Three in Jesmond Dene on 4th and two along the Horton Burn (Cramlington) on 20th were the only double-figure counts this month. Singles were seen at 23 further widespread localities during January, including two sites in Newcastle City Centre (DM).

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

A gathering of 24 at Morpeth Common pre-roost on 8th was the maximum count this month (IRD). Eight were noted at Druridge Lane on 24th (TB). Six at Berwick and a single inland at Derwent Reservoir were the only other reports.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

West Hartford (Cramlington) continued to support a feeding group, with varying numbers noted throughout the month, between 12 and 30 being seen by various observers. Birds noted inland, included eight + at Wooler Common/Wester Tor on 30th (MJC). Seven were noted at Fenham le Moor on 3rd. Five at Harehope/Bewick Moor on 17th(MH). Two seen at Colt Crag on 21st (MR) and singles at Padon Hill, Otterburn, Grindon Lough, Whittle Dene and Derwent Reservoir.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Five were at Low Newton on 21st, increasing to seven by 30th were the month's high counts (TRD/EC/JSB). Three were at Seahouses Harbour on 3rd (DM/GB/LAR). Two were at Stag Rocks Bamburgh, Hauxley, Newbiggin and Holy Island during the month and singles seen at six further coastal sites.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

38 + were seen at Grindon on 11th with ten remaining next day (PRM). The only other reports were of single birds at feeders at Big Waters, Rothbury, Holywell Dene, a Ridsdale garden and Wallington.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

24 at feeders on 2nd at Derwent Reservoir was the only sizeable gathering this month (IFo). Five were at Milkwell (Corbridge) and at Jesmond Dene during the month and three at Holywell Dene and in a Gosforth garden on 31st.

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Very well reported this month with flocks of 13 birds noted on 26th at Rothbury (ten males), and at Wark in the North Tyne Valley on 27th (TRD/PRM). 12 at Slaley on 24th (JPD/AS). Up to eight were attracted to an Old Hartley garden throughout the month and seven at Tyne Green (Hexham), Wallington and Plessey Woods. Six were seen at Barrowburn (Upper Coquetdale) on 6th, Swallow Pond on 29th and on two dates in Hexham. Five were also noted in gardens at Morpeth and again in Hexham. One to four were at 17 further widespread sites.

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

Poorly reported this month with the maximum number seen being seven at Beaconhill (Cramlington) on 3rd (STH). Elsewhere, One to four were at eight further sites.

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

There were only six records for January, with a flock of 120 at Holywell on 1st being the only large gathering (ASJ). 12 were seen at Big Waters on 1st, rising to 30 on 4th and 18 at Newbiggin on 24th (GB/STH). Eight were at Shadfen, four at Fenham le Moor and two at Holywell Dene during the month.

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*

The wintering Beal Point flock was seen again on 23rd, numbering 80 birds (TRD). Varying numbers noted at the regular Hemscott Hill, Druridge site throughout the month, with 20 - 60 counted on various dates. (TB/TRD *et al.*). 26 were seen at Fenham le Moor on 3rd (DM/GB/LAR). 18 at Cresswell Links on 24th was probably part of the Hemscott group (TB). Interestingly, one was seen on a hillside inland at Harehope on 17th (MH).

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis caberet*

Flocks of 30, 25 and 15+ watched at Derwent Reservoir, West Chevington and Humshaugh this month (IFo/TB/MR). Around ten birds were at Grindon on 19th (PRM). Elsewhere, one to five were at thirteen sites, including five on garden feeders in Gosforth Garden Village on 17th (MJC).

Common (Mealy) Redpoll *Carduelis flammea*

One was present on feeders at Gosforth Garden Village on 17th and 24th (MJC).

Common Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

23 were at Sweethope on 30th (PRM) and 12 were noted at Bakethin on 18th, with a pair displaying (MD). Two were at Blakehopeburnhaugh and Colt Crag in the month and interestingly, at the Taret Burn, a pair was watched on the wall of the Black Middens Bastle on 26th(MH). A single female seen at Catcleugh on 14th.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Large flocks of 66, 65, and 60 were noted at East Ord, Berwick, Holywell and Hepburn Steads during January (Mhu/ASJ/MH). 50 were at Village Road (Cramlington) on 8th (LJM). In Jesmond Dene on 28th, around 30 were seen (ADM). 24 were at Haughton Strother on 3rd (MR), 21 and 20 were at Holystone, Wallsend on 24th and at Beaconhill (Cramlington) on 4th. Elsewhere, one to 15 were at eleven further sites.

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

A good count of 100+ was made at Haughton Strother G.P on 12th (MR). 50 noted in Harthope Valley on 18th (JPD/AS/TD) and 30 were at Big Waters on 1st (GB), with 20+ at Wooler Common on 24th (MJC). 15 + at County Hall (Morpeth) on 29th. One to eight were at six further localities, including Leazes Park (Newcastle).

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Some good counts this month. 30 were observed at Boulmer on 4th and a minimum of 28 at Low Steads (Longhoughton) on 30th (RB/MB/TRD). 25 watched at Cambois on 10th (PHH). The well-watched flock at North Blyth again peaked at 19 birds on various dates throughout the month (AA/MH/ASJ). Also at the coast, one at Stag Rocks on 3rd and two at St. Mary's on 4th and inland a pair was seen on the Otterburn Ranges on 24th (JL).



A Snow Bunting from the Boulmer flock
30th January by Tim Dean

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

An encouraging increase in sightings this month, with peak counts in the county in the last week of the month being 33 at Holywell, 14 in gorse at Wooler, 12 at field feeders at Boulmer and ten at Cresswell and ten attracted to a Corbridge garden. (ASJ/MH/EC/JSB/TB/MR). Elsewhere, one to ten were at nine further sites, including ten at Beaconhill (Cramlington) (STH).

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Seven were at Holywell on 1st and six at Gosforth Park throughout the month and at Cocklawburn on 27th (ASJ/NHSN/MHu). Five were at Derwent Reservoir on 22nd(IfO) and one to three at seven other sites within the county, including Sweethope.

ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN

Escapes

Bar-headed Goose *Anser indicus*

Two were at East Chevington from 11th to 18th (JPD / AWS / TB).

Harris's Hawk *Parabuteo unicinctus*

The individual seen last month at Swallow Pond was seen again there on 15th and 16th (JPD / AS/ SPP). Presumably the same individual was nearby at Jesmond Dene on 24th (MJCo)

Hybrids

Aythya hybrid *Aythya sp*

The hybrid at Killingworth lake was noted again on 2nd (GB). The exact parentage is uncertain but appears Scaup-like.

Tufted Duck x Pochard *Aythya fuligula x Aythya ferina*

One was present at Holywell Pond on 23rd (SPP).

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

An interesting first-winter hybrid was noted at North Shields Fish Quay from at least 2nd to 13th (SPP / DMT / TRD / JD). These two species hybridise in Greenland and Iceland where they are known as 'Viking' Gulls.

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Berwick Wildlife Group, Natural History Society of Northumbria, NTBC Field Trip (BCFT), Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

Apologies for any accidental omissions

BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION

This bulletin was compiled by Graeme Bowman (Mute Swan to Ruddy Duck), Lindsay McDougall (Red Grouse to Black-necked Grebe), Trevor Blake (Honey-buzzard to Crane), Steve Holliday (Avocet to Godwit) Ian Forsyth (Turnstone to Skua), Eddie Crabtree (Puffin to Great Black-backed Gull), Tim Dean (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), Alan Jack (Dunnock to Corn Bunting), Dan Turner (WeBS Coastal Counts) and Steve Holliday (WeBS Inland Counts).

Thanks to David Sanders of NNBC for providing data.

Proof reading was by Mike Smith.

Edited by Steve Barrett NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com

Mail distribution by Paul Stewart.

RECORD SUBMISSION

Please email ntbcorg@gmail.com for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and grid references: The use of standard location names and the include grid references as this 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.

Could club members ensure they to submit records direct to NTBC rather than just Birdtrack. There may be an assumption by some members this happens automatically. We do not want to miss records.

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

It is preferable if you re-size your photos before sending and a suggested size is 640 x 480 pixels. Please ensure you include the following information with your submissions: name, species, date taken, locality.

Photographs will not be used elsewhere without the photographer's permission.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual membership costs £10 for a junior, £30 for an individual, and £32 for a family. For membership enquiries please contact ntbc@jobentley.plus.com

Subscriptions were due from 1st October. Members are asked to check that standing orders have been paid.

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. Please submit any new content for the website to the main club email address.

NTBC SIGHTINGS PAGE

The Sightings Page contains current reports by members. Access is from the NTBC website and an email notification is available for new postings.

Members need to submit a request to be added to the website, specifying the email address they wish to post from before they can submit sightings to ntbcorg@gmail.com

BIRDS IN NORTHUMBRIA 2013

BIN 2013 distribution started at the Indoor Meeting in February. The Club are hand-delivering as many copies as possible to reduce postal costs. You should get your copy soon.

BIRDS IN NORTHUMBRIA 2014 - a request for photographs

Photographs are always welcome for consideration. All members are free to submit images (taken within the county during 2014) to the editor.

Please send as jpeg image attachments to one or more emails, or copy to a disc and send to the address below. Larger files are preferred.

Mike Richardson
49 Crofts Ave
CORBRIDGE
Northumberland
NE45 5LY

Email: mike@49crofts.entadsl.com

SEATON SLUICE WATCH TOWER

New keys are required for access. Keys can be collected at indoor meetings or email ntbcorg@gmail.com

Keys are available for £5 for new holders and existing key-holders can exchange keys for £4.

BUTTERFLIES OF NORTH EAST ENGLAND

This is a new regional atlas of the history and current state of each of our regular 33 species. Each species account is illustrated with photographs, line drawings, maps and graphs. There are other sections discussing changes in distribution, the future and a section on 17 extinct and vagrant species. (108 pages in full colour, 17½ x 24½ cm). I will have copies available at £5 at the March club meeting.

If you would like a copy by post please send a cheque for £6.60 payable to 'Butterfly Conservation North East England Branch' to:

Roger Norman, 1 Prestwick Gardens, Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 3DN, tel 0191 285 8314

OUTSTANDING DESCRIPTIONS

Tim Dean, the County Recorder, has issued the attached spreadsheets of Outstanding Descriptions required for 2014.

These descriptions are essential in order for them to be included in 'Birds in Northumbria 2014'.

Observers are reminded to document their sightings.

WHOOOPER and BEWICK'S SWANS

Census in Northumberland, 17th-18th January 2015

The latest [International Swan Census](#) took place in January 2015. Overall, the census is organised by the [Wetlands International / IUCN SSC Swan Specialist Group](#), whilst the Wildfowl and Wetland Trust (WWT) coordinates the British, Irish and Icelandic surveys. The priority count dates were arranged to match with the usual monthly Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) counts taking place and steps were taken to encourage information from all sources across the county; e.g. notices in the Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club (NTBC) monthly Bulletins and website, plus a series of targeted emails. I'm very grateful for all the information and assistance provided and the following table summarises the findings. Habitat information and the birds' activities (feeding, roosting etc) were also gathered and included on recording forms for each location.

Site	Whooper	Bewick's	Observers & Survey Date
Amble Braid (fields opposite)	23 including Broods 1, 1		Richard Poyer (18th)
Angerton Lake	1 adult		Keith Buchanan (19th)
Fenham-le-Moor	34 including Broods 3, 2, 2, 2		Steve Holliday & Dee McKeown (18th)
Greenlee Lough	1 adult		Mike Smith (13th)
Newton Pool	6 adults	1 adult	Kevin Redgrave (18th)
Rayburn Lake	5 including Brood 3		Keith Buchanan (18th)
West Ord	26 including Broods 3, 2, 2, 1		Malcolm Hutcheson (18th)
Whittle Dene Reservoirs	4 adults		Steve Rippon (18th)
TOTALS	100 birds including 22 young (22%)	1 adult	

NB Another semi-feral adult Whooper Swan was also present in the Berwick area during the winter.

The International wild swan survey has been undertaken on a 5-yearly basis on a number of occasions in the past and the total of 100 Whooper Swans is easily the poorest showing on record. Although some 58 Whooper Swans were noted at Horncliffe on the 25th (i.e. outside the survey dates) these birds may have included some of those in the table above and thus the 100 bird total for the survey weekend (bar one on the 13th) is probably a fair reflection of the current total wintering in Northumberland.

A comparison with previous 5-yearly Whooper Swan counts is as follows:

Year (January)	Total number of Whooper Swans	Comments
2015	100 (survey)	See above
2010	100 (survey) ca.160 max (NTBC records)	The formal survey indicated 100 birds in 5 flocks but the detailed breakdown is unavailable (see <i>Wildfowl</i> (2012) 62: 73–96). NTBC: The monthly WeBS count for January numbered a meagre 45 birds, whereas ad hoc records suggest at best a total of ca.160 (Ellington-Linton-QEII CP 61, Druridge Bay CP 40, Fenham Flats 34, Aln estuary 10 plus single figures at 6 sites (say 18) = 163)
2005	454 (survey) ca.400-500 (NTBC records)	The formal survey indicated 454 in 10 flocks but the detailed breakdown is unavailable (see <i>Wildfowl</i> (2009) 59: 17–40). NTBC: Monthly peaks at 7 widespread county locations totalled 514 birds (see species account in <i>Birds in Northumbria 2005</i> p.20) however this included 266 at Norham on 30th when only 102 had been present on 15th. A further 60 were noted at Hartburn on the 8th but not included in the 514 total.
2000	366 (survey)	Included 57 young (16.8%) and the total of 366 represented around 7%-8% of the wintering GB population (see International Whooper and Bewick's Swan Census by Roger Norman in <i>Birds in Northumbria 2000</i> p.145)

Acknowledgements: Many thanks to all those who either provided information or took part in the counts. I am also very grateful to Roger Norman and Paul Massey for reviewing a draft of this note and making several helpful comments.

Steve Holliday
Local Organiser for Northumberland



Two Greenland Whitefronts
at Warkworth Lane on 1st January
by Tim Dean

COASTAL WEBS COUNTS: NORTH THUMBERLAND

January 2015

Site	Berwick North Shore (including Little Beach)		Berwick Little Beach		Tweed Estuary		Spittal - Cocklawburn		(including Budle Bay)		Budle Pt - Seahouses		Seahouses - Beadnell		Beadnell - Howick		Howick - Boulmer		Alyn Estuary		Alnmouth South		Coquet Estuary		Amble - Chevington		Cresswell - Newbiggin		Newbiggin - Cambois		Blyth Estuary		Blyth KVB		St Mary's Island		Whitley Bay - Tynemouth		Tyne North Pier - Fish Quay		East Howdon, (north bank only)		Redeough - Scotswood Bridge, (north bank)		Scotswood - Newburn Bridge, (north bank)	
	MHu	TOTAL	MHu	MHu	MHu	AC	AC	RP	MLC	KR	JAR	TAC	RP	RP	TW	MGA	RC	LJM	KVB	SP	DMT	DMT	PF	PF	DMT	DMT	SP	SP	MK	MK	SP	SP	DMT	DMT	PF	PF	DMT	DMT	PF	PF						
Red-throated Diver	13	18	13	16	14	17,18	18	17	5	20	15,16	19	19	24	24	17	21	19	16	20	18	23	25	18	25																					
Black-throated Diver					6	1		1																																						
Little Grebe																																														
Slavonian Grebe																																														
Black-necked Grebe																																														
Comorant																																														
Shag																																														
Grey Heron																																														
Mute Swan																																														
Pink-footed Goose																																														
Greylag Goose																																														
Canada Goose																																														
Barnacle Goose																																														
Dark-bellied Brent Goose																																														
Light-bellied Brent Goose																																														
Shelduck																																														
Wigeon																																														
Gadwall																																														
Teal																																														
Mallard																																														
Pintail																																														
Shoveler																																														
Pochard																																														
Tufted Duck																																														
Eider																																														
Long-tailed Duck																																														
Common Scoter																																														
Goldeneye																																														
Red-breasted Merganser																																														
Gosander																																														
Moorhen																																														
Coot																																														
Oystercatcher																																														
Ringed Plover																																														
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Grey Plover																																														
Lapwing																																														
Knot																																														
Sanderling																																														
Purple Sandpiper																																														
Dunlin																																														
Snipe																																														
Black-tailed Godwit																																														
Bar-tailed Godwit																																														
Culwren																																														
Redshank																																														
Turnstone																																														
Black-headed Gull																																														
Common Gull																																														
Lesser Black-backed Gull																																														
Herring Gull																																														
Great Black-backed Gull																																														
Kittiwake																																														
Mediterranean Gull																																														
Kingfisher																																														
ADDITIONAL SPECIES																																														
Little Egret																																														
Water Rail																																														
TOTALS - WILDFOWL																																														
- WADERS																																														
- GULLS & TERNS																																														

RECORDS OUTSTANDING 2014

Species	A/S/Nu	Place	Date 1	Date 2	Obs	Comments
Tundra Bean Goose	3	Alnmouth	24/01/14	26/01/14	TF / JFa	
Tundra Bean Goose	1	Grindon Lough	05/05/14		PRM	
Tundra Bean Goose	2	Grindon Lough	18/11/14	23/11/14	PRM / AJR	
Tundra Bean Goose	1	Seaton Sluice	22/11/14		SSWT	
Tundra Bean Goose	3	High Newton	23/11/14	03/12/14	GW et al	
Bean Goose	2	Holywell Pond	30/11/14		?	No observer details
Tundra Bean Goose	1	Hemscott Hill, Cresswell	06/12/14	16/12/14	?	Phone contact details possible
Snow Goose	2	Stobswood	22/09/14		JC	
Snow Goose	1	Beal Pt	24/09/14		AC / GW	
Red-breasted Goose	1	Farne Islands / Warkworth / Cres	08/06/14		FIW / NFO	Unknown Origin (presumed escape)
Red-breasted Goose	1	Hauxley	09/06/14	12/06/14	? / TRD/JD et al	Unknown Origin (presumed escape)
Egyptian Goose	1	Hauxley	01/11/14	08/11/14	HRS	
Ruddy Shelduck	2	Gosforth Park	06/07/14		NHSN	
Ruddy Shelduck	2	Yarrow Slake, Berwick	09/07/14		MHu	
Ruddy Shelduck	2	Cresswell Pond / East Chevingt	11/07/14		IF	
Green-winged Teal	M	Big Waters	05/02/14	02/03/14	GB et al	
Green-winged Teal	M	East Stobswood Pool	12/04/14	16/04/14	IJ et al	
Ferruginous Duck	M	Gosforth Park	06/04/14	09/04/14	Dbo / Lbo	
Ferruginous Duck	M	Exhibition Park, Newcastle	24/09/14		DHWB	
King Eider	F	North Blyth	06/11/14		TCL	possible
Fea's Petrel	1	Newbiggin	21/09/14		JM / GB et al	
Fea's Petrel	1	Snab Pt, Cresswell	21/09/14		IK / MW et al	
Fea's Petrel	1	Druridge	21/09/14		IDR	
Fea's Petrel	1	Farne Islands	21/09/14		FIW	
Cory's Shearwater	1	Annstead	20/08/14		DF	
Cory's Shearwater	1	Newbiggin	20/08/14		PHH	
Cory's / Great Shearwater	1	Tynemouth	22/08/14		MK	
Cory's Shearwater	1	Brownsman, Farne Islands	24/08/14		FIW	
Cory's / Great Shearwater	1	Snab Pt, Cresswell	24/08/14		?	No observer details
Cory's Shearwater	1	Newbiggin	25/08/14		Jsw	
Cory's Shearwater	1	Seaton Sluice	14/09/14		RD	
Great Shearwater	1	Snab Pt, Cresswell	19/08/14		BB/ADM et al	
Great Shearwater	1	Farne Islands	19/08/14		FIW	
Great Shearwater	1	St Mary's	20/08/14		Jbu / DH / BB et al	

Great Shearwater	1	Farne Islands	21/09/14	FIW	
Balearic Shearwater	1	St Mary's	19/08/14	?	Birdguides
Balearic Shearwater	1	Newbiggin	21/08/14	AT	
Balearic Shearwater	1	Hauxley	26/08/14	?	Blog details
Balearic Shearwater	1	Farne Islands	17/09/14	FIW	
Balearic Shearwater	1	St Mary's	04/10/14	JPD / MPF / AS / TG	
Leach's Petrel	2	Inner Farne, Farne Islands	22/07/14	01/08/14	FIW
Great White Egret	1	Arcot Pond	09/04/14	JM	
Great White Egret	1	Long Nanny, Newton	19/05/14	IDR / GW et al	
Great White Egret	1	Foxton	22/05/14	TAC	
Great White Egret	2	Hauxley	12/06/14	HG	
Great White Egret	1	Beadnell Bay	14/06/14	?	No observer details
Great White Egret	1	Alnmouth	31/07/14	GT	
Great White Egret	1	Prestwick Carr	01/09/14	TRC / PCF / ADMc et al	
Great White Egret	1	Newton Pool	05/09/14	Long Nanny wardens	
Great White Egret	1	Alnmouth	11/09/14	TAC	
White Stork	1	Cullercoats	02/03/14	?	Birdnet
Glossy Ibis	1	North Shields / Tynemouth	19/02/14	24/02/14	ND et al
Honey-buzzard	1	Dudley	14/05/14	CP	Unconfirmed
Honey-buzzard	1	Cramlington	26/08/14	FG	
Goshawk	1	Budle Bay	15/12/14	JDL	Coastal
Rough-legged Buzzard	Juv	Allenbanks	01/11/14	PRM	
Rough-legged Buzzard	Juv	Ingram Valley	22/11/14	ASJ	
Rough-legged Buzzard	Juv	Widdrington	01/12/14	JC	reported
Rough-legged Buzzard	Juv	Swinhoe	28/12/14	JPL	
Corncrake	1	Beal	09/07/14	10/07/14	GM
Corncrake	1	Farne Islands	14/09/14	FIW	
Crane	1	Emmanuel Head, Holy Island	07/02/14	JDL	
Crane	2	North Sunderland	11/03/14	NW	
Crane	1	East Chevington	14/03/14	per ADMc	Unconfirmed
Crane	1	Bothal Pond	22/03/14	TAC	
Crane	1	Felton	28/03/14	GW	
Crane	1	Newbiggin	29/04/14	AT	Heard only
Crane	1	Beal	01/05/14	?	Email contact details
Crane	1	Corbridge	13/05/14	MR	
Crane	1	Stonehaugh	22/05/14	Murfin	
Dotterel	1	Long Nanny, Newton	28/04/14	GR	
Dotterel	1	Annstead	26/09/14	Dsh	
Temminck's Stint	1	Lynemouth Flash	07/05/14	TB	

Temminck's Stint	1	Derwent Res	26/06/14	03/07/14	IFo et al	Three from 13 th to Two juv up to 25 th
Temminck's Stint	1	Newton flash	11/07/14	14/07/14	GW et al	
Temminck's Stint	1	Rocket Field, Holy Island	09/08/14		BG	
Pectoral Sandpiper	1	Hoppen Kiln Flash	06/05/14	10/05/14	RB / GPK et al	No observer details
Pectoral Sandpiper	1	North Charlton	27/08/14	30/08/14	AH et al	
Pectoral Sandpiper	3	Grindon Lough	07/09/14	25/09/14	PRM / AA et al	
Grey Phalarope	1	Alnmouth	15/02/14		TAC	No observer details
Grey Phalarope	1	Farne Islands	15/10/14		FIW	
Grey Phalarope	1	St Mary's	05/11/14		JPD	
Grey Phalarope	1	Blyth	05/11/14		?	probable
Grey Phalarope	1	Boulmer	06/11/14	07/11/14	TAC	
Grey Phalarope	1	Seahouses	09/11/14		RJ	
Grey Phalarope	2	Farne Islands	22/11/14		AD	No observer details
Grey Phalarope	1	St Mary's	24/11/14		AH	
Grey Phalarope	1	St Mary's	02/12/14		JPD	
Marsh Sandpiper	1	Newton flash	09/09/14		JPL	No observer details
Long-tailed Skua	1	Farne Islands	15/06/14		FIW	
Long-tailed Skua	1	Newbiggin	15/06/14		ASH	
Long-tailed Skua	3	Tynemouth	26/08/14		SPP	No observer details
Long-tailed Skua	1	St Mary's Island	15/09/14		?	
Long-tailed Skua	2 Juv	Seaton Sluice	15/09/14		Mhp	
Long-tailed Skua	2	St Mary's Island	21/09/14		JPD	No observer details
Long-tailed Skua	1	Newbiggin	21/09/14		Jbu	
Long-tailed Skua	1	Tynemouth	24/09/14		CB	
Long-tailed Skua	Juv	Seaton Sluice	13/10/14		BB	No observer details
Long-tailed Skua	2	St Mary's Island	14/10/14		Arbery	
Long-tailed Skua	1	Newbiggin	14/10/14		DD	
Long-tailed Skua	Juv	Annstead	04/11/14		?	No observer details
Black Guillemot	1	Berwick	09/01/14		MHu	
Bridled Tern	1	Inner Farne, Farne Islands	20/06/14	12/07/14	FIW	
White-winged Black Tern	Ad	Long Nanny, Newton	27/05/14		CR	No observer details
Sabine's Gull	1	Snab Pt, Cresswell	29/01/14		PRM	
Sabine's Gull	Ad	Newbiggin	21/09/14		DD / GB / IF et al	
Sabine's Gull	Ad	Druridge	21/09/14		IDR	No observer details
Sabine's Gull	2 Juv	St Mary's Island	24/09/14		JPD / MPF	
Sabine's Gull	Juv	Seaton Sluice	24/09/14		BB	
Sabine's Gull	Juv	Newbiggin	25/09/14		PRM	No observer details
Bonaparte's Gull	Ad	Inner Farne , Farne Islands	23/11/14		FIW	
Yellow-legged Gull	Ad	Derwent Res	21/07/14		DB	

Yellow-legged Gull	Ad	Castle Island	21/08/14	GB	probable
Yellow-legged Gull	1 st W	Elswick	26/12/14	27/12/14 DA	
Yellow-legged Gull	Ad	North Shields Fish Quay	26/12/14	?	No observer details
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	1	Corbridge	13/12/14	MR	
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	1	Central Northumberland	April 14	PRM	
Hobby	1	Swallow Pond	19/05/14	SPP	
Hobby	1	Ponteland	29/05/14	MRS	
Hobby	1	Simonside	31/05/14	ASJ	
Hobby	1	Gosforth Park	01/06/14	30/06/14 NHSN / ASJ et al	
Hobby	1	Druridge Pools	03/06/14	TRC	
Hobby	1	Ellington	15/07/14	TB	
Hobby	Ad	Druridge	02/08/14	TD	
Hobby	1	Warkworth	03/08/14	JC	
Hobby	1 st S	Ellingham	07/09/14	JPD/MPF/AWS	
Golden Oriole	1	Farne Islands	17/09/14	FIW	
Bearded Tit	5	Holy Island	11/10/14	ASJ	
Bearded Tit	2	East Chevington	09/11/14	TB	
Greenish Warbler	M	Newbiggin	29/05/14	JGS / SJM	
Greenish Warbler	1	Chare Ends, Holy Island	14/09/14	19/09/14 SS/ JWR et al	
Yellow-browed Warbler	1	Longbenton	17/10/14	ADM	inland
Yellow-browed Warbler	1	Gosforth	22/10/14	?	inland. Email contact details
Dusky Warbler	1	Brownsman, Farne Islands	30/10/14	01/11/14 FIW	
Siberian Chiffchaff	1	Holy Island village	10/11/14	IK	
Siberian Chiffchaff	1	Druridge Pools	23/11/14	JPD / MPF / AS	
Siberian Chiffchaff	1	Cresswell Pond	30/11/14	?	Blog details
Willow Warbler	1	Fenham le Moor	15/12/14	JDL	Mid-winter !
Barred Warbler	1	Cambois	06/09/14	DTE	
Barred Warbler	2	Inner Farne, Farne Islands	06/09/14	08/09/14 FIW	
Barred Warbler	2	Crooked Lonnen, Holy Island	07/09/14	AH /SR/JPD/MPF	
Barred Warbler	1	Farne Islands	19/09/14	FIW	
Barred Warbler	1	Hartley	20/09/14	?	probable. Email contact details
Barred Warbler	1	Straight Lonnen, Holy Island	05/10/14	EB	
Barred Warbler	1	Hauxley	27/10/14	?	Phone contact details
Barred Warbler	2 1 st W	Holy Island	01/11/14	02/11/14 Mwe	2 on 1 st only
Siberian Lesser Whitethroat	1	Alnmouth	06/09/14	PRM	
Icterine Warbler	1	Vicar's Garden, Holy Island	17/09/14	TF	probable
Blyth's Reed Warbler	1	Cresswell Pond	13/09/14	EB	possible
Rose-coloured Starling	1 st W	Prudhoe	Dec 14	RT	
Red-breasted Flycatcher	1	Farne Islands	27/05/14	FIW	

Red-breasted Flycatcher	1	Druridge	14/09/14	15/09/14	IDR et al	
Red-breasted Flycatcher	2	Farne Islands	14/09/14	20/09/14	FIW	
Red-breasted Flycatcher	1	Inner Farne , Farne Islands	20/09/14		IRD	
Citrine Wagtail	1	Grindon Lough	09/08/14		PRM	Two on 14 th only
Citrine Wagtail	1	Brownsman, Farne Islands	27/08/14	28/08/14	FIW	
White Wagtail	1	Cresswell Pond	06/09/14		IRD	
White Wagtail	3	Whittle Dene Res	12/09/14		SR	
Olive-backed Pipit	1	Brownsman, Farne Islands	15/10/14	18/10/14	FIW	
Red-throated Pipit	1	Staple Island , Farne Islands	20/05/14		FIW	
Common Rosefinch	2	Farne Islands	17/09/14	19/09/14	FIW	Two on 17 th only
Arctic Redpoll	1	East Chevington	03/04/14		IRD	
Ortolan Bunting	1	Brownsman, Farne Islands	11/09/14		FIW	
Rustic Bunting	1	Brownsman, Farne Islands	15/09/14	19/09/14	FIW	
Little Bunting	1	Brownsman, Farne Islands	14/09/14	19/09/14	FIW	
Little Bunting	1	Inner Farne, Farne Islands	16/09/14	19/09/14	FIW	
Corn Bunting	1	Hemscott Hill	09/06/14		AT	

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2015 No 2

MONTHLY SUMMARY – FEBRUARY

2nd April 2015



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COMMITTEE NEWS

Eight years of work has culminated in the delivery of the NTBC Northumbria Bird Atlas. The committee wish to thank all who have helped produce this remarkable work. In particular grateful thanks are due to Tim Dean and his Atlas team.

CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Bean Goose

Greenland White-fronted Goose

European White-fronted Goose

Ross's Goose

Pintail

Scaup

Black Scoter

Velvet Scoter

Goldeneye

Red-throated Diver

Great White Egret

Bittern

Red-necked Grebe

Black-necked Grebe

Pomarine Skua

Great Skua

Black Guillemot

Little Auk

Waxwing

Single at Hauxley on 26th and 27th.

13 at Big Waters from 8th onwards. Seven at Warkworth Lane.

Single at Warkworth Lane on 9th.

Single still at West Stobswood.

193 at Fenham Flats on 3rd.

Singles at East Chevington and Haughton Strother GP.

The drake remained all month in Cheswick area.

Only singles reported at five sites.

WEBS count at Tweed Estuary of 184 on 5th.

78 in Druridge Bay on 7th.

One circled Cresswell Pond briefly on 6th.

Up to three at Gosforth Park and the popular bird at Swallow Pond.

Only one reported was at Holy Island on 10th.

Singles still at Bamburgh, Cheswick and East Chevington.

Another winter sighting on 5th at Seaton Sluice.

Single on 3rd at Seaton Sluice.

One off Emmanuel Head, Holy Island on 27th.

Large passage on 1st with 146 past Newbiggin.

Few seen with four at Haughton Strother GP and two at Morpeth.



A female Eider in Blyth Harbour by Alan Jack
one of the species featured in the NTBC Atlas.

INDOOR MEETINGS

NTBC indoor meetings are held at Northern Rugby Club, McCracken Park, Great North Road, Newcastle, NE3 2DT starting at 7.00pm and generally finish between 9.00pm-9.30pm.

The next meeting of the 2014-2015 season is;

ATLAS LAUNCH

7pm on Thursday April 9th at Northern Rugby Club, McCracken Park, Great North Road, Newcastle, NE3 2DT

This meeting is open to everyone who helped with the Atlas so please come along and get your copy. A memorable night is guaranteed.

The Atlas will be on sale at the launch at £25 a copy. If you are unable to collect the book on the night stocks will be held by members of the committee.

A buffet (free) and a bar (not free) will be provided.

A highlight of the evening will be guest speaker and NTBC member Adrian Pitches who will talk on - "**Tibet - birding the roof of the world**".

FIELD TRIPS

April 12th 2015 **Langholm for Harriers**

May 17th 2015 **Sidwood for new members**

Any members who are interested in any of the above field trips please email Steve Anderson seaswan@btinternet.com

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 2013 page 234.

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.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

At Ellington, four flew S on 22nd and two S on 25th (TB). Peak concentrations were 93 at QEII CP Lake on 7th (CDH), 79 at Capheaton on 15th (STE), 75 at Killingworth Lake on 4th (LJM), 23-28 at Big Waters (GB), the Tweed Estuary (MHu) and West Ord (MHu), and 14 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs (PRM). Five to nine were at Bothal Pond, Doddington, Grindon Lough, Newcastle Leazes Park and Shield on the Wall Dam. One to three were reported from five further sites.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

In the north of the county, 77-78 (21 juveniles) were at Whiteadder Point, Berwick on 7th-8th (TBr/BWG), 72 at Horncliffe on 4th (per NNBC), 26 at West Ord on 1st (MHu), and 17 at Doddington on 7th (JR). Peak counts further south were 44 at Warkworth Lane on 14th (ASJ), 23 at Warkworth (per NNBC), six to nine at Big Waters (GB) and Whitley Bay (IJ) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs (SR), and three at Capheaton (STE).

Bean Goose *Anser fabalis*

Five of the 'Tundra' race were at Hauxley Reserve on 3rd (JSB/EC), while one of undetermined race was present there on 26th-27th (MSH/HRS), the latter thought to be almost certainly the same individual as that at Gloucester Lodge, Blyth earlier this winter.

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Flocks moving N/NW involved a total of 450 at Gosforth Park NR on three dates between 18th-28th (CGK/GPK/NHSN), 200 at Seaton Sluice on 9th (SSWT), 200 at Tynemouth (CGK/GPK) and 172 at Howdon (CB) on 11th, 110 at Prestwick Carr on 25th (PCF), and 60 at Scotswood. A skein was heard flying over Wark at 20.55h on 9th (PRM). Some large flocks remained, with peaks of 4,300 at Elwick on 20th (per NNBC), 4,000 at Bell's Farm, Cresswell on 7th (GB/LAR) and 3,000 at nearby Warkworth Lane on 25th (JPD/MPF/AWS), 3,000 at Beal on 7th (ASJ), 3,000 on a reclaimed opencast site near Ulgham Park on 16th (MSH), 1,500 at West Stobswood on 14th (GB/LAR) and 1,500 at Ellington on 18th (TB). Counts of 500-750 came from Cresswell, Fenham Flats, Holywell Dene and Lucker, and 250-300 at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) and Earsdon. Counts of 30-50 came from Capheaton, East Chevington and St Mary's, and three to seven were at three other sites.

White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*

A notable flock of 22* was at Big Waters on 4th (AJJ per GB), 13 of which remained until the end of the month. All were of the Greenland *flavirostris* race. Other Greenland birds involved five (four adults) at Warkworth Lane between 7th-9th (GB/LAR/TB/TRD), and four on 10th (EC/JSB).

*one bore a neck collar (V8F) and had been marked at Loch Ken, Scotland in winter 2011-12 and was noted there in winters 2011-12 and 2013-14, being seen at Kintyre in 2012-2013. Between 9/11/14-14/12/14 it was noted in Norway, having thought to have been blown eastwards during the autumn migration.

Birds of the Eurasian *albifrons* race involved an adult at Warkworth Lane on 7th (GB/LAR) and 9th-10th (EC/JSB/TRD)

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

60 flew S at Capheaton on 22nd (STE). 428 at Harper's Heugh, near Budle Bay, on 17th was the largest single concentration (MSH). Other peaks were 199-200 at Earsdon on 18th (MNC) and Hauxley Reserve (HRS), and 100-120 at East Chevington (GB/LAR) and Grindon Lough (PRM). Groups of 22-30 were at Big Waters and Swallow Pond. One to seven were at Bothal Pond, Cocklawburn, Holywell Dene and Holystone.

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

About 350 were at Grindon Lough on 6th (TRD) and 319 on 9th (PRM), 170 at Bothal Pond on 8th (TD), 100 at Warkworth Lane on 8th (TB), 34-48 at Big Waters (GB), Newcastle Leazes Park (DM), QEII CP Lake (CDH) and the Tweed Estuary (MHu), and 20-28 at Bothal Pond, Hauxley Reserve and Swallow Pond. Five to nine were also at Bywell Haughs and Farnley Haughs.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

A notable 1,800 were at Budle Bay on 7th (ASJ), 230 at Elwick on 20th (per NNBC) and 60 at Harper's Heugh (near Budle Bay) on 17th (MSH). Singles were at Bothal Pond and Castron.

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

About 2,500 un-raced birds were at Fenham Flats during the month (per NNBC), 200 at Harper's Heugh (near Budle Bay) on 17th were mainly pale-bellied *hrota* race birds but included some dark-bellied *bernicla* race birds (MSH). Four of the *hrota* race flew N at Hadston Carrs on 1st and two were at Alnmouth.

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

A total of eight flew N at St Mary's and Tynemouth on 4th-5th (JPD/AWS/MSH/GPK), six flew N at Seaton Sluice between 1st-4th (SSWT), six N at Tynemouth pier on 5th (JPD/AWS), and two to four N at Newbiggin and St Mary's between 1st-5th. The Fenham Flats section of Lindisfarne NNR held 1,150 on 3rd (per NNBC), 57 were at the Blyth Estuary on 8th (LJM), 36 at Howdon on 1st (CB), and five to nine at Bothal Pond (TD), Cresswell Pond (DM/STH), Boulmer (PCF) and Elswick (DM). One to two were at Earsdon, Holywell and Swallow Ponds, Lynemouth Flash, the Tweed Estuary, West Hartford and West Stobswood Pool, while one to two were further inland at Grindon Lough and Haughton Strother GP.

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

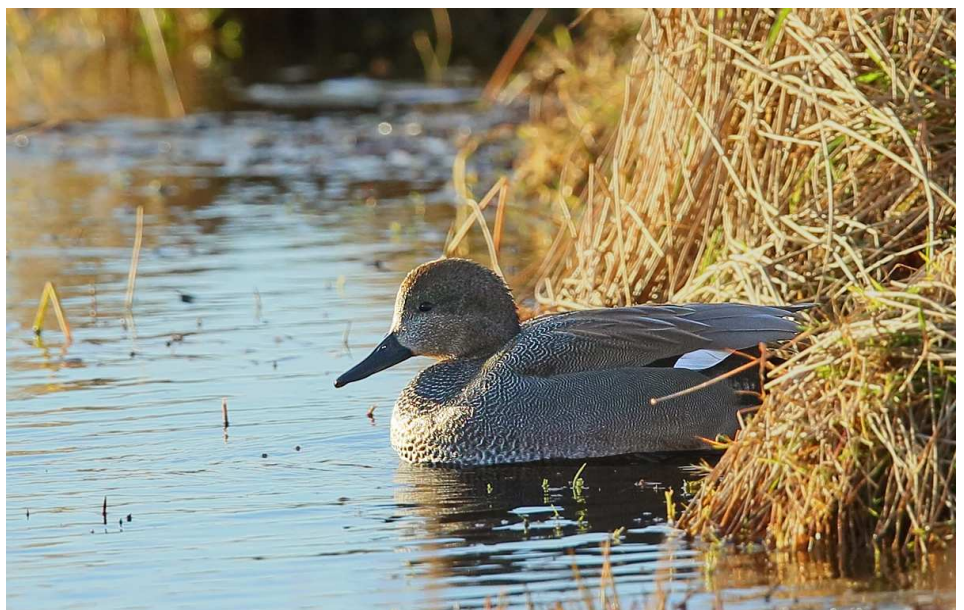
Peak counts concerned 620 at Cresswell Pond on 19th (MSH), 466 at Big Waters on 8th (GB), 250 at Hoppen Kiln Flash on 11th (MSH), 200 at Druridge Pools (IF *et al.*) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs (SR), and 100-167 at Amble Braid, Bothal and Warkworth Lane Ponds, Derwent Reservoir and Grindon Lough. Counts of 60-90 came from Gosforth Park NR, Linton Ponds and West Stobswood Pool, and 22 were at QEII CP Lake.



Two drakes photographed in the winter sun at Howdon Wetland

both by Colin Bradshaw

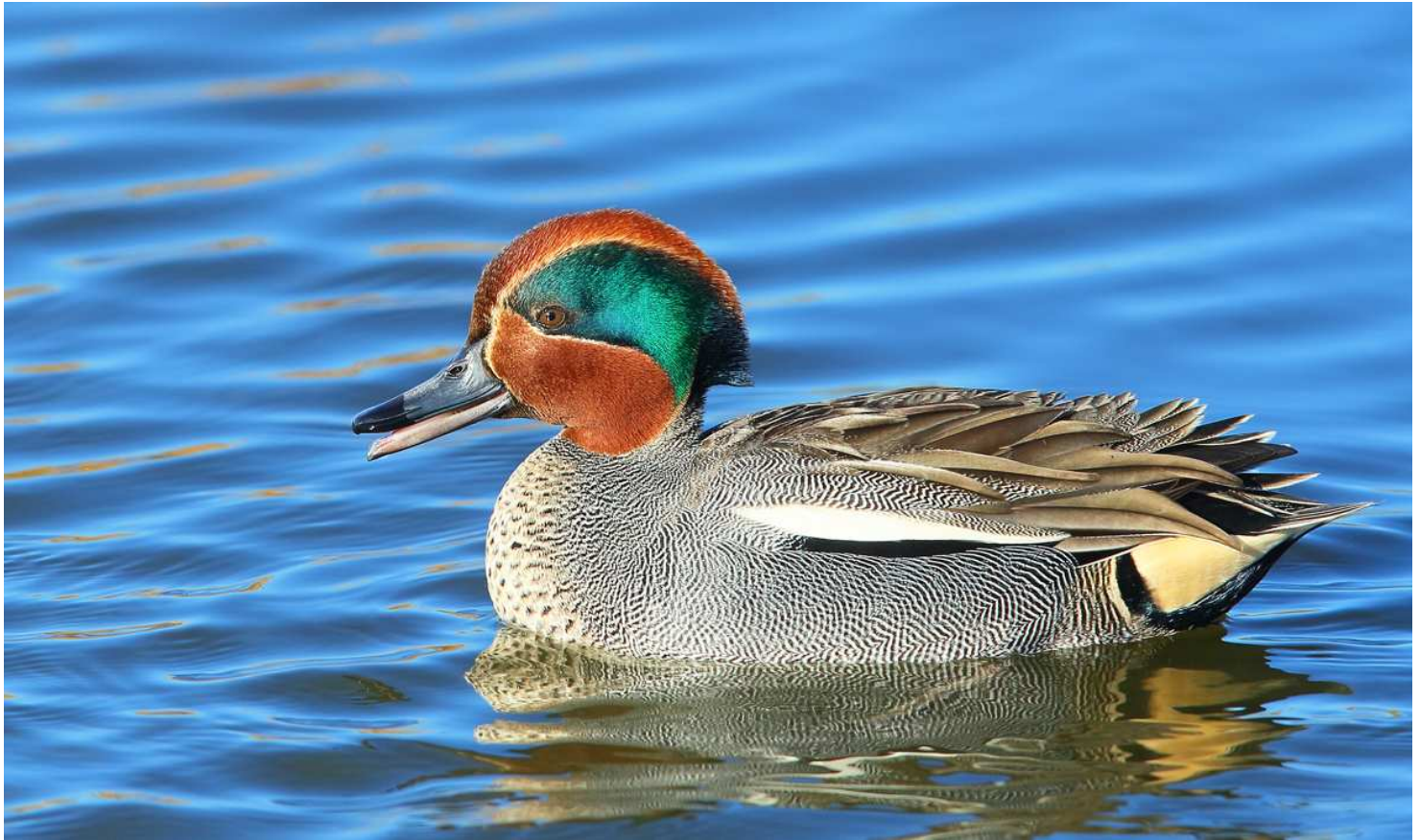
Top a Wigeon and bottom a Gadwall

**Gadwall** *Anas strepera*

Large gatherings were unexceptional, with peaks of 27 at Ladyburn Lake on 17th (LJM), 18 at the Blyth Estuary on 8th (LJM), 17 at Arcot Pond on 13th (LJM) and 17 at Castron on 18th (DRo). Five to eight were at Big Waters, Bothal, Cresswell and Warkworth Lane Ponds, Gosforth Park NR, QEII CP Lake and St Mary's Wetland, three to four at East Chevington and Howdon, and one to two at West Stobswood and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. One at Chirton Dene Park, North Shields on 20th (KWY) was a more unusual record.

Teal *Anas crecca*

Large counts involved 544 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 2nd (SR), 341 at Big Waters on 8th (GB), 310 at Derwent Reservoir on 5th (IFo), 225-282 at Capheaton Lake (TRD) and Howdon (CB), 152-172 at Druridge Pools (TRC), Elswick (DM), and 100-105 at Arcot, Bothal and Warkworth Lane Ponds. Counts of 50-85 came from Cresswell Pond, Hauxley Reserve, Holburn village, Holystone, St Mary's Wetland and along the River Tweed between A1-Gainslaw House, and 22-44 were at Backworth, Linton and Swallow* Ponds, Grindon Lough, Gosforth Park NR, Hoppen Kiln Flash, Longhirst Flash, Prestwick Carr, St Mary's Wetland and West Hartford. * Display noted on 15th (CGK/GPK).



A drake Teal at Howdon Wetland by Colin Bradshaw

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Highest counts were 203 at Derwent Reservoir on 5th (IFo), 182 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 2nd (SR), 142 at the Tweed Estuary on 5th (MHu), 138 at Big Waters on 8th (GB), and 110 on the River Tweed between A1-Gainslaw House (TBr). Counts of 55-88 were made at Airy Holm and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, Bothal and Cresswell Ponds, Killingworth Lake, Longhirst Flash, Newcastle Leazes Park and Warden, while 20-45 were at Backworth, Linton and West Allotment Ponds, Chirton Dene Park (North Shields), Earsdon, Holburn village, Howdon, Marden Quarry and QEII CP Lake and the Tweed Estuary.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

One flew N at Tynemouth pier on 5th (JPD/AWS). A total of 193, mostly in pairs, was noted at Fenham Flats, Lindisfarne NNR on 3rd (MH/AA). The only other reports were of a pair at Big Waters on 8th (GB), and singles at East Chevington on 28th (TF/JFa) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 14th (SR).

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

11 were at Druridge Pools on 22nd (IF et al.), ten at Swallow Pond on 18th (JPD/AWS), eight at 'Gosforth Flash' on 27th (JPD/AWS), six to seven at Arcot Pond (LJM), Gosforth Park NR (NHSN et al.), Holy Island Lough (per NNBC) and Swallow Pond (GPK), three to four at Bothal and Cresswell Ponds, and one to two at Howdon, Killingworth Lake and Monks' House Pool.

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Killingworth Lake attracted a peak of 35 on 20th (GPK), 22 were at Swallow Pond on 8th (JPD/AWS), 16 at Bothal Pond on 8th (TD), nine at West Stobswood Pool (MSH), seven at Lewisburn (JMA), and four at Marden Quarry (KWY). Singles were at Capheaton and QEII CP Lakes, East Stobswood and Warkworth Lane Pond.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Killingworth Lake again proved attractive to the species, holding peaks of 185 on 4th (LJM) and 175 on 7th (JPD/MPF/AWS). Elsewhere, peak counts were 73 at Ladyburn Lake on 8th (TB), 53 at QEII CP Lake on 7th (CDH), and 35-36 at Newcastle Leazes Park (DM) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs (SR). Counts of 13-26 came from Arcot, Bothal, Holywell and Linton Ponds, and Howdon.

Scaup *Aythya marila*

A drake was again at Haughton Strother GP, on 6th (MR), and one was at East Chevington on 28th (TF/JFa).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

Modest counts included 65 at Blyth Harbour on 3rd (JMA), 39 at North Shields Fish Quay on 13th (MSH), 30 at Berwick North Shore on 3rd (MHu), and ten to 20 at Cheswick, Meadow Haven (Berwick) and Stag Rocks. One to four were also at the Royal Quays Marina (North Shields), the Tweed Estuary and Whitley Bay.

An Eider in Blyth Harbour by Alan Jack

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

50 were off Cheswick on 21st (IJ), 41 at Stag Rocks on 17th included many drakes (MH/AA), and 26 at Holy Island Harbour on 2nd included many displaying pairs (IK). Five were off Ross Back Sands on 11th (GW et al.), two at Beadnell Point, and singles at Cocklawburn and East Chevington north pool. The long-staying drake remained at Derwent Reservoir all month (IFo). Display was also noted amongst a group of 13 off Cheswick on 20th (IK).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

Three flew N at St Mary's on 1st (IJ). Small numbers included 76 at Cocklawburn on 26th (MHu), 50 at nearby Cheswick on 21st (IF et al.), 35 at Stag Rocks on 21st (IJ), and 12-18 at Druridge Bay (GB) and Boulmer (RB/MB).

Black Scoter *Melanitta Americana*

A drake was again noted sporadically off Cheswick between 7th-21st (IBDa/KDa/ASJ/IJ et al.), and was at nearby Cocklawburn on 26th (MHu). On 20th it was noted off Cheswick displaying to a female Common Scoter (IK).

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

A drake flew N at Newbiggin (GB/TF/JFa) and Snab Point on 1st (JL). Singles were at Bamburgh on 4th (per NNBC), Cheswick on 21st (IJ) and Hadston Carrs on 1st (TF/JFa).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

A minimum of 31 flew N at Newbiggin on 1st (GB/TF/JFa), when ten flew N at Tynemouth (DRW), ten flew N at Seaton Sluice between 1st-4th (SSWT), and six N at St Mary's on 4th (MSH). A total of 184 was counted in the Tweed Estuary on 5th (MHu), 65 at East Chevington north pool on 3rd included many drakes (MH/AA), 54 were at Capheaton Lake on 28th (STE), 33 at Whiteadder Point (TBr), and 20-25 at Killingworth and QEII CP Lakes. Groups of 11-18 were at Big Waters, Castron, Castle Island, St Mary's, Swallow Pond* and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, six to nine at Ashington, Berwick North Shore, Bothal Pond, Grindon Lough and West Ord, and three to four at Bothal and Cresswell Ponds, Druridge Pools, Gosforth Park NR and Widdrington Moor Lake.

*display noted on 8th (JPD/MPF/AWS)



A drake Goldeneye
Killingworth Lake
Alan Jack

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Much active display was noted amongst a group of 15 at Ladyburn Lake on 17th (LJM), while four drakes displayed to three females off Druridge Pools on 7th (GB/LAR). Ten were at Spittal Bay on 3rd (MHu), seven at Budle Bay (JPL), and three to four at Beadnell Bay, Berwick North Shore, East Chevington and Stag Rocks. Twos were noted at Cheswick, Cresswell Pond and Druridge Pools.

A Goosander at Killingworth Lake
Alan Jack

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

Two flew N at St Mary's on 7th (JPD/MPF/AWS) and one flew W at Swallow Pond on 21st (JPD/MPF/AWS). Peak gatherings were 34 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 25th (SR), 23 along the River Tweed between A1-Gainslaw House-Lower Whiteadder on 8th (TBr), and ten at Killingworth Lake on 25th (LJM). Three to four visited Bothal (River Wansbeck), Hexham, Rothbury, the Tweed Estuary, Wark and Wylam, and one to two were at Backworth and Swallow Ponds, Gosforth Park NR, Jesmond Dene, Morpeth, Newcastle Leazes Park, QEII CP Lake, Tyne Riverside CP (Prudhoe) and Warden. A more unusual record concerned two at Hoppen Kiln Flash on 11th (MSH).

**Red-legged Partridge** *Alectoris rufa*

The highest counts were of 11 from just north of Ellingham on 1st (AJR) and ten at Holburn Village on 10th (MJC). Nine seen at Rothbury on 3rd were considered very unusual for the locality (TRD) and six "very tame" birds were in the Carey Burn area on 21st (STH). The only other records were of two at Cockle Park and one at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay).

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

One again the maximum monthly count was in the Cheviots, with 101 (including many pairs) seen on 10th during a six hour circular walk around the Broadstruther/Harthope Burn area (MH/AA). 25 were counted from a drive-by on Allendale Common on 6th (EC/JSB) and two to three birds were at Carrshield, College Valley and Steng Moss (Elsdon).

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

All records came from the Allenheads area, the highest count being 11 at Swinhope Shield on 25th (STH) and five (four males) there on 6th (JSB/EC). Nearby there were four (three males) near Meadow Cottage and another four (all males) at Shieldridge on 6th (JSB/EC) with three at Coatenhill on 25th (STH).

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Once again well reported from the east of the county. Top counts were an impressive 30 at Lucker during the month (per NNBC) and 16 at Townfoot on 25th (IBDa/KDa). Elsewhere, eight were at Warkworth Lane (Ellington) on 9th (TRD) with counts of six near Meadow Cottage (Allenheads) on 6th (EC/JSB) and Swallow Pond (three pairs) on 8th and 14th (JPD). One to five birds were also noted at Big Waters, Druridge Pools, Ellington, Maiden's Hall (West Chevington), New Moor (Ashington), Old Mousen, Spittal (Berwick) and Warkworth Lane.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

On 15th, 11 birds (ten females) were feeding on seed dropped by Tree Sparrows in the observer's garden at Walbottle (KR/LR). Two were at Linton Ponds (CDH), Holywell Dene and in a garden at Old Hartley throughout the month (RJP)

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

Northbound birds included seven at Church Point (Newbiggin) in two hours sea-watching on 1st (GB) and four past St Mary's between 09.25–11.00h on 7th, with two flying S also recorded by the observers (JPD/MPF/AWS). Druridge Bay again proved to be the favoured location with 78 present during a flay high tide on 7th (TRC) and 30 still there the following day (JL). Elsewhere, 20+ were offshore at Cheswick on 7th (MSH), 11 on 9th (IBDa/KDa) and nine on 28th (JR). Six were seen off Boulmer on 20th (RB/MB) and five at Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) on 10th (per NNBC). One to three were also at Amble, Cocklawburn, Ross Back Sands and Tynemouth.

Black-throated Northern Diver *Gavia arctica*

Two flew N and one S at St Mary's on 7th (JPD/AWS/MPF) and a single N past Tynemouth Pier on 5th. Singles were also recorded off Cheswick (JR) and East Chevington (GB).

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

Only records were of two birds flying N past Cheswick on 7th (MSH) and a single N at St Mary's on the same date (JPD/MPF/AWS).

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

Birds returning to breeding areas included 55 at Coves Bay on Holy Island during the month (IK), 36 present at Tynemouth Priory on 5th (JPD/AWS) and 11 at Old Hartley cliffs on 20th (SPP). 13 were loafing and feeding at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 3rd (MH/AA) and 12 at St Mary's on 1st. One to seven birds were also at Berwick North Shore, the River Tweed Estuary, Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) Saltpan Rocks (Cocklawburn), and Snab Point.

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

Seaton Sluice Watch Tower recorded 36 N (including 30 following a fishing boat) in two hours on 5th, and 17N in two hours on 1st (SSWT). Eight were flying S past Saltpan Rocks (Cocklawburn) on 23rd (MHu). A large feeding frenzy off Berwick Pier numbered ca. 100 birds on 15th (MHu). Elsewhere, 12 were near St Mary's on 1st (IJ) and one to four birds were seen at various coastal locations.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Once again North Shields Fish Quay held the highest numbers with 80 there on 13th (MSH) and 55 on 8th (SPP). Whittle Dene Reservoirs also proved a popular location with 32 birds on 25th (SR) following counts of 20 on 10th (MR) and 14 on 8th (PCF). Nine were at Big Waters on 15th (GB) with WeBS counts also producing nine at Berwick North Shore on 3rd and seven in the River Tweed Estuary on 5th (MHu). Seven were also at Blyth Harbour on 3rd (JMA). One to three were at ten other sites, including three of the continental "sinensis" race at North Shields Fish Quay on 8th (SPP) and a single, well-marked adult of this sub-species was at Holy Island Harbour on 2nd (IK).



"Not all white headed are sinensis". A Cormorant by Colin Bradshaw

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

At Newbiggin two flew N on the first day of the month (TF/JFa), whilst two N past Seaton Sluice Watch Tower on 4th constituted the first records there this year (SSWT). Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) again held impressive numbers with 70 offshore there on 7th (ASJ). Elsewhere, six were at Spittal Bay (Berwick) on 3rd and Saltpan Rocks (Cocklawburn) on 26th (MHu) with singles recorded at Berwick North Shore during a WeBS count on 3rd (MHu) and an adult sitting on a jetty amongst Cormorants at North Shields Fish Quay on 8th (SPP).

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

Up to three birds were seen regularly throughout the month at Gosforth Park Nature Reserve (NHSN/GPK). The Swallow Pond individual proved very obliging for three lucky observers by sitting in Willow ten feet off the ground for 45 minutes on 3rd (JPD/AWS) and catching two fish in full open view on 10th (SPP).

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

The peak count in the Lindisfarne NNR area was four on 22nd (IK) with one to three noted on further dates (MH/AA/BWG). Singles continued to be present in the Holywell Dene area throughout the month, seen at the estuary and further upstream (RJP) and at Horton Burn (Cramlington) on 23rd (LJM). One was at Cresswell Pond on 10th (JSB/EC).

Great White Egret *Ardea Alba*

A single bird circled Cresswell Pond at 16:15h on 6th before flying off towards Warkworth Lane (TB).

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

The peak counts were 21 at Howdon on 7th (CB), 19 at Yarrow Slake (The River Tweed Estuary) on 4th (BWG) and 16 at Berwick North Shore during a WeBS count on 3rd (MHu). One to four were also noted at Arcot Pond, Bassington NR (Cramlington), Cresswell Pond, Hexham (flying low over Wentworth car park), Holywell Dene, Jesmond Dene, Leazes Park, Old Hartley, QE11 Country Park, West Hartford and Wylam.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Well reported this month with 23 records received. Maximum numbers were was 23 at Castle Island (River Wansbeck) during a WEBS count on 8th (DM/STH) with 15 there on 1st (JL). Eight were on the River Tweed between the A1-Gainslaw House-Lower Whiteadder area on 8th (TBr) and fives were at Druridge Bay Country Park on 8th (TB), East Chevington North Pool on 7th (GB) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 25th (SR). One to four were at ten widespread locations including Airy Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield), Capheaton, Exhibition Park (Newcastle Town Moor) and Tyne Green Country Park (Hexham). Interestingly, none were recorded at Coney Garth (Bothal) again this month (TF/JFa).

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps Cristatus*

At Killingworth the first bird arrived on 20th (CGK/GPK) and eventually numbered two pairs by the end of the month - one pair on each lake – and proved very popular with many observers (MSH/LJM/SR *et al.*), one pair was even witnessed doing the 'reed dance' on 28th (GB). One to two were also reported from Cheswick Beach, Holy Island, Saltpan Rocks (Cocklawburn) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Coney Garth (Bothal) was again notable in having none of this species recorded during the month (TF/JFa).

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

One, presumably the same individual as last month, was in Holy Island Harbour on 10th (DS *per* NNBC).

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) had the biggest counts, peaking with ten there on 28th (JR). Six were off Cheswick on 7th (MSH) and Ross Back Sands on 25th (SVM). Two were still at Holy Island on 21st (IBDa/KDa) and the only inland sighting was a single at Gosforth Park NR on 18th (NHSN).

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

Only single birds recorded this month on several dates offshore at East Chevington (GB *et al.*), Stag Rocks (ASJ) and amongst Scoters off Cheswick Sands (JBu).

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Three birds were seen wandering from Ebchester (Co Durham) to Broad Oak Quarries on 8th (MH) and a juvenile/2nd calendar year bird was seen crossing over the River Tyne at Wylam on 9th (MH).

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

A juvenile male was seen at a confidential site on the 6th (MJC).

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

Two separate birds an adult and a 2nd calendar year bird were seen at one site on 10th (MH/AA) and another bird was displaying at a different site on 22nd (AA).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Only single birds were noted this month with birds seen at 17 sites.



A Sparrowhawk
8th February at Wallington
by Mike Carr

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Eight birds were seen at the West Simonsides on 21st (MH), five birds were at Lesbury on 5th (MJC) and near Ulgham Park on 26th (MSH) and four birds were at Catcherside (Harwood), Corbridge, Holburn Village, Letah Wood (Hexham) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Three birds were seen at Bakethin reservoir, College Valley and Grindon Lough and two birds were at Wallsend Swallow Pond. Single birds were also noted at 14 sites.



A Buzzard soars over Holborn on 27th February by Mike Carr

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Four + birds were heard or seen at Gosforth Park NR throughout the month (NHSN), three birds were at Cresswell Pond on 7th (TRC). Two birds were at Swallow Pond on several dates (CGK/GPK), Prestwick Carr on 14th (PCF) and Gosforth Park NR on 28th (CGK/GPK). Single birds were either seen or heard at Cresswell Pond, East Chevington North Pool, Howdon, Prestwick Carr and Warkworth Lane (Ellington).

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

28 birds were at Druridge Bay CP on 17th (LJM), 17 were at Big Waters on 8th (GB), 11 were at QEII CP on 7th (CDH) and at Haughton Strother GPs (Humshaugh) on 28th (MR). One to eight birds were at Arcot Pond, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Castle Island, Cresswell Pond, Holywell Dene, Jesmond Dene (Newcastle), Leazes Park (Newcastle), Tyne Riverside CP (Newburn), Spindlestone, Wark and Wylam.

Coot *Fulica atra*

164 birds at QEII CP on 7th (CDH), 110 at Warkworth Lane (Ellington) on 8th (TB) and 108 at Killingworth Lake on 4th (LJM) were the highest counts (LJM). 37 were at Big Waters on 8th (GB), 19 were at Bothal Pond on 8th (TD) and 14 were at Arcot Pond on 15th (DM). One to six birds were also noted at Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Howdon, Leazes Park (Newcastle), Linton Ponds and Middle Ord Pond (Berwick)

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

The WeBS count at Berwick North Shore totalled 114 on 3rd (MHu) and 51 were noted at Cresswell Pond on 7th (PCF). Apart from 36 at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 21st (IJ) and 30 at Whitley Bay 'pitch and put' on 3rd (JMA), it was a case of relatively low numbers with ten to 19 seen at Bywell Haughs, Haughton Strother GP, Holystone (Wallsend) and West Hartford, with single-figure reports from an additional 14 sites. A number of inland sites recorded one to two birds for the first time this year, such as Big Waters (19th), Longhirst GC (22nd), Newcastle Airport (28th) and Wark (10th)

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

The Coquet Estuary held a flock of 1,200 birds on 7th (NNBC) and 1,000 were noted on Holy Island on 2nd/7th (IK/ASJ), whilst good counts elsewhere included 500 at St Mary's Island on 20th (KWY), 400 at Blyth Links on 3rd (TB), 300 at Seaton Delaval on 3rd (JMA), 200 at both Harper's Heugh on 17th (MSH) and Prestwick Carr on 21st (PCF), 120 at Corbridge on 20th (PRM), 110 at Cocklawburn on 11th (MHu) and 100 at Radcliffe on 12th (JMA). Smaller groups of 25-80 were also

present at the Blyth Estuary, Cresswell Pond, Elsdon/Hudspeth, Grindon Lough, Longhorsely Moor, Newcastle Town Moor, Old Hartley and Ulgham Park (on nearby reclaimed opencast site). Some 15 were seen on a moss by Tipalt Burn (Thirlwall Common) on 19th (MH) and three were seen feeding on the sports field at the Royal Grammar School (Jesmond) during the night on 10th (GB).

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Reports included 17 at Holy Island on 7th (ASJ), seven at Hauxley on 14th (RB/MB), five on the Blyth Estuary on 8th (LJM), four at Berwick North Shore on 3rd (MHu) and singles at Hadston Carrs and on the Tweed Estuary.

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

A 'huge flock' of some 1,800 birds was seen in roadside fields by the A189 at Laverock Hall Farm (Blyth) on 14th (ASJ) and 1,000 were noted at Druridge Pools on 10th (EC/JSB) with 600 recorded here on the previous day (MSH). The reclaimed opencast site near Ulgham Park also held 600+ on 16th/26th (MSH). Further good counts included 455 at Haughton Strother GP on 9th (MR) 400 at Cresswell Pond on 5th (JMA), 220 at Grindon Lough on 9th (PRM), 210 at St Mary's on 22nd (ASJ), 200 at both the Blyth Estuary on 1st (JL) and Derwent Reservoir on 14th (JMA), 150 at Hauxley on 12th (JMA), 135 at Widdrington Moor on 14th (ASJ) and 100 at Amble Braid on 12th (JMA). Many further reports included 40-90 at Big Waters, East Ord, Holystone (Wallsend), Howdon, Old Hartley, Prestwick Carr and Swallow Pond, with 20-35 at Big Waters, Chollerford, Cocklawburn, Cramlington (Northumberlandia), Gosforth Park NR, Longhorsely, Newton-on-the-Moor, Morpeth (Whorral Bank) and Pegswood. Seven displaying birds were watched at Ellington on 21st (TB) and six non-displaying birds were noted at both Bothal Pond and Bywell Haughs.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

The WeBS count at Berwick North Shore totalled 58 on 3rd (MHu) and several counts at St Mary's saw a peak of 52 on 15th (SPP). Chevington Burn mouth attracted 21 on 7th (GB), five flew N at Snab Point on 20th (TB) and a single was at Widdrington Moor Lake on 14th (GB).

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Smaller flock sizes were noted this month with 75 at Druridge Pools on 5th the peak (JMA), closely followed by 67 at Cresswell Pond on 26th (IF) and 60 at both the Blyth Estuary (on Mount Pleasant fields) on 1st (JL) and Whitley Bay on 2nd (JMA). Counts of 53 were made at Blyth (Gloucester Lodge) on 12th (MSH) and Howdon on 20th (CB), whilst 52 were noted at Cocklawburn on 11th (MHu). Elsewhere, 24-40 were present at Berwick (Whiteadder Point), Haughton Strother GP and Hauxley NWT; ten to 18 were at Berwick North Shore, Ellington, Prestwick Carr, the Tweed Estuary and West Ord and single-figure reports came from a further four sites.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

The wintering group at Holy Island Rocket Field pools peaked at 14 on 21st (IK) and at Howdon three were seen on 1st/7th and two on 28th (CB).

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

The wintering stronghold at Holy Island held 1,500 on 7th (ASJ) whilst elsewhere, eight were at Berwick North Shore on 3rd and five on the Tweed Estuary on 5th (MHu), four were at Hauxley on 20th (RB/MB) and one to three at the Blyth Estuary, Cocklawburn and Newbiggin. The most remarkable record however was of three birds flying W over Swallow Pond on 24th – a 'patch tick' for the observers (JPD/ASW)!

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

The WeBS count at Berwick North Shore was of 108 on 3rd (MHu), some way ahead of the 50 in Whitley Bay on 2nd (JMA) and 15 at St Mary's also on 2nd. Two to eight were noted at Cresswell Pond, Howdon, the Tweed Estuary and Stag Rocks. Additional record for January 2015: 13 at North Shields Fish Quay on 1st.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

A count of 550 at Holy Island on 7th (ASJ) is the sole report.

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

One was seen at Cresswell Pond on 7th (GB/TRC/PCF) and again on 15th (TF/JFa).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Boulmer held 64 on 7th (PCF), the peak at St Mary's was 61 on 12th (ASJ) and 58 were at Berwick North Shore on 3rd (MHu). Also 45 were noted in Whitley Bay on 2nd (JMA), eight at East Chevington on 9th and five at Cocklawburn on 2nd. Additional records for January 2015: 50 at Boulmer on 8th (JMA) and 12 at North Shields Fish Quay on 17th.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

The Blyth Estuary again held the most: 343 on 8th (LJM). Berwick had 112 on 3rd (MHu), Boulmer, Cresswell Pond and Tynemouth had up to 59-82, 46 were at St Mary's on 11th and 18 were logged at Howdon on 21st.

Additional record for January 2015: 65 at Fenham Flats on 18th.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

The Stag Rocks stronghold had a peak of only 45 on 21st (IJ) but a count of around 40 on rocks below the pier at North Blyth on 15th (LJM) was notable. At Boulmer, Newbiggin, St Mary's and Snab Point 13-17 were recorded occasionally with six to eight at Holy Island, Seaton Sluice and Tynemouth. Additional record for January 2015: 25 at Low Newton on 8th.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Again up to three were regularly noted at Whittle Dene Reservoirs (SR/MR/AJH). Singles were reported at Branton on 3rd (IBDa/KDa) and at Haughton Strother GP from 14th to the month end (MR).

Additional record for January 2015: one at Bothal village on 1st (ADM/C).

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

One was reported at Fenham Flats on 17th (per NNBC).

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

One was feeding on Black Low saltmarsh (Fenham Flats) at high tide on 17th (MH/AA).

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

The maximum count at Howdon was 344 on 4th (CB), 294 were in the Tweed Estuary on 5th (MHu), the peak at St Mary's was 122 on 22nd (ASJ) and 90 were in Whitley Bay on 2nd (JMA). In addition 100+ fed in fields near the Blyth Estuary on 1st (JL), 48 were at Berwick on 3rd and 35 were on the R Tyne between Elswick Wharf and Newcastle BP on 6th; 13 or fewer appeared at Bothal Pond, Cresswell Pond, Ellington and Stag Rocks.

Jack Snipe *Limnocyptes minimus*

Two were at Backworth on 12th (CGK/GPK). Singles were found at Holy Island on 7th (IK), at Haughton Strother GP on 17th (MR) and at Chesterhill on 21st (per NNBC).

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Three were seen at Swallow Pond on 3rd (JPD/AWS), with one there on 14th. Two were found at each of Wallsend on 4th (DRo), Longhorsley on 13th (EC/JSB) and at Steng Moss near Winter's Gibbet on 25th (EC/RSF), the latter put up as foresters cleared young trees from the Moss. Singles appeared at Arcot GC, Bamburgh, Big Waters, Capheaton, Corbridge, Cramlington, Derwent Reservoir, Ford Moss, Harthope Valley, Holywell Dene, Howdon and Linden Hall. Additional records for January 2015: on 3rd two were at Belford Moor and one at Prestwick Carr (DM/GB/LAR).

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

The top counts were fairly similar: 41 at Backworth on 12th (CGK/GPK), 36 at Haughton Strother GP on 24th (MR) and 34 at Arcot Lane Flash on 8th (DM). The WeBS at East Chevington revealed 19 on 8th, 12+ were noted at Druridge Pools on 9th and 11 were at Hauxley NWT on 26th. Arcot Pond, Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Howdon, Lowick, Prestwick Carr and Wallsend had four to seven at times and two were at Big Waters.

Additional records for January 2015: three at Arcot Pond on 1st and four at Fenham-le-Moor on 3rd.

A Common Snipe
Howdon Wetland
by Colin Bradshaw

**Pomarine Skua** *Stercorarius pomarinus*

A juvenile flew N at Seaton Sluice Watch Tower on 5th (SSWT).

Additional record for January 2015: one flew N at St Mary's on 31st (JPD/MPF/AS).

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

One flew N at Seaton Sluice Watch Tower on 3rd (SSWT).

Additional records for January 2015: two flew N at St Mary's on 31st (JPD/MPF/AWS).

Auk *sp*

A few records, totalling 14 moving N, came during the first week (SSWT).

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

Three singles moved N during 1st-2nd at Tynemouth and St Mary's Island (IJ/SPP).

Black Guillemot *Cephus grylle*

One was off Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) on 27th (SR).

Razorbill *Alca torda*

At Tynemouth on 1st, 30 flew N in half an hour (CB) and on the same day up to six were noted flying N at Newbiggin and St Mary's Island (GB/IJ); on 7th, six were seen at Cheswick (MSH) with six on the sea offshore from Druridge Pools (GB).

Little Auk *Alle alle*

Fresh north-westerly winds at the start of the month brought another influx into the North Sea and the species was widely reported from a number of coastal watch points. On 1st, at Snab Point (Cresswell), 146 moved N in one hour at mid-day (JL) with 87 N counted at Hadston Carrs during this period (TF/JFa) and 110 N in three hours at nearby Newbiggin during the morning (GB/TF/JFa). Also on 1st, up to 17 were recorded at Beadnell Point, Holy Island, Newton Point, St Mary's Island and Tynemouth. From 2nd-5th, birds were still moving N, albeit in much smaller numbers, with a maximum of 17 at Tynemouth on 4th (GPK).



A dramatic seascape
A Little Auk off-shore at Newbiggin
by Jonathan Farooqi
1st February

Guillemot *Uria aalge*

The auk passage on 1st included ca.400 of this species flying N in one hour at Snab Point (Cresswell) (JL) with up to ten passing Newton Point and St Mary's Island (TRD/IJ). The return of birds to their nesting cliffs on Inner Farne was much in evidence on 21st when 'thousands' were recorded either on the ledges or flying around the island (IF *et al.*).

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

The first birds had returned to their nesting ledges on the Tyne Bridge and the Quayside buildings by 25th, when 28 were on the bridge and four on the buildings (DM). Elsewhere, records were few with only ten moving N recorded from Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT) and singles at Bamburgh and Newbiggin during the first week (AA/GB/MH).

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

The peak count was 750 at Howdon on 7th (CB) and significant flocks elsewhere were 300-500 at Berwick North Shore, the QEII CP Lake, the River Tweed Estuary and Whitley Bay (CDH/IJ/MHu). Smaller gatherings of 50-200 were at Arcot Pond, Bothal Pond, Castle Island, Exhibition Park, Hauxley, Hexham, Jesmond Dene, Leazes Park and Silverlink CP (North Shields) (JMA/RB/MB/MJCo/TD/PCF/DM) with up to 50 at nine other mainly coastal localities in the south east (JMA).

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

A maximum of ten, the majority adults, were at Newbiggin on a number of dates throughout the month (TRC/IF/STH) with one or two elsewhere, at Ellington, North Blyth, Seaton Sluice, Swallow Pond and Tynemouth.

Common Gull *Larus canus*

Movement of 150 N in 1.5 hours was noted at Seaton Sluice on 4th (SSWT), whilst at Haughton Strother GP, 600 gathered on 14th (MR) and 200 were recorded at North Charlton on 26th (JR). At six other sites namely Arcot Pond, Big Waters, Fairmoor (Morpeth), the QE II CP Lake, the River Tweed Estuary and Seaton Sluice, gatherings of 30-80 were present.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

Singles were noted at nine localities, coastal and inland, including the regular wintering adult at Cramlington (DM/LJM), two were present at Budle Bay on 17th (MSH) and on the River Tyne at Scotswood on 21st (JL), indicative of the first arrivals of the year, with three at Swallow Pond on 26th (GPK) and six there on 28th (JPD/AWS).

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

At least 700 were present at Scotswood on the River Tyne on 1st (JL) with 150 counted flying E there on 3rd (JMA) and 138 were found on the River Tweed Estuary during a WeBS survey on 5th (MHu). Elsewhere, 20-30 were at Berwick (North Shore), Blyth Harbour, Leazes Park, the QE II CP Lake and Whitley Bay (MHu/CDH/IJ/DM) with one to five at a few other sites.

'Northern' Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argentatus*

At least five birds of this northern race were at Scotswood on the River Tyne on 1st (JL).

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoideus*

An adult was a regular, although brief, visitor to Swallow Pond throughout the month (JPD/GPK/AWS/SPP) but its whereabouts when not there remained unknown. A first-winter was recorded at North Shields FQ/Tynemouth on 8th and 17th (GB/SPP).

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

Few reports this month; five were on the River Tweed Estuary on 5th (MHu) with one to three at Berwick North Shore, Castle Island, Elswick Wharf (River Tyne) and Grindon Lough.

Rock Dove/Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

A count of 120 was made in Newcastle on 4th (JMA) with ten at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) (IJ).

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Present in good numbers at Howdon during the month with 32 on 1st rising to 79 on 16th and down to 32 on 20th (CB). On 1st 18 were at Swallow Pond (SPP), 17 at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 7th with 12 there on 14th (TB). Five were at Jesmond Dene on 15th, four at Big Waters on 15th with one to three birds attracted to garden feeding stations at Holywell Dene, Royal Grammar School (Newcastle), Rothbury and six other locations.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

Large numbers at Whittle Dene Reservoirs brought estimates of 1,700 on 4th and 1,000 coming into roost at plantation on 6th (AJH/EC/JSB).

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Four at Radcliffe (near Amble) on 14th with two in gardens at Walbottle and Rothbury the latter the first breeding attempt since the observer moved to the location in 2004 (KR/LR/TD/JD).

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Roosts of eight were located on Holy Island with four in one large garden, two in nest boxes and singles at the Lime Kilns and the Lough (IK). Two were at Warenford during the month and Cresswell Pond on 28th (per NNBC/TF/JFa) with singles at the latter locality on three further dates and at Branton, Doxford, East Ord, Holy Island, Longhorsley, South Charlton and Widdrington Village.



Two Gulls by Colin Bradshaw, top: a Common Gull at QEII Park and bottom: an Iceland Gull at North Shields Fish Quay

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

A pair was on territory all month at Shiremoor (CGK *et al.*) and two at Druridge Lane on 21st and 26th, a single having been seen there on 6th (IF *et al.*).

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Three called all month at Capheaton (STE) and one at Earsdon Village (CGK) with a single perched all month at a nest box in Stamfordham possibly a prelude to nesting (EC). Singles also called at Derwent Reservoir on 5th, Catcherside (near Harwood) on 6th, Holywell Pond on 9th, Beadnell on 13th, Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 14 and 15th and Walbottle Hall on 25th.

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

Two were at Swallow Pond on 3rd and a single calling there on 10th (JPD/AWS/SPP) with one singing at a confidential site on 15th (CGK/GPK) and one was at roost at Northumberlandia on 20th (STH).

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Present all month at Prestwick Carr with two after dark on 4th but three started flying in daylight on 25th with four on 26th/27th (PCF) the appearance coinciding with two to three present at Warkworth Gut on 25th (JPD/MKF/AWS) possibly indicative of passage.

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Present all month at Branton GP and Gosforth Park NR and adjacent Pool with two at the former site on 1st (IBDA/KDa/NHSN). Singles were recorded on three dates at Jesmond Dene and at Acomb, Big Waters, Capheaton, R Coquet Estuary, Holystone, Holywell Dene, Morpeth, Thrum Mill (Rothbury), Tynemouth and Wallsend.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Calling all month at Craggside (Rothbury) and Gosforth Park NR (TRD/JD/NHSN) also at Tyne Watersmeet (Acomb) on 2nd (AJR), Holystone (Wallsend) and Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 7th (DRo/TB), Dukeshouse (Hexham) on 10th and 21st (AJH) and Wark (N.Tyne) on 21st (PRM).

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Eight birds were seen between Heddon and Twice Brewed on the Military Road on 19th (MH); six birds were at Widdrington Moor on 14th (ASJ). Three birds were at Prestwick Carr on 19th (PCF) and at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 25th (SR). 44 records were received of one to two birds.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

A single bird was seen at Lucker throughout the month (*per* NNBC). Other single birds were seen at Norham Bridge on 7th (TBr), Holy Island on 7th and 8th (IK/SR/AH), Beal also on 8th (SR/AH), Chatton on 13th (*per* NNBC), Cornhill on Tweed on 18th (*per* NNBC) and Goswick and Boulmer on 28th (JR).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Two males were seen fighting between Longhirst and Ulgham on 3rd (MJC), two birds were also on Holy Island Causeway on 10th (*per* NNBC), Cresswell Pond on 25th (JPD/MPF/AS) and a pair were back at a regular nest site on 12th (IK). Single birds were seen at nine sites including a bird feeding on a Feral Pigeon *Columba livia* at the Redheugh Bridge (Newcastle) on 6th (DM).

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Well reported with peak counts of six at Beanley Wood on 12th (IBDa/KDa), five at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 7th (TB) with four there on 14th and 21st and at Spindlestone on 2nd (BRS). Three were at Cherryburn NT, Gosforth Park NR, Holburn Village, Jesmond Dene, Rothbury, and Wallington with one to two at 17 other widely spread localities.

Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor*

One was observed hunting from firs at Steng Moss NE of Winter's Gibbet (Harwood) on 12th (IK).

Magpie *Pica pica*

At Northumberlandia (Cramlington) 30 went to roost on 20th (STH), 16 were at Howdon on 1st (CB), 13 at Big Waters on 13th (GB), 11 at Prestwick Carr on 21st (PCF), eight at Jesmond Dene on 1st (MJCo) and seven the peak count for the month in a Walbottle garden (KR/LR).

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Seven were in College Valley on 7th (JR), six the high count at Gosforth Park NR during the month, four at Hedgeley on 20th (IBDa/KDa) with three at Northumberlandia (Cramlington), Ellington, Ford Moss, Jesmond Dene and Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth). One to two were at 11 further locations.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

A pre-roost flock of 56 was at Prestwick Carr on 26th (PCF), 25 the maximum monthly count at Howdon on 16th (CB), a flock of 12 on Paddy Freeman's Playing Field (Jesmond Dene) on 15th (MJCo) and ten was the peak monthly count in a Walbottle garden (KR/LR).

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

The only reports were from Cramlington of 25 at Beacon Hill on 15th and six at Alexandra Park on 1st (DM).

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

There were just two reports of 11 at Jesmond Dene on 15th (MJCo) and three in a Walbottle garden on 16th (KR/LR).

Raven *Corvus corax*

Possibly the largest gathering recorded was 30 sub-adults soaring together over Kidland Forest on 21st BG (*per* IK). Elsewhere three including a pair were at Steng Moss (Harwood Forest) on 25th (EC/RSF). A pair were displaying at Broadstruther (Harthope Burn) on 10th (MH/AA) and two were at Ford Moss on 19th (IBDa/KDa). A single was seen all month in Holystone (Wallsend) area (DRo) and a calling bird flew N over Blyth Power Station on 5th (TRC). Singles were also at five further typical upland locations.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Three were at Felton Lane on 14th (GB) with two at Prestwick Carr on 13th and Hauxley NWT on 14th (PCF). One attended garden feeders at Northburn (Cramlington) regularly during the month (LJM) with singles at seven other widespread localities.

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Four ringing visits to Spindlestone during the month trapped 74 (BRS) with 20 there on 21st (IJ), 11 at Prestwick Carr on 1st (PCF) and gardens at Walbottle and South Gosforth attracting four and three respectively with one in Jesmond Dene on 1st.

Great Tit *Parus major*

The same regime as above at Spindlestone trapped and ringed 50 (BRS) with 30 at Letah Wood (Hexham) on 19th (AJH), 12 at Prestwick Carr on 14th (PCF), six at Jesmond Dene on 8th and Spindlestone on 21st (MJCo/IJ). Four were at Linton Ponds and a Walbottle garden with a single at a South Gosforth garden.



A Great Tit at Howdon by Colin Bradshaw

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

Ringing at Spindlestone trapped 15 in four visits (BRS) with three at Jesmond Dene on 1st (MJCo), one to two in an Old Hartley garden during the month and singles reported at Spindlestone, South Gosforth and Walbottle.

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

Feeders were visited daily during the month at Prestwick Carr with two pairs the peak on 14th (PCF). Two were at Lucker on 1st (NNBC), North Plantation (between Longhirst and Ulgham) on 3rd (MJC), Weetslade CP on 7th and Warkworth Lane on 25th (JPD/MPF/AWS). Singles were also at Big Waters, Branton GP, Ellington, Eshott and Rothbury.

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

Two in the garden at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 1st (NFO), at Spindlestone on 7th (BRS) and Wallington on 8th (MJC). Singles were at Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth), Thrum Mill (Rothbury), Spindlestone regularly and also at New Mills Wood (near Berwick) and Wark (N.Tyne).

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Around 50 were attracted to stubble fields at Holy Island on 21st having been absent all winter (IK), 27 flew N at Cheswick on 28th with 12, some singing, there on 7th (ASJ). 25 fed on saltmarsh at Beal on 7th and 24 at St Mary's on 22nd included five in song (ASJ). Display and territorial display was noted by 12 at Hemscotthill Links (Cresswell) on 27th and eight at Broadsheet (Harthope Burn) on 10th (EC/JSB/MH/AA) with one to four moving N or singing at ten further locations.

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

The largest tribe was ten at Haughton Strother (Humshaugh) on 2nd. Groups of eight to nine were also reported from Cramlington (Northburn), Harthope and Rothbury. Six were at Ellington, three pairs on the Hadrian Cycle Way and two to four at a further 11 localities.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

There were only two individuals this month, with singles again at Newcastle City Centre (Cathedral) on 11th (PRM) and at Tynemouth on 1st (DRW).

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

A total of four were seen in a Cramlington (Northburn) garden; the two females from last month throughout, a male on 12th and a third female from 21st (LJM). Elsewhere, two were in a South Gosforth garden on 17th (MJCo), a male was at East Ord on 20th (MHu) and a female at Tynemouth from 14th-28th (DRW).

Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus*

Four were at Haughton Strother (Humshaugh) on 6th (MR) and two were seen on Coopies Lane (Morpeth) on 3rd and regularly from 18th-25th (MJC *et al.*).

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Six singing birds were heard in Plessey Woods CP (LJM) and four in Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth) on 14th. Four were also at Gosforth Park NR during the month. Three were reported from Jesmond Dene and Spindlestone, two were at Bothal, Holywell Dene, Kielder Viaduct, Morpeth and Wallington and singles at a further nine localities.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Three were at Holystone (Wallsend) on 27th. Two were reported from Capheaton, Jesmond Dene and Whittle Dene Reservoirs and singles from Plessey Woods CP and Thrum Mill (singing).

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Eight were noted at Holburn Village on 10th (MJC). Seven were seen roosting together in a Swallow's nest on Holy Island during the month (IK); three were reported from Jesmond Dene and singles at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) and a South Gosforth garden.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

The largest gatherings were near Ulgham Park where there were 2,000+ on 16th and 1,500+ on 26th (MSH). Elsewhere numbers were considerably smaller, with 400 at Stobswood on 3rd (TRD), 210-250 at Dinnington and near Humshaugh and 50-100 at Big Waters, Blyth Battery, Derwent Reservoir and Whitley Bay. Two birds were carrying nest material under house eaves at Fulbeck (Morpeth) from 14th (TD).

Rose-coloured Starling *Pastor roseus*

The Prudhoe individual remained in gardens until at least 8th (SPP/STH/DM).

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

Nest building was well under way in Jesmond Dene (Waterfall) by 18th (DHWB). Counts of two, including single singing birds came from Bothal and on the North Tyne near Humshaugh and Wark. Two were also noted in the College and Harthope Valleys, Holystone (Wallsend), Holywell Dene, Plessey Woods and Thrum Mill while singles were seen at Bywell Bridge, Lesbury, Mitford, Ovingham, Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

By far the highest count was 54 at Swallow Pond on 14th (JPD). Other sizeable gatherings were 13 feeding along the edge of the horse field at Big Waters on 22nd, 11 in a Walbottle garden, eight at Howdon and seven in an Alnwick garden. Three to five were also reported from Jesmond Dene, Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) and South Gosforth.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

About 400 were feeding on sheep pasture at Greystead Church (North Tyne) on 20th (EC/JSB). At Swallow Pond numbers rose from 80-100 on 10th to 200+ by the end of the month (SPP/JPD); 106 were at Berwick on 8th and 105 at Earsdon on 6th. Elsewhere 75-100 were reported from Backworth on 12th, Dinnington on 1st, Eshott on 5th, Grindon Lough on 9th, Haughton Strother (Humshaugh) on 14th, Longhirst on 16th, Morpeth on 24th and Wallhouses on 19th with 25-50 noted at Aydon (Corbridge), Druridge, Harwood, Longhorsley and Stobhill (Morpeth).

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Six were feeding together at Carey Burn on 21st (STH). Elsewhere one to three were reported from Bothal, College Valley, Hazlerigg, Howdon, Howick, Jesmond Dene, Monkseaton, Stamfordham and Wideopen. Lesser flocks of 20-35 were reported from Aydon (Corbridge), Cherryburn (Wylam), Earsdon, Gosforth Park NR and Longhorsley with up to 15 at a further four localities.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

250+ was the largest flock seen, at Holystone (Wallsend) on 28th (DRo). There were 80-100+ at Swallow Pond/Rising Sun CP on 19th (SPP/GPK), 100 at Dinnington on 1st (PCF) and 80 at Kenton Bankfoot on 12th.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Five were at Hawsen Burn on 21st (STH), Jesmond Dene on 1st (MJCo) and Swallow Pond on 13th (JPD/AWS). Three were noted at Morpeth on 2nd and counts of two came from Carey Burn, Castle Island, Cherryburn (Wylam), College Valley, Cresswell Pond, Gosforth and Newcastle City centre. Singing birds were reported from Spindleston from 2nd and Dinnington on 15th.



A Mistle Thrush at Eachwick by Chris Barlow

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Six were at Spindleston on 21st (IJ) and one to four at Jesmond Dene, South Gosforth and Walbottle.

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

Peak counts were as follows;

Site	Peak count	Date	Observer	Site	Peak count	Date	Observer
Coastal:				Inland:			
Holy Island	Pairs and singles in four breeding areas		IK	Holystone (Wallsend)	2	5th	DRo
Druridge Pools	4 (2 pairs)	6th-9th	TD/GB	Prestwick Carr	2 (pair)	11th	PCF
Cresswell Pond	4 (2 pairs)	6th-7th	JMA	West Hartford	2	1st	LJM
Bamburgh	2 (a pair)		NTBC	Broadstuther (Harthope Burn)	1 (male)	10th	MH/AA
Coquet Estuary	2	7th	NNBC				
East Chevington	2 (a pair)	Various	TD/GB/TRD				
Howick	2 (a pair)	13th	MJC				
Seaton Sluice	2 (a pair)	3rd	JMA				
St Mary's Island	2 (a pair)	15th	SPP				
Hemscott Hill dunes	1 (male)	27th	JSB/EC				

Dunnoch *Prunella modularis*

During a 4km walk in Central Cramlington on 6th, 16 were heard singing (LJM). 12 birds were also singing in Holburn Village on 10th(MJC). One to two were reported at a further five South East sites.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

40-60 were noted at Low Cocklaw, Berwick on 28th(TBr). 60 were at Cullercoats Harbour Cottages all month and 40 at feeders in a Marden Estate (Cullercoats) garden all month and at feeders at Battlesteads, Wark on 19th(ASJ/CB). During the month, groups of 25 were seen at Blyth Battery and Christon Bank, with ten in an Alnwick garden (JMA). Nine were in gardens at Walbottle and Chapel House (Newcastle) during the month, and six at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) and five at Cresswell Pond.

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

An impressive flock of 51 birds at feeders in a Walbottle garden on 1st provided the observers with an all-time record count for the site (KR/LR). 50 were at Seahouses all month (NNBC). 25+ at Holburn on 10th and 20 at Cresswell on 12th (MJC/ASJ). 17 were at Branton on 23rd (IBDa/KDa). On 19th, 14 were at feeders at Battlesteads(CB) and on 28th 12 were at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) (Tbr). Groups of ten+ noted at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) and at Spindlestone on 3rd and 11th respectively (MHS/BRS). Seven at feeders in a Monkseaton garden on 20th (ASJ). Elsewhere, one to eight were noted at ten county-wide sites during the month.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Three were noted in Jesmond Dene on 22nd (MJC). Elsewhere, singles were seen at 11 sites including two in Newcastle City Centre (DM).

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla Alba*

Only three reports this month, with six at Chevington Burn mouth on 7th being the largest group. Two at Bothal Pond and a single at Big Waters also noted (GB).

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Above average sized winter flocks were to be found this month, with 45 at Prestwick Carr and 38 at West Hartford, both on 14th (PCF/ASJ). 14 were also noted at Holywell Grange on 12th and seven at St. Mary's on 22nd (CGK/GPK/ASJ). Five were seen at Holystone (Wallsend) on 25th and three were at Newcastle Town Moor on 4th (DRo/GB).

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Seven birds were feeding on the beach at Bondicarr (Hauxley) on 27th(EC/JSB). Two to three were at St. Mary's and Tynemouth Pier throughout the month (ASJ). A single all month at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) (IJ).

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

A scarce species in the County this winter, with a female at Rothbury on 8th and two on 15th (TRD). A pair near Kielder Castle on 20th and a single male at Druridge Bay Country Park on 17th (JSB/EC) being the only records.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

20+ at Spindlestone on 2nd, increasing to 50+ by 11th, 20 remaining by 21st (BRS/IJ). On this latter date, 12 were at Howdon (CB). 14 were at Alnwick Garden on 3rd and six at Kielder Viaduct on 6th (JMA). One to four were at three further sites.



Male and Female Chaffinch at Howdon by Colin Bradshaw

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Well reported again this month, with 20 at Howick Gardens on 27th (JMA) and 12 at Kimmer Lough on 10th (IBDa/KD) being the largest parties seen. Between one and six were attracted to garden feeders at Old Hartley throughout the month (RJP). Six along a waggonway at Holywell on 17th (ASJ). Five also in a garden all month at Morpeth (TD). One - four were observed in Holywell Dene in the month, four at Valley Park and three at Southlands School, (both Cramlington) on 14th (RJP/DM), and four seen at Bakethin on 21st (MJC). Pairs noted at a further 14 widespread localities and single birds at eight sites.

Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*

16 at Howden on 21st was the monthly maximum count(CB). Seven in a Walbottle garden on 15th (KR/LR). Six were at Gosforth Garden Village on 13th including two fighting males(MJC). Five were at Alnwick Garden on 3rd (JMA). Three in a Chapel House garden were the first noted this winter at a previously regular site(IK). A pair attended feeders in a Marden Estate garden, all month, with display seen(ASJ) and a single was seen in Jesmond Dene on 22nd (MJCo).

A male Greenfinch
Howdon
Colin Bradshaw

**Linnet** *Carduelis cannabina*

The only large flock of the month, was 150+ at Old Hartley on 3rd (MHS). 45 noted at Swallow Pond on 14th (JPD/AS). About 30 were at Boulmer on 28th (JR). The only other reports were of five at Big Waters and four at Chugdon on 15th.

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*

The wintering flock at Beal was again observed on 7th, feeding on saltmarsh and numbering 100+ (ASJ). Elsewhere, groups of 50 were at Ross Back Sands on 25th (SVM) and around 40 at Hemscott Hill (Druridge) on 3rd (JSB/EC). 30 were noted at Long Nanny throughout February (JPL/NNBC). 28 were at Scremerston Station on 11th (MHU) and ten at Fenham Flats on 17th (NNBC).

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis caberet*

Two+ on 10th and ten+ on 26th were watched at Holburn, and birds attending garden feeders at Gosforth Garden Village during the month, reached a peak of five on 13th (MJC). Three were with a tit flock in Alders at Tarret Burn/Gatehouse on 24th (MH/AA). Single birds were seen at Wark and Grindon and at East Cramlington Pond during the month and a female was attracted to garden feeders at Fulbeck, Morpeth on 1st.

Common Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

13 were at Bakethin on 21st, included three singing males (MJC). One to five were at five further sites, including singing males and birds perched on Winter's Gibbet at Harwood and at Holystone, Wallsend.

A Crossbill in Kielder by Mike Carr

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

50 north of Druridge Pools on 7th and 40 at Howdon on 21st were the month's largest counts (GB/CB). Charms of 20 -22 were at Prestwick Carr, Hauxley and Haughton Strother and Cresswell dunes in the month and 19 noted at Alnwick Garden. Elsewhere, one to 16 were at nine sites. Also, eight singing males were seen/heard establishing territories along a Waggonway between Monkseaton and Holywell on 28th (ASJ).

**Siskin** *Carduelis spinus*

Around 25 on 16th had increased to 40+ at Wark by 21st (PRM). Ten+ were at Wallington on 8th and four at Bakethin on 21st (MJC). Several birds were noted as being back on breeding territory at Fourlaws Plantation (Ridsdale) by 12th (IK). Singles noted in gardens at Prudhoe and South Gosforth during the month.

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

A flock of 22 was at Holy Island (SR/AH) on 8th. The wintering group at North Blyth was variously reported as between 17-19, coming to seed provided (ASJ/TB/GB/LAR). 11 were seen at Guile Point (Lindisfarne) and Ross Back Sands on 8th and 11th (KDa/IBDa/GW). Six were noted at Hemscott Hill dunes on 27th (JSB/EC). Five were watched heading N at Cheswick on 28th (JR) and four fed along the footpath between Craster and Dunstanburgh on 25th (*per* MP).

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

There was an increase in reports this month, with several healthy sized groups noted, the largest being 35+ at Holburn on 10th and 35 at Bee Hive North Pond (Earsdon). 33 were at Holywell and 26 was an excellent garden count in Corbridge (MJC/MNC/ASJ/MR). 28 were also at Whitelea (Cramlington) on 15th (DM). One to five elsewhere at five sites and four males calling on separate territories at Holywell on 28th (ASJ).



Two views of Yellowhammers

left: by Chris Barlow at Big Waters and right: a singing bird by Mike Carr at Holborn on 10th February

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

A good inland winter count of 15 at Catcherside, Harwood on 6th (MJC). Nine were observed at Prestwick Carr on 14th (PCF). Six birds spent the month at Gosforth Park and the adjacent pool area (NHSN) and six also seen north of Druridge Pools on 7th (GB). One to three were at a further eight sites in the South East, one at Derwent Reservoir on 5th (IFo), and singing males at St. Mary's (two) on 22nd and at Holywell on 28th (ASJ).

ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN**Escapes****Lesser White-fronted Goose** *Anser erythropus*

The long-staying individual was again seen at Hauxley on 3rd (JSB/EC).

Bar-headed Goose *Anser indicus*

Two were found at East Chevington & Hauxley from 7th to 28th (GB/TB/HRS/PCF).

Harris's Hawk *Parabuteo unicinctus*

One without jesses was seen again at Jesmond Dene on 1st & 8th (MJCo).

Hybrids**Mallard x Wigeon** *Anas platyrhynchos x Anas penelope*

An unusual hybrid was found at Cresswell Pond from 8th to 19th (MSH).

Tufted Duck x Pochard *Aythya fuligula x Aythya ferina*

One was seen again at Swallow Pond on 19th and Holywell Pond on 23rd & 24th (SPP).

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, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower. **Apologies for any accidental omissions**

BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION

This bulletin was compiled by Graeme Bowman (Mute Swan to Ruddy Duck), Steve Laing (Red Grouse to Black-necked Grebe), Trevor Blake (Honey-buzzard to Crane), Steve Holliday (Avocet to Godwit) Ian Forsyth (Turnstone to Skua), Eddie Crabtree (Puffin to Great Black-backed Gull), Tim Dean (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), Alan Jack (Dunnock to Corn Bunting), Dan Turner (WeBS Coastal Counts) and Steve Holliday (WeBS Inland Counts).

Thanks to David Sanders of NNBC for providing data.

Proof reading was by Mike Smith.

Edited by Steve Barrett NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com

Mail distribution by Paul Stewart.

RECORD SUBMISSION

Please email ntbcorg@gmail.com for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and grid references: The use of standard location names and the include grid references as this 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.

Could club members ensure they to submit records direct to NTBC rather than just Birdtrack. There may be an assumption by some members this happens automatically. We do not want to miss records.

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

It is preferable if you re-size your photos before sending and a suggested size is 640 x 480 pixels. Please ensure you include the following information with your submissions: name, species, date taken, locality.

Photographs will not be used elsewhere without the photographer's permission.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual membership costs £10 for a junior, £30 for an individual, and £32 for a family. For membership enquiries please contact ntbc@jobentley.plus.com

Subscriptions were due from 1st October. Members are asked to check that standing orders have been paid.

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. Please submit any new content for the website to the main club email address.

NTBC SIGHTINGS PAGE

The Sightings Page contains current reports by members. Access is from the NTBC website and an email notification is available for new postings.

Members need to submit a request to be added to the website, specifying the email address they wish to post from before they can submit sightings to ntbcorg@gmail.com

SEATON SLUICE WATCH TOWER

Keys can be collected at indoor meetings or email ntbcorg@gmail.com

Keys cost for £5 for new holders and existing key-holders can exchange keys for £4.

NORTHUMBRIA BIRD ATLAS

Please order your Atlas from

trevor.1958@live.co.uk

You can also collect your copies from the following NTBC/Atlas committee members.

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THE BREEDING BIRD SURVEY (BBS)

Do you enjoy exploring?

Can you identify common British birds by sight and sound?

If so this could be the survey for you.

We are looking for volunteers to survey randomly selected 1km squares. After an initial route-planning and habitat assessment visit, two visits a year in the breeding season are all that is required to record all birds seen and heard along predetermined transects.

The following list is of available squares in the Northumberland area. The grid reference is for the SW corner of the 1km square, and the location name is approximate.

NT7108	Deerlee Knowe	OS map 80
NT8817	Kings Seat, Cheviots	OS map 80
NT9134	West Flodden	OS map 75
NU0637	Buckton Moor	OS map 75
NU1108	Edlingham	OS map 81
NY6080	Cumbrian Border	OS map 80
NY6781	Whickhope Nick East, Kielder	OS map 80
NY7994	Kielder, west of Blackburnhead	OS map 80
NY9980	Ladywell, Gt. Bavington	OS map 81
NZ0075	East of Hallington	OS map 87
NZ2582	Bedlington	OS map 81

WATERWAYS BREEDING BIRD SURVEY (WBBS)

If you are also sure-footed and enjoy river banks, WBBS could be for you.

WBBS extends the methodology of BBS to linear waterways. The following sites are available:-

Shank Burn	NT973153 to NT952137	OS map 81
Wooler Water	NT995279 to NT997248	OS map 75
River Breamish	NU004168 to NU017164	OS map 81
Lewis Burn	NY631887 to NY623874	OS map 80
River Rede	NY880933 to NY864943	OS map 80
River Rede	NY888927 to NY900901	OS map 80
Tarn Beck	Close to NY6078 route needs to be planned	OS map 86

To find out more about both these surveys please visit the British Trust for Ornithology's BBS website at www.bto.org/bbs

For further information please contact Muriel Cadwallender, BBS Regional Organiser,

email ; tomandmurielcadwallender@hotmail.co.uk.

BTO HOUSE MARTIN SURVEY 2015

We know surprisingly little about House Martins despite the fact that they breed alongside us, using our houses on which to build a nest made of hundreds of beak-fulls of mud.

Critically, we do not know why this species is in rapid decline in the UK. Currently, it is 'Amber listed' in the **Birds of Conservation Concern** listings, compiled by the UK's leading conservation agencies.

How can you help in Northumberland?

In this first year of the survey we need help to visit 81 'random' (i.e. pre-selected) 1-km squares, across the whole county, for breeding House Martins.

We need volunteers who are willing to carry out two or three visits to a 1-km square between late May and mid-July, to look for House Martins and their nests.

How long will each visit take?

The survey visits will involve walking around the square looking for House Martins and their nests and mapping and recording a few details about any nests that you find. In most squares each visit will normally take around one to two hours - however, the visit length depends on the habitats within the square: visits to urban squares may take longer, whereas visits to squares with only a small number of buildings may take less than half an hour.

To sign up

To select a 1km square please visit <http://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/house-martin-survey>

If you are new to BTO online surveys you will need to register to obtain a 'user name'. This is easily done on the website.

Tom Cadwallender

BTO Regional Representative - Northumberland

FARNE ISLANDS WILDLIFE 2014

Farne Islands Wildlife 2014 is now on sale, £5. Annual report of birds, seals, whales, dolphins, butterflies and moths recorded on the Farne Islands during 2014. Published by Natural History Society of Northumbria in partnership with the National Trust. The latest Farnes report can be purchased from the Great North Museum: Hancock (Mon-Fri 10-5) or from the Farne Islands. Alternatively you can purchase online (£6.50 incl p&p) <http://www.nhsn.ncl.ac.uk/news/fiw-2014-for-sale/>

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BEACH SURVEY - TIDELINES

The Interpretation Gallery in the Old Low Light (North Shields fish quay <http://oldlowlight.co.uk/> is now open to the public (from last Friday 27th) – was opened by local MP Alan Campbell. The gallery includes our exhibition entitled 'Tidelines' – made in association with artist Stephen Livingstone <https://stephenlivingstone.wordpress.com/> 'Tidelines' will be on display probably until the end of August – already some of our members have been to take a look. There is a small charge of £2 for entry to the first and second floors where there is also an art exhibition. On the ground floor is a cafe and shop (please look out for my book 'Fish Quay Folk of North Shields').

If you are able to visit the gallery it should provide much of interest – remember to take a look in the drawers of the Cabinet of Curiosities (part of our exhibit), but please open them carefully and pull out to their full extent. Altogether 39 bird specimens feature, in various forms, from the collections of the NEBBS Group and myself.

Dan Turner



A Stock Dove at Gosforth NR by Colin Bradshaw

INLAND WeBS COUNTS: NORTH HUMBURLAND

Version

Interim

Year: 2015
Month: February

[illegible]

NOTE - special arrangements have been made for access to Longhirst Flash where there is no general access due to opencast coal mining work until approx end 2015.

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2015 No 3

MONTHLY SUMMARY – MARCH

5th May 2015



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Smew

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Red-necked Grebe

Black-necked Grebe

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Osprey

Whimbrel

Black-tailed Godwit

Ruff

Yellow-legged Gull

Waxwing

Single at Widdrington Moor lake on 8th.

13 still at Big Waters through to 25th and 14 at Grindon Lough on 12th.

One with Greylags at Holywell Pond on 18th.

Single adult with Pinkfeet at Widdrington Moor Lake on 8th.

The drake previously present was found again on 26th at Cocklawburn.

First sighting in county this year involved a drake on Holy Island on 21st.

One at Gosforth Park remained until mid-month.

An adult in full breeding plumage at Castle Island on 23rd.

One at Budle Pt on 4th. Few sightings this winter.

Singles still at Bamburgh and East Chevington until 18th.

Singles noted at Tughall and The Wanneys.

Exceptionally early report of one on 4th in North Northumberland.

Early sighting of two over Morpeth on 20th.

Peak count of 14 on Holy Island on 22nd.

Single at Berwick on 27th.

An adult at Lynemouth Flash on 31st.

Two at Morpeth were the only sightings all month.

COMMITTEE NEWS

The Northumbria Bird Atlas has been uniformly received with praise. Sales are going very well and are currently approaching 1000 copies. If you have not got your copy of this impressive NTBC publication please use the club website or contact any committee member. The book is also available from NHSN at the Hancock Museum, NWT at the Gosforth HQ and of course at high quality book shops, not to mention the Drift Inn, Cresswell.

INDOOR MEETINGS

NTBC indoor meetings are held at Northern Rugby Club, McCracken Park, Great North Road, Newcastle, NE3 2DT starting at 7.00pm and generally finish between 9.00pm-9.30pm.

The next meeting will be in September 2015.

FIELD TRIPS

May 17th 2015

Sidwood for new members

June 7th 2015

Long Nanny for Terns

Any members who are interested in any of the above field trips please email Steve Anderson seaswan@btinternet.com

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 2012 page 236.

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.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Peak counts involved 69 at QEII CP Lake on 7th (CDH), 66 at Berwick on 27th (PRM), 65 at Killingworth Lake on 31st (LJM), 30-41 at Horncliffe, West Ord and Whiteadder Point (Berwick), and ten to 15 at Big Waters, Bothal and Cocklawburn Ponds, Budle Bay, East Chevington and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Six to nine were also at Broomlee and Greenlee Loughs, Gosforth Park NR and Warkworth, while one to four were at about 17 further sites. One, of the 'Polish' form, ringed at Amble in 2007 was at QEII CP Lake on 29th (IF).

Bewick's Swan *Cygnus columbianus*

An adult, with 51 Whooper Swans, was at Widdrington Moor Lake on 8th (MPF *et al.*).



A Bewick Swan with Whooper Swans at Widdrington Moor Lake
8th March by Jonathan Farooqi

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

At Tynemouth, 40 flew N on 8th (SPP) and 34 N (GPK/SPP) on 17th, when 17 flew N at Seaton Sluice (SSWT), and seven to nine moved N at Berwick on 12th (BWG) and Newton Point on 20th (TRD), while 16 flew NW at Haughton Strother GP on 12th (MR). A total of 126 was at Lindisfarne NNR on 8th and involved parties of 60, 30, 30 and six asleep on the flats and sandbars (apparently tired after a westerly gale; IK). Other large parties included 105 at East Chevington on 8th (JL), 88 at Bothal Pond on 24th (TB), 64 at Widdrington Moor Lake on 8th (JL), 52 at Sweethope Lough on 24th (IK), and 40-47 at Cresswell Pond (AA), Horncliffe (JDL) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs (SR) between 8th-23rd. Counts of 22-33 came from Branton GP, Gosforth Park NR, Hadston, Warkworth and Warkworth Lane up to 23rd, and ten to 18 at Beal, the Blyth Estuary, Derwent and Hartburn Reservoirs, Grindon Lough and Haughton. One to six were at Big Waters, Capheaton and QEII CP Lakes, Greenlee Lough, Linton and Swallow Ponds, and West Ord.

goose (sp.)

One was at Hauxley Reserve on 11th (HRS).

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Northbound birds involved 206 at Tynemouth (SPP) and 140 at Whitley Bay on 8th (IJ), 100 at Seaton Sluice on 15th (SSWT), and 45-60 at East Ord, Berwick on 7th and 9th (MHu), while 80 flew SW at Low Alwinton on 15th (SW), 55-70 W at Big Waters (GB) and Harper's Heugh (MSH) on 5th and 8th, and 30 S at Bothal. 1,350 were at Doddington on 15th (DGB), 800 at Bradford Kaims on 4th (GPK), 300 at Harper's Haugh (near Budle Bay) on 14th (MSH), 300 at West Stobswood Pool on 11th (MSH), 126 at Widdrington Moor Lake on 8th (JL), and counts of 80 at Budle Bay, East Stobswood and Flotterton (Coquetdale) up to 18th. One to ten were also at Coanwood and Warkworth Lane Ponds, East Chevington, Grindon Lough, Hauxley, Low Newton and Sweethope.

White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*

All reports were of Greenland *flavirostris* race birds and involved 14 adults at Grindon Lough on 12th (PRM) and four there on 1st (PRF) and 29th (PRM), 13 at Big Waters up to 25th (GB *et al.*), and six (probably of this race) at Harper's Heugh (near Budle Bay) on 5th (MSH).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

About 400 at Flotterton (Coquetdale) on 15th (SW) and 258 at Derwent Reservoir on 27th (IFo) were the largest single counts. Other peaks included 180 at Hauxley Reserve on 8th (DM *et al.*), 171 (including two neck-collared birds) at Holywell Pond on 18th (SPP), 69-93 at Grindon Lough (PRM) and Woodhorn Flashes (CDH), and 39-44 at Coanwood and Warkworth Lane Ponds, and Low Newton. Counts of 12-18 came from Bothal Pond, Gosforth Park NR and Plenmeller Common, while one to eight were at nine further, mainly coastal, sites. One at Woodhorn Flashes on 27th appeared to be paired up with a Mute Swan (STH).

Ross's Goose *Anser rossii*

One was at Widdrington Moor Lake on 8th (JL/IJ).

Snow Goose *Anser caerulescens*

A white morph adult flew E, with 16 Greylags, at Holywell Pond on 18th then turned NNW until lost to view (SPP).

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Grindon Lough held a peak of 213 on 2nd (PRM), 164 were at Derwent Reservoir on 6th (IFo), 113 at Hauxley Reserve on 8th (DM *et al.*), 65 at Plenmeller Common (PRM), 45-50 at Bothal Pond (TF/JFa), Big Waters (IJ) and Castle Island (DM *et al.*), and 30-36 at Gosforth Park NR, Newcastle Leazes Park and Warkworth Lane. Groups of ten to 21 were at Bywell Haughs, Catcleugh Reservoir, Linton and Swallow Ponds, and QEII CP Lake, and six to nine at Coanwood Pond, West Ord and Woodhorn Flashes. One to four were also at seven further sites.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

In the north of the county, 500 were at Fenham Flats on 15th (JPL) following 70 there on 3rd (JDL), 450 roosted at Budle Bay on 4th (GPK), 205 were at Harper's Heugh (near Budle Bay) on 5th (MSH), and 11 at Holy Island on 11th (JPL/GRo). In the southern half of the county, one was at Bothal Pond on 6th (TF/JFa).

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

Pale-bellied *hrota* race birds involved 130 at Holy Island harbour on 21st (IK) and 81 at Fenham Flats on 26th (PRM), while 80+ at Harper's Heugh (near Budle Bay) on 5th (MSH) consisted mainly of birds of this race. A group of 70 dark-bellied *bernicla* race birds were at Holy Island on 21st (IK).

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Fenham Flats attracted 309 on 26th (PRM), 205 were at Budle Bay on 15th (SW), 81 at the Blyth Estuary on 28th (LJM), and 33 at Howdon on 12th (CB). Five to nine were at Bothal Pond, Castle Island, Elswick, Grindon Lough, Hauxley Reserve, and Widdrington Moor Lake, three to four at East Chevington, Haughton Strother GP, Holystone, and Holywell and Swallow Ponds, and one to two at Arcot Pond, Big Waters, the *Beehive* Flash (Earsdon), Longhirst Flash, and Monks' House Pool.

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

Three (two drakes) were at Blakehopeburnhaugh on 22nd (TRD), single pairs at Ridley Stokoe on 6th (JSB/EC) and 14th (PRM), and Redmire on 29th (JR), and a drake at Smalesmouth on 21st (JR). Away from the core breeding area, a drake was on the River Wansbeck on 7th (GB) and 8th (DM *et al.*).



A fine drake Mandarin
Ridley Stokoe
19th March
John Clark

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

Peak counts were 269 at Hauxley Reserve on 11th (HRS), 234 at Derwent Reservoir on 5th (IFo), 160 at Warkworth Lane on 21st (TB), 140-152 at Bothal Pond (TD) and Grindon Lough (MRS), 101-117 at Big Waters (GB), Cresswell Pond (STH) and Hoppen Kiln Flash (MSH), and 60-95 at Druridge Pools, Fenham Flats, Gosforth Park NR and Hauxley Reserve. Counts of 27-45 came from Budle Bay, Linton Ponds and Low Newton, and 12-17 were at Brenkley, Newbiggin (on sea) and QEII CP Lake.

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Largest concentrations were 24 at Bothal Pond on 10th (TF/JFa), 22 at Arcot Pond between 8th-29th (DM), 18 at Caistron on 5th (JD), and ten to 16 at Big Waters, Castle Island, East Chevington, Hauxley Reserve, Ladyburn Lake and Swallow Pond. Eight were at a small pool south of Bothal Pond, and three to four were at Druridge Pools, Gosforth Park NR, Lynemouth and Woodhorn Flashes. One to two also visited Capheaton and QEII CP Lakes, Grindon Lough, Haughton Strother GP, Holystone, Holy Island, Howdon, Longhirst Flash and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. A group of 11 fed at the Wansbeck Estuary on 7th (GB).

A handsome drake Eurasian Teal at Howdon by Colin Bradshaw

**Teal** *Anas crecca*

The only three-figure report was of 230 at Howdon on 12th (CB). Other peak counts were 89 at Grindon Lough on 23rd (PRM), 85 at Budle Bay on 26th (PRM), 50-61 at Big Waters (SPP), Druridge Pools (TD), Hoppen Kiln Flash (MSH) and St Mary's Wetland (IJ). Counts of 21-36 came from Arcot and Bothal Ponds, Derwent Reservoir, Elswick, Gosforth Park NR, Wallington Hall, Warkworth Lane, West Hartford and Whiteadder Point (Berwick), and 12-16 at Hauxley Reserve, Longhirst Flash and Middle Ord Pond. Three were on the River Wansbeck at Bothal on 7th.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

The largest concentrations were 122 at the Tweed Estuary on 6th (MHu), 86 at Derwent Reservoir on 5th (IFo), 68 at QEII CP Lake on 7th (CDH), 54 at Newcastle Leazes Park on 3rd (DM), and 43-44 at Longhirst Flash (TD) and Whiteadder Point, Berwick (TBr). Counts of ten to 23 came from Alnwick Garden, Bothal Pond, Byker, Castle Island, Hauxley Reserve, Monks' House Pool and Stakeford.

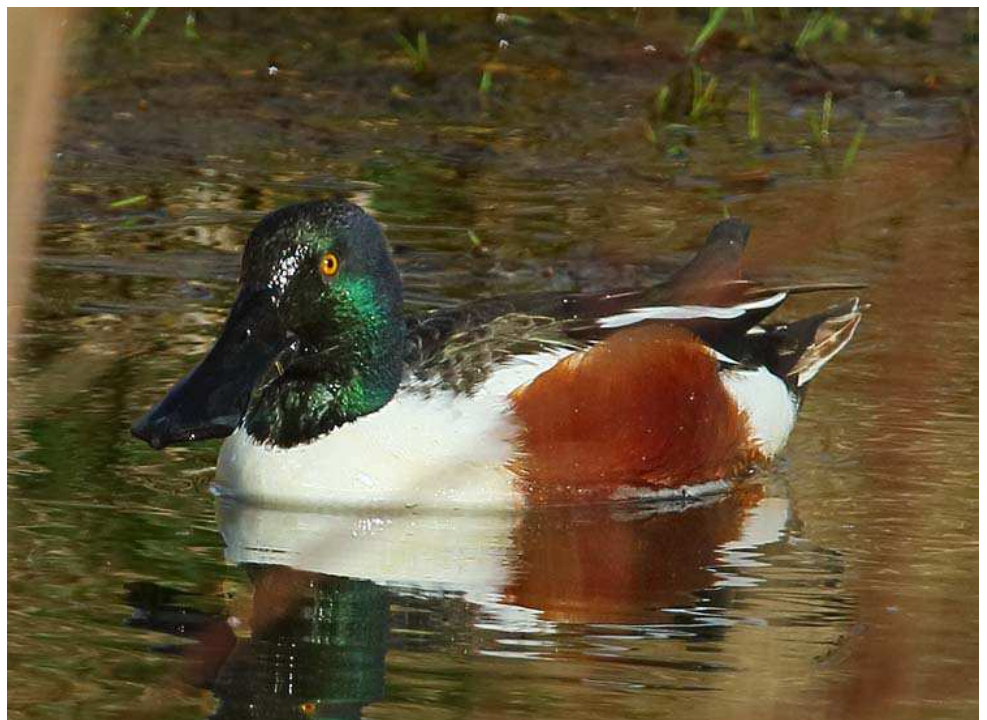
Pintail *Anas acuta*

Three were at Fenham Flats on 12th (IK) and four on 15th (TRD), and three were at East Chevington on 29th and 31st (JSB/TRC/TF/JFa/IJ) and one to two on several dates between 15th-23rd (TB/TRD *et al.*). At Druridge Pools, a pair was present on 5th (IRD), two drakes on 7th (SRB) and one on 6th (TRD). A drake was noted at Arcot Pond on several dates between 15th-28th (DM/LJM).

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

18 were at Swallow Pond on 1st (GPK), 12 at Monks' House Pool on 19th (JDL), 11 (all drakes) at Druridge Pools on 18th and ten (eight drakes) there on 23rd (TRD), eight at Warkworth Lane on 8th and 21st (TB), and six to seven at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN) and Holy Island Lough (NNBC). Three to four were found at Bothal Pond, Howdon, Monks' House Pool and Widdrington Moor Lake, and one to two at Arcot Pond, Big Waters, Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough, Hauxley Reserve, Killingworth Lake and Marden Quarry.

A Sholveler reflects Howdon Wetland by Colin Bradshaw



Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Peak counts involved 32 at Holywell Pond on 18th (SPP), 30+ at Killingworth Lake on 8th (MSH), 12 at Swallow Pond on 7th (SPP), and six to eight at Arcot (LJM) and Bothal (TD) Ponds. One to two were at Big Waters, East Chevington, East Stobswood Pool, Hauxley Reserve, Ladyburn Lake, and Linton and Warkworth Lane Ponds.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Killingworth Lake again proved popular with this species, holding peaks of 115 on 1st (LJM) and 147 on 8th (MSH). Peak counts elsewhere were 37 at Newcastle Leazes Park on 7th (KWY), 37 at QEII CP Lake on 7th (CDH), 31-33 at Hauxley Reserve (HRS), Ladyburn Lake (TB) and Newcastle Exhibition Park (DM), and 11-25 at Arcot, Bothal, Coanwood and Holywell Ponds, Big Waters, Bolam Lake CP, East Chevington, Gosforth Park NR and Grindon Lough. Two to eight were at nine further sites, including four at the Tweed Estuary.

Scaup *Aythya marila*

Five (two adult drakes, and adult female and two immatures) were at East Chevington on 21st (TF/JFa/CGK *et al.*) and one was noted there on 1st (NFO), with one at nearby Ladyburn Lake on 8th (TB). More unusual were two (one drake) at Bolam Lake CP on 31st (CDB).



A drake Scaup
Bolam Lake
Chris Barlow
31st March

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

A total of 29 flew N and 21 S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). Moderate counts involved peaks of 63 at Berwick and 55 at Cocklawburn on 27th (PRM), 45 at Stag Rocks on 26th (PRM), 30-40 at Fenham Flats (PRM), North Shields Fish Quay (DRW), and 23 at Newbiggin. Seven to ten were also at the Tweed Estuary and Whitley Bay.

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

26 were at Stag Rocks on 15th (SW) and five to six on 4th and 26th (GPK/PRM), eight were at Scremerston on 16th (SW), six at Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) on 19th (JPL/GRo), and one to two at Cocklawburn, Fenham Flats, Holy Island harbour (pair in full breeding plumage; IK) and Newbiggin. The long-staying drake was again at Derwent Reservoir all month (IFo/PRM).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

A total of 16 moved N and six S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). About 60 were at Cocklawburn on 26th-27th (PRM), 20 at Stag Rocks on 24th (BRS) and three to 12 there on 14th-15th (TRD/BRS), and three off East Chevington.

Black Scoter *Melanitta americana*

A drake was again off Cocklawburn, on 26th (PRM).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Largest gatherings (probably including some overlap) were 104 at the Tweed Estuary on 6th (MHu), 77 at Berwick on 27th (PRM) and 74 at New Water Haugh (River Tweed) on 13th (MHu). Other high counts involved 42 at East Chevington (JL), 32 at Capheaton Lake (STE), 25 at Swallow Pond (GPK/SPP), and ten to 18 at Big Waters, Branton GP, Caistron, Grindon Lough, Killingworth and QEII CP Lakes, West Ord and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Seven to nine were also at Bothal Pond, Castle Island and Hauxley Reserve, and three at Bolam Lake CP, Broomlee Lough, Shield on the Wall and Widdrington Moor Lake.



Goldeneye displaying at Branton GP by Tim Dean on 24th March

Smew *Mergellus albellus*

An unusual record concerned a drone which flew from Holy Island harbour until lost to sight over Fenham Flats on 21st (IK). This is the first Lindisfarne NNR Smew record since November 2003.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

18 were at Stag Rocks on 24th (BRS), 16 at Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) on 19th (JPL), 13 at Budle Bay on 26th (PRM), ten at Fenham Flats on 13th (JDL), and seven at the Tweed Estuary (MHu). Three to four visited the Blyth Estuary, Cocklawburn and Meadow Haven (Berwick), and two at Spittal Bay. A group of 18 was a notable flock for Druridge Pools on 29th (IJ/TRC), East Chevington north pool hosted 11 on 21st (TF/JFa) and up to seven on several other dates (while up to seven were also offshore there), and one to two were at Cresswell Pond, Ladyburn and Widdrington Moor Lakes, and on the River Wansbeck at Stakeford.

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

32 were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 7th (SR), 19 at Berwick on 27th (PRM), ten at Broomlee Lough on 7th (MRS), five to eight at Horncliffe (MJC), Killingworth Lake (MSH), the Tweed Estuary (MHu), Warkworth (IRD) and West Ord (MHu). Three to four visited Hexham, Morpeth, Pauperhaugh and Thrum Mill (both Rothbury), and Staward, and one to two were at 16 further widespread sites.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

The peak count was ten at the localities of Holborn Village, on 20th and 27th, and Harthope Valley (including singing birds) on 22nd (MJC). One to three birds were seen at many other widespread locations.

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

Some good numbers of birds recorded in upland habitats with peak counts of 90 in the Carey Burn area (Harthope Valley) (MJC), 50 at Allendale (ASJ) and 40 in the Hawsen Burn area (Harthope Valley) (MJC), all on 22nd. A further 20 were at Broadstruther (The Cheviots) on 19th (TRD), 16 at Hedgehope on 6th (IRD) and ten at Plenkeller Common on 12th (PRM). A group of seven at Longframlington Common on 23rd included four males, some displaying (MH). One to six were at Knockburn Farm (Allendale), Meadow Cottage (Allenheads), Steng Moss (Harwood Forest) and Whitfield Moor.

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

Up to 12 birds were regularly recorded at Slaggyford throughout the month (IK). High Knock Shield Farm (Allendale) peaked at eight on 3rd and the highest count at Meadow Cottage (Allenheads) was seven, also on 3rd (RD/IF). One to five birds were at Carrshield, Coanwood Burn, Hexhamshire Common, Hollin Green Farm (Allendale), Plenmeller Common, Sinderhope, Spartylea and Swinhoe Shield.



Above: a Grey Hen at Allendale on 25th March by Tim Dean and right:

a cock Pheasant by Mike Carr
Gosforth NR on 8th March

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Apart from four at Druridge Lane on 20th (TB), all other records were of either two or single birds, no doubt as a result of coveys breaking up and pairs returning to breeding territories - reports came from 11 typically eastern locations including Big Waters, Brenkley (Blagdon), East Chevington, Holywell Dene, Prestwick Carr, QE11 Country Park, Warkworth Lane and Widdrington Moor Lake. A pair were also at Derwent Reservoir on 17th (IFo).

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

Hauxley again proved to be a favoured location with 11 there on 8th, including nine at the feeding station (DM/STH/IF/PJA). Four were at Big Waters on 1st (IJ) and one to two birds at Eachwick and Holywell Dene.



Golden Pheasant *Chrysolophus pictus*

A single female was at Gosforth on 30th (SR).

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 18 flying N and 10 S (SSWT). A minimum of eight were at Cocklawburn on 26th (MHu) and four, including a bird in full summer plumage, were close inshore at Old Hartley Bay on 14th (SPP). Elsewhere, one to two birds were recorded at eight coastal localities between Druridge and Berwick North Shore.

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

One was in Beadnell Bay on 6th (JPL) and an immature bird was feeding in Low Newton Bay on 20th (TRD).

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

At Seaton Sluice Watch Tower the peak total was 30N per hour on 21st during what was otherwise a poor month for this species (SSWT). 18 were on Old Hartley Cliffs on 14th (SPP) and Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) peaked at 17 on 15th (IJ). One to two were at Berwick North Shore (during a WeBS count), Holy Island and St. Mary's Wetland.

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

The only significant movement recorded at Seaton Sluice was 560 N in three hours on 21st (SSWT). On 11th, 300 headed S in one hour in a big fishing movement off Emmanuel Head (Holy Island), all except one being full adults (IK). Other movements included 40 past Emmanuel Head on 15th, mostly headed S, 30 N past East Chevington on 18th (TRD) and 15 flew N past St Mary's in 15 minutes on 18th (GPK). 30 were in Spittal Bay (Berwick) on 3rd (MHu) and 20 at Newton Point on 20th (TRD). Singles were at East Chevington and Snab Point (Cresswell).

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Inland sites held the greatest numbers this month with 29 present at Whittle Dene Reservoirs 7th (SR) and 19 at Derwent Reservoir on 12th (PRM). A WeBS count at Berwick North Shore produced a total of 15 on 4th (MHu) and Big Waters had a maximum of eight on 1st (IJ). One to six were at Colt Crag Reservoir, East Chevington, Elswick Wharf (Newcastle), Gosforth Park, Holywell Dene, QE11 Country Park, Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay), Seaton Sluice and Whitley Bay Links/Beach. One was observed flying over the Nestlé factory in Fawdon (Newcastle) on 7th (CDB).

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

At Seaton Sluice this species continues to be scarce with a monthly total of five N and two S (SSWT). Five were seen at Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) on 15th (TRD) and four at Berwick North Shore (during a WeBS count) on 4th (MHu).

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

A bird, or possibly more than one, was seen regularly at the start of the month at Gosforth Park NR and adjacent pool, but not after mid-month (NHSN).

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Only single sightings this month, from the following localities: Cresswell Pond, Holy Island Causeway, Holywell Dene, Holywell Pond, Horton Burn (Cramlington) and Stakeford. (RJP/LJM/NNBC/PCF/TRD/SPP).

Great White Egret *Ardea alba*

A summer-plumaged adult was at Castle Island (River Wansbeck) on 23rd (JR/IF/TRD).

The Castle Island Great
White Egret
by Tim Dean on 23rd March

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

The peak counts were 19 in the River Tweed Estuary during a WeBS count on 6th (MHu), a minimum of six at Gosforth Park NR regularly during March having returned to nests in the heronry at the start of the month (NHSN), and six at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 7th (SR). Elsewhere five were at Howdon on 15th (CB) and four at Hauxley NR on 8th (DM). One to three birds were at many other locations.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

The highest count was 14 on the River Wansbeck on the stretch of the river between Wansbeck Riverside Park–Castle Island on 7th (GB). Swallow Pond had a peak of eight there on 20th (GPK) and a WeBS count produced six at Whiteadder Point (Berwick) on 9th (TBr). One to five birds were recorded at 16 typical locations, with display and trilling widely noted, such as Airy Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield), Arcot Pond, Big Waters, Blyth GC, Bothal Pond, Caistron, Capheaton, Derwent Reservoir, East Chevington, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Gosforth Park, Hauxley NR, Holywell Pond, Low Stanners (Morpeth), River Tyne (Hexham) and Stakeford Bridge.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps Cristatus*

A good number of reports from suitable inland breeding sites included peak counts of eight at Derwent Reservoir on 25th (IFo), six at Killingworth Lake, also on that date (GPK), and five at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 10th (SR). At the coast, East Chevington held five on 29th (IJ/TRC). Birds finally returned to Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) with three present on 10th (TF/JFa) and the same number at QE11 CP on 3rd. One to two were at Airy Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield), Big Waters, Cocklawburn, Druridge Pools, Felton Lane, Haughton Strother GP (Humshaugh), Holy Island, Seaton Sluice, Tynemouth and Widdrington Moor Lake.



A Great Crested Grebe creating a splash at Killingworth Lake
by Alan Jack

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

One was at Budle Point on 4th (GPK).

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

The group at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) peaked at 11 by 24th (TRD/BRS) with three at Budle Point on 4th and a maximum of two around Holy Island during the month.

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

The well-watched individual remained at the North Pool (East Chevington) until at least 18th, by which time it was in partial summer plumage (NFO/TB/JL *et al.*). The only other record was one off Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 10th (AJN).

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Two different birds were seen at Carterway Heads and Derwent Reservoir on 5th (IFo) and other birds were seen at Etal on 8th (*per* NNBC), Big Waters on 19th (SPP) and at Snods Edge on 29th (IFo).

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

A well photographed female was at Gosforth Park NR on 9th (NHSN) and a male was back at East Chevington on 29th (IK/TF/JFa).

The East Chevington Marsh Harrier
quarters the reeds
29th March by Jonathan Farooqi

**Hen Harrier** *Circus cyaneus*

On 2nd a ring-tail was at a confidential site in Central Northumberland (MH) and a male was seen at a confidential site in North Northumberland on the 14th (*per* NNBC).

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

Two birds were at one site on 5th (STE) and a single bird was seen there on 8th and 21st (CGK/GPK/PS *et al.*), one to two birds were also seen at another site throughout the month (DRo). Single birds were also at two other sites on 23rd (MH).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Three birds were noted at Staward on 21st (MJC) and two birds were seen at Thrunton Woods on 14th (MJC) and at Prestwick Carr on 30th (PRM). Single birds were noted this month at over 20 sites.

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

12 birds were at Holburn Village on 20th (MJC), nine birds were seen in the Harwood Forest area on 21st (DM/STH/JA) and at Haughton Strother GP on 22nd (MR). Eight birds were seen at Big Waters on 22nd (GB), seven were at Cartington on 10th, Harwood on 15th and Holburn Village on 27th (MJC). Six birds were also seen at Staward on 21st, Grindon Lough on 23rd (MJC) and at Big waters on 26th (SPP), five birds were seen on Otterburn Ranges on 15th (JR), Alnwick Garden on 21st (PRM), Harthope Valley on 22nd (MJC) and at Prestwick Carr on 23rd (SPP). 51 records were received of one to four birds from over 40 sites.

Rough-legged Buzzard *Buteo lagopus*

A bird was noted at Tughall on 3rd (JPL/RNa) and another one flew off E towards Harwood from the Wanneys on 24th (IK).

Osprey *Pandion haliaetuss*

One was noted flying NW in North Northumberland on 4th (JDL), and on 12th a bird was being escorted N by two Buzzards (*Buteo buteo*) at Holystone (DRo).

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Once again four + birds were heard or seen at Gosforth Park NR throughout the month (NHSN). Up to two birds were at East Chevington, Cresswell Pond and Swallow Pond on several dates. Single birds were either seen or heard at Bamburgh, Big Waters, Branton GP, Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough and Newton Pool.

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Ten were at Lynemouth on 19th (SRB), nine birds were at Woodhorn Flashes on 27th (STH) and eight were at Big Waters on 1st (IJ) and Arcot Pond on 29th (DM). Seven were at Castle Island on 8th (DM/STH/PJA/IFo) and Hauxley NWT on 11th (HRS) and six birds were seen at Gosforth Park NR throughout the Month (NHSN). One to four birds were at 11 sites



A Moorhen at Holywell by Alan Jack

Coot *Fulica atra*

83 birds were at Killingworth Lake on 1st (LJM), 73 were at Warkworth Lane on 8th (TB) and 69 were at QEII CP on 7th (CDH) were the highest counts. 34 birds were at Big Waters on 12th (GB), 31 at Woodhorn Flashes on 27th (STH) and 20 at Arcot Pond on 8th (DM). One to eighteen birds were also noted at over 20 sites.

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

The first returning birds were three at Cresswell Pond on 11th (TB), followed by two to three here between 22nd-29th (PCF *et al.*). A single landed for a brief moment at Druridge Pools on 22nd (STE) and six arrived on the Blyth Estuary on 28th staying until the following day at least (LJM). Two more briefly touched down at East Chevington on 29th (TF/JFa).

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

An exceptional inland count of 212 was noted at Derwent Reservoir on 12th (PRM), whilst 118 at Berwick North Shore on 4th was the peak coastal gathering (MHu). The species was very well reported this month, with high coastal counts being 84 roosting birds at Cullercoats on 18th (ASJ), 43 at Newbiggin on 19th (STH), 40 at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 26th (PRM) and 38 at Cresswell Pond on 29th (STH) with 12-30 at a further six coastal spots and one to two pairs at East Chevington and Hauxley NWT.

Inland reports were even more numerous, with the peaks being 60 at Branton (just south of the GPs) on 19th (TRD), 42 at Caistron on 5th (JD), 37 at Haughton Strother GP on 31st (MR) and 22 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 28th (SR). Counts of ten to 18 were also made at Merryshields GP, Sharperton, West Hartford and Widdrington Moor Lake and single figure reports, including some territorial birds, came from Arcot Pond, Big Waters NWT, Blagdon (Horton Grange), Bothal Pond, Brenkley, Buckham's Bridge (Upper Coquetdale), Capheaton, Coanwood Pond, Gosforth Park, Grindon Lough, Harthope Valley, Hepple, Hexhamshire Common, Holystone, Killingworth Lake, Knockburn, Plenmeller Common, Prestwick Carr, Spartylea, Swallow Pond and Wark.

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

Some good-sized Spring flocks reported this month, the peak being 600 at Nedderton (near Bedlington) on 18th (TB) whilst inland, ca.500 were noted at Low Acton Farm (Allendale) on 26th (SJH) and 350 (in several flocks) were in the Meadow Cottage (Allenheads) area on 26th (ASJ). A build-up of numbers took place at Prestwick Carr, from 160 on 13th (PCF), to 260 on 21st/22nd (PCF/SPP) and 340+ on 30th (PRM). Elsewhere, ca.300 were at Lowick on 4th (AB/LB), 250 high to the NE of Hulne Park on 2nd (MH), 227 on Plenmeller Common on 12th (PRM), 200 at Amble Braid on 18th (TRD) and ca.150 at Staward on 21st (MJC). Groups of 30-94 were also seen at Coanwood Pond, Farnham Moor, Grindon Lough, High Mickley, Hollin Green Farm (near Keenley), Pegswood, St Mary's Wetland and Shield on the Wall, with single-figure reports from a further eight locations. Four males were noted in song flight over Hexhamshire Common on 25th (STE), three were seen feeding on the sports field at the Royal Grammar School (Jesmond) during the dark on 3rd (GB) and two were on the summit of Hedgehope on 6th (IRD).

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Berwick North Shore held 16 on 4th (MHu), ten were noted at Fenham-le-Moor on 26th (PRM) and nine were on Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 14th (STH).

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

Some decent flocks remained into March with high totals including ca.600 at Staward on 21st (MJC), 400 in several flocks/pairs at Acton Moor on 22nd (ASJ), 350 at Caistron on 5th (JD), 273 at Plenmeller Common on 12th (PRM), 225 at Haughton Strother on 10th (MR), 200 at Spartylea on 3rd (RD/IF), 100-160 at Breckonholme (Allendale), Coanwood Burn, Derwent Reservoir, Low Acton Farm (Allendale) and 80 at Holystone. Hauxley NWT held 46 on 8th and 31 (mostly in pairs) were counted in a single field at Big Waters NWT on 22nd (GB). Smaller numbers, including territorial birds, were also noted at a further 15 locations.



A Lapwing at Holywell Pond by Alan Jack

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Coastal reports involved seven between Hauxley-Amble on 2nd (HRS), six at Cocklawburn on 30th (MHu) and five at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 27th which included some display taking place (STH). Two pairs were also seen at Widdrington Moor Lake on 11th/30th (MSH). Three were noted at Derwent Reservoir and Holy Island, whilst one to two were present at East Chevington and Holystone, and a pair was on a restored open-cast site at Brenkley (Blagdon) on 21st (GB).

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Two moved E over Morpeth on 20th (TB).

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

An increase in flock sizes from last month was apparent, with highs of ca.300 resting on saltmarsh at Long Nanny on 22nd (TD), ca.190 at Fenham-le-Moor on 26th (PRM) and 185 at Boulmer on 18th (AB/LB). Counts of 70-85 came from Bamburgh, Berwick, Hauxley-Amble, Holystone and Prestwick Carr, whilst 40 pairs were counted on Acton Moor (Allendale) on 22nd (ASJ). Additional coastal gatherings included peaks of 54 at Druridge Pools, 52 on the Tweed Estuary, 41 at Howdon and 20 at Beacon Point,(Newbiggin,) whilst inland were 51 at Haughton Strother GP, 36 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs, 31 at Plenmeller Common and 19 at Derwent Reservoir. Ten to 14 were also noted at Backworth, Berwick North Shore, Coanwood Pond, Grindon Lough, St Mary's Wetland and Widdrington Moor Lake; single-figure reports came from an additional 12 sites.



Two photographs by Colin Bradshaw from Howdon Wetland, above: a Eurasian Curlew and below: Black-tailed Godwits

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

The wintering group at Holy Island Rocket Field pools peaked at 14 on 22nd (IK/SR/AH) – the same maximum as last month and presumably the same group. Howdon also held three birds during 7th-13th with two here on 23rd (CB). Late month saw singles appear at Cresswell Pond on 21st, Druridge Pools on 22nd, Castle Island on 23rd and Grindon Lough on 23rd.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Few reports this month, with five from Holy Island causeway and three in Budle Bay on 15th (TRD) and further singles at Hauxley NWT on 2nd, Budle Bay on 26th and Cresswell Pond on 29th. Two birds at Newbiggin on 30th, included one very white leucistic individual (ADMc).

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

The most were 52 recorded during the WeBS at Berwick North Shore on 4th (MHu) then 40 at St Mary's Wetland on 15th (IJ), 35 at Newbiggin Beacon Point on 19th (STH) and 30 in R Tweed Estuary on 15th (MHu). Boulmer had 15 on 20th, up to eight were in Whitley Bay, up to four at Cocklawburn and also two at Howdon on 7th.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

At least 550 were at Fenham-le-Moor on 26th (PRM). The only others reported were ten at Amble Braid on 18th and six at Newbiggin on 19th.

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

One was on R Tweed near the sewage works on 27th (PRM).

A Ruff at Cresswell Pond
15th March
by Jonathan Farooqi

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

The peak count at St Mary's was 85 on 21st (KWY), 54 were at Newbiggin Beacon Point on 19th (STH) and 47 at Scremerston on 16th (SW). Berwick, Cocklawburn, East Chevington and Hauxley all had 24-34 at times.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

The WeBS at Berwick North Shore resulted in 76 on 4th (MHu); 15-25 were noted at Amble Braid, Newbiggin and Widdrington Moor Lake. Eight or fewer were noted at Boulmer, Cresswell Pond, Howdon, Prestwick Carr and St Mary's.

**Purple Sandpiper** *Calidris maritima*

Peak counts were of 30 at Stag Rocks on 24th (JSB/EC) and 26 at St Mary's on 21st (SPP). Ten to 14 appeared at Boulmer, Scremerston, Tynemouth and Whitley Bay and eight were at Cocklawburn on 16th, seven at Newbiggin on 19th and seven at Seaton Sluice on 29th.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

An exceptionally early individual was reported at Big Waters on 14th (AJN). Another very early one was calling along the river at Kilham on 29th (TRD/JD).

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Two were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 24th (SR) with one there on 3rd and two were on R Breamish north of Hedgeley GP on 29th (NFO). Singles were at Houghton Strother GP on 2nd and 30th and at Big Waters on 14th.

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Four were at Fenham Flats on 19th (JDL).

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Around 600 were at Fenham-le-Moor on 26th (PRM), the maximum at Howdon was 292 on 23rd (CB), 166 were logged during the WeBS on R Tweed Estuary on 6th (MHu) and 140+ were noted at Berwick on 27th (PRM). St Mary's had a peak count of 80 on 14th, 47 were at Newbiggin on 19th and 15 were at Ellington on 8th. The first inland all arrived on 12th: nine at Grindon Lough, four at Derwent Reservoir, two at Holystone and one at Plenmeller Common. Later, 40 were seen at Acton Moor (Allendale) with display noted on 22nd (ASJ) and on 26th three to four were observed in the Knockburn area, Keenley and Coanwood Burn.

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyrtus minimus*

There were three records of singletons: at Houghton Strother GP on 4th (MR), at Arcot Lane on 8th (DM) and at East Chevington burn sea pool on 19th (ADMc).

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Two were at Prestwick Carr on 15th (PCF) and two in Harthope Valley on 22nd (MJC). During the period 5th to 29th singles were recorded at Alnwick, Cambo, Capheaton, Harbottle, Harwood village, Kilham, Longhorsley, North Shields and St Mary's.

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Haughton Strother GP again held good numbers with 45 on 20th (MR) and 27 were at Arcot Lane flash on 8th (DM); 13 were logged at Hauxley NWT on 11th. Nine or fewer appeared at another 12 typical wintering localities. In potential inland breeding areas 12 were noted displaying at Acton Moor on 22nd (ASJ) and four were doing so in the Knockburn area late in the month.

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

Ten were noted at Bamburgh Stag Rocks on 26th (PRM) but elsewhere, the only records were two were off Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) on 15th (NNBC/TRD) and a single at Cheswick Sands on 3rd (AA/MH).

Razorbill *Alca torda*

At Seaton Sluice, 73 passed the watch-point on 8th, the majority moving S, and on the following day 95 moved N in two hours with 23 S in one hour on 12th (SSWT). An observer at Tynemouth on 8th also noted 20, mainly moving S (SPP). Singles were noted elsewhere at Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) and at Bamburgh Stag Rocks on 15th and 19th.

Little Auk *Alle alle*

A lone bird flew S at Tynemouth on 8th (SPP).

Guillemot *Uria aalge*

Two hours of sea watching at Seaton Sluice on 7th and 9th recorded 350 N and 1,255 N respectively, with 275 returning S in one hour on 12th (SSWT). In the north of the county, 70 were on the sea at Marshall Meadows Bay and four at Berwick, North Shore on the 4th, with 18 counted at Cocklawburn on 30th (MHu) and five at Holy Island, Emmanuel Head on 15th (TRD).

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

The first returning bird of the year was heard calling over the beach at East Chevington on 22nd (STE) and a single moved N at Seaton Sluice on 30th (SSWT).

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

The only significant passage noted at Seaton Sluice was 100 N per hour on 21st (SSWT) but on 8th, 51 loafed on the sea close inshore at the base of the cliffs at Tynemouth Priory (SPP) where 20+ were noted back on the breeding cliffs on 17th (CGK/SPP). At the Newcastle Quayside on 15th-16th, 50+ were on the nesting ledges (PRM/KWY) and at Cullernose Point, 150 were noted as the first of the year there on 20th (TRD). Up to six were recorded at Howdon from 13th (CB), but an unusual record was a single at Grindon Lough on 7th (PRM).

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

By far the largest concentration was ca.4,500 in the evening gull roost at Derwent Reservoir on 12th with 450 in the Grindon Lough roost, also on 12th (PRM). Smaller three-figure gatherings of 100-260 were at Berwick (West Ord), Bothal Pond, Exhibition Park, Haughton Strother, QEII CP Lake, the River Tweed Estuary and Warkworth (JMA/TD/CDH/MHu/DM/MR) with flocks elsewhere of up to 85 at about ten other localities (MJCo/MHu/IJ/DM/NHSN/MRS).

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

Surprisingly few records from the favoured Newbiggin where numbers had dwindled to only singles on two dates, 7th and 14th (GB/STH) and, on other dates throughout the month, singles were also present at seven other sites, namely Castle Island, Ellington, Holy Island Lough, the River Tweed, St Mary's and Swallow Pond (TB/TRD/IF/MHu/GPK/SPP/SW); the majority of these birds were adults in full plumage and at Swallow Pond on 16th one fancied his chances with a Black-headed Gull which was not appreciated by other BHG males (SPP).

Common Gull *Larus canus*

A huge gull roost at Derwent Reservoir on 12th was estimated to hold at least 11,500 (PRM), 545 were counted at Haughton Strother on 10th (MR) and 100 were at Chirdon on 15th (JR). Small gatherings of up to 15-50 were noted at Arcot Pond, Flotterton (Coquetdale), the River Tweed Estuary and Wark (MHu/DM/PRM/JR).

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

Many records were received as birds returned to the county in good numbers. From 15th, the monthly total counted moving N at Seaton Sluice was 50 (SSWT) and gatherings of 10-30, the majority adults, were at Budle Bay, Jesmond Dene, the River Tyne (Elswick Wharf-Newcastle Business Park) and Swallow Pond (MJCo/MSH/GPK/DM/SPP) with up to eight at more than 30 other localities, both coastal and inland moorland sites.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argentatus*

The maximum count was 752 from a WeBS survey on the River Tweed Estuary on 6th (MHu) with 200 recorded at Haughton (North Tyne) on 7th (JMA). Elsewhere, 10-90 were at Berwick (North Shore), Derwent Reservoir, Exhibition Park, Leazes Park, QE II CP Lake, the River Tyne (Elswick Wharf) and St Mary's Wetland (CDH/IJ/MHu/DM/PRM), with one to ten at eight other sites.

***Yellow-legged Gull** *Larus michahellis*

An adult was on Lynemouth Flash on 31st (JSB).

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoides*

An adult bird was again present at Swallow Pond on 2nd (GPK/SPP *et al.*) and from 14th-17th single immatures, possibly only one individual, frequented Tynemouth, North Shields Fish Quay and St Mary's Island (AC/MSH/GPK/DLo); on 18th, two immatures were present at the Fish Quay (AC). A 1st-winter was at the Holy Island war memorial lookout by the priory on 15th (TRD).



A first-winter Iceland Gull with a 'northern' Herring Gull on Holy Island
photographed by Tim Dean on 15th March

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

At Derwent Reservoir, 35 gathered in the evening gull roost on 12th (PRM), 22 were at St Mary's Wetland on 15th (IJ) and 16 were counted in a WeBS survey on the River Tweed Estuary on 6th (MHu). Other records of single birds came from three coastal and one inland site.

Rock Dove *Columba livia*

Just one report of 20 at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 8th (IJ).

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Large counts at Howdon with 64 on 7th and 58 on 12th (CB). A weedy stubble field at Big Waters held 15 on 15th (GB), seven were at St Mary's Island on 14th with six there on 15th (IJ), five at Jesmond Dene on 8th (MJCo), four at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) and in an Old Hartley garden with one to two at ten other widespread localities.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

Large counts of 500 at Staward on 21st (MJC), 100 at Hulne Park on 5th (JMA) and 65 at St Mary's Wetland on 14th (IJ) with 14 at Jesmond Dene on 22nd and 11 at Eachwick on 14th.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Ten gathered in a tree at Beaconhill (Cramlington) on 6th (STH), seven at Dinnington on 25th (PCF), five at Linton Ponds on 7th (CDH) and two at Eachwick on 14th with two fledged young in a Gosforth garden on 29th (STE).



A Collared Dove
Eachwick
Chris Barlow

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Very well reported with two between Red Row and Widdrington on 2nd, at Beadnell on 13th (JPL), Eland Hall (Ponteland) on 15th (per PCF) and East Chevington on 26th and 29th (ADM/TF/JFa). Singles were noted regularly at Cresswell Pond, Holy Island and Prestwick Carr and at 16 other widely spread localities with one road casualty on the A1 north of Morpeth.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

One was at Derwent Reservoir on 5th and 23rd (IFo) and at Big Waters NWT on 21st (GB).

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Two called at Capheaton on 19th (STE) with all other reports singles at Wark and Derwent Reservoir on 12th, Pegswood by-pass and Pigdon on 14th, Humshaugh on 15th, Low Alwinton and Ouseburn (Newcastle) on 16th, North Shields on 17th, Holywell Pond on 18th, Usway Burn (Fairhaugh) on 25th and near Corbridge (A69) on 27th.

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

One called on several dates in 2nd half of the month at a site in the SE of the county (CGK/GPK/AJ) and one hunted near the Dene at Holywell on 28th (ASJ).

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Six were at Quarry House Moor on 23rd (AH) with several birds present at Prestwick Carr in the first half of the month the peak counts being four on 4th and 10th (PCF). Two hunted the dunes at Warkworth Gut on 18th (TRD) with singles in the Stobswood / Widdrington area, Alnwick Moor, Coanwood Burn, East Chevington, Holy Island, Holywell and Monks' House Pool, with one exception all in the second half of the month.



A Shortie at Warkworth
28th March by Jonathan Farooqi

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Scarce this month with singles at Holywell Dene on 4th, 6th and 11th (SPP/RJP), Jesmond Dene and Sheepwash on 8th (MJCo/CGK/GPK/PS).

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Birds yaffling all month at Craggside (Rothbury) and Gosforth Park NR (TRD/JD/NHSN/DLo) with singles calling at Riding Mill on 10th and 13th (CW/PCF), near Cambo on 18th (MSH) and Holystone on 18th (DRo).

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Largest count of six at Derwent Reservoir on 25th (IFo), four present all month at Northumberland Park (North Shields) all month (MNC) and three all month at Rothbury (TRD/JD). Three were at Low Alwinton, Chugdon Wood (Ellington) and Jesmond Dene on 15th (SW/TB/MJCo), near Cambo on 18th (MSH) and Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth) on 24th (MJC) with one to two at 14 other widespread localities.

A Greater Spotted Woodpecker
Gosforth NR
Mike Carr
8th March

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

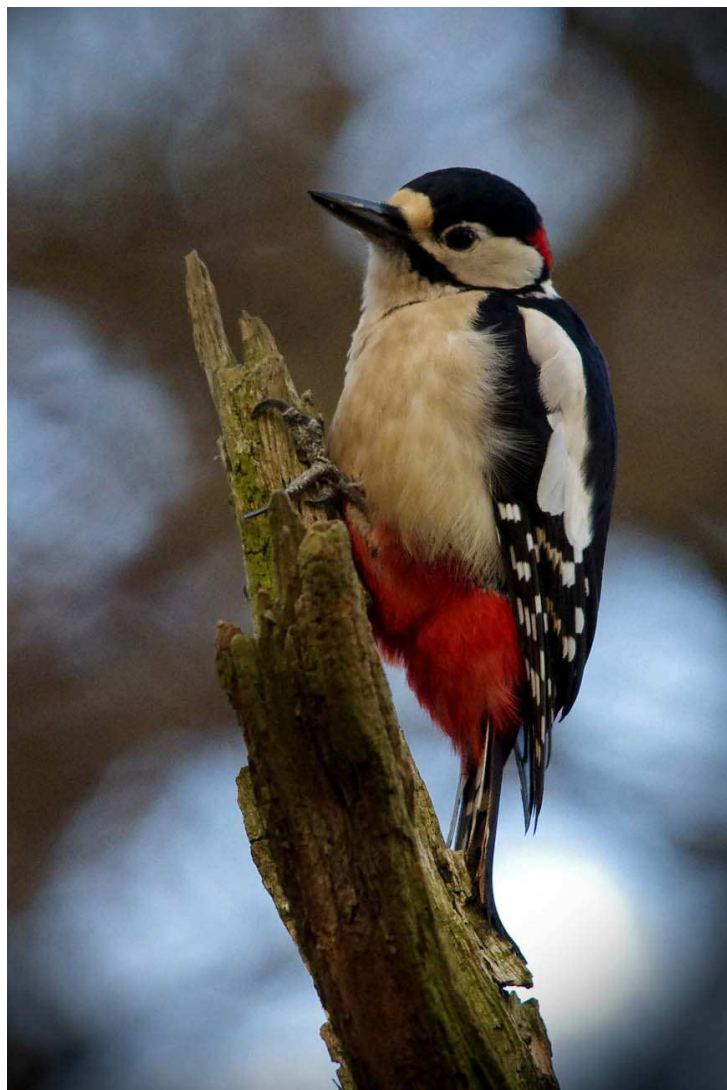
Five birds were seen at Felton Lane on 15th (TB) and at Prestwick Carr on 30th (PRM); four birds were noted at Holburn Village on 20th and at Carey Burn (Harthope) on 22nd (MJC) and three birds were at Winters Gibbet (Harwood) on 21st (DM/STH/PJA). 56 records were received of one - two birds.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

On the coast single birds were seen at Fenham-le-Moor on 3rd (JDL) and at Holy Island on several dates from 15th (SW/SJH/IK/PRM) (IK/SR/AH), while inland birds were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs and an upland site on 6th (SW/CW), Castron on 21st and at another upland site on 22nd (MJC/MSH).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

The breeding pair was back at Newcastle Quayside with copulation noted early in the month (IK/KWY), and two birds were seen interacting with a Common Buzzard (*Buteo buteo*) at Widdrington Moor Lake on 11th (MSH). A sub-adult female was regularly noted on Holy Island throughout the month (IK). On or near the coast single birds were seen at Widdrington Moor Lake on 8th (IJ), Budle Bay on 15th (SW) and at Seaton Sluice on 30th (SSWT). Single birds were also noted at four inland sites during the month.



A Kestrel over Warkworth Gut
Tim Dean on 15th March

Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor*

One was at Aid Moss on 27th (ADMc).

Magpie *Pica pica*

A foraging flock of 20 was at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 8th (DM), 13 at Howdon on 14th (CB) and ten to 12 at Prestwick Carr on 18th (PCF/GB). Nine were at Sheepwash on 22nd, seven at Fawdon on 18th, five at Jesmond Dene on 29th with one to four at five other locations.

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Eight, consisting of four pairs, were noted at Woolsington Hall on 30th (SRB), three at Jesmond Dene on 22nd (MJCo) and Ellington on 28th (TB) with two at Thrunton Woods, Gosforth Park and at Northumberland Park (North Shields) all month. Singles were at nine other widespread locations.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

Some large gatherings with photography aiding the observer in counting 800 swirling in to roost at Fawdon on 6th (CDB), 300 at East Shaftoe on 11th, 250 going to roost at Warkworth, 100 at Radcliffe both on 3rd (JMA), 150 were at Staward on 21st (MJC), 90 at an evening roost at Ouseburn mouth (Newcastle) on 16th (PRM), 75 at Cresswell on 3rd (JMA), 74 the peak count for the month at Howdon on 15th (CB) and 50 at Big Waters on 1st (IJ). One to 16 were at three other locations with a first garden record for the observer at Tynemouth (CB).

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

At Warkworth on 3rd 250 flew to roost (JMA), 100 at Staward on 21st (MSH) and at Backworth on 26th where 83 nests were counted, 80 at Holywell Dene on 28th with 34 nests counted (ASJ/SPP). 50 were at Cresswell on 3rd, ten at Big Waters on 1st and three at St Mary's Wetland on 15th.

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

50 were at Cresswell on 3rd (JMA), 23 at St Mary's Wetland on 15th, 14 at Weetslade Colliery CP on 14th (IJ), 18 possible migrants at the Snook (Holy Island) on 17th (MJC) and 12 N at Seaton Sluice Watch Tower on 29th. Two to six were at Big Waters, Eachwick and Jesmond Dene.

Raven *Corvus corax*

One mile north of the Gibbet at Harwood four were seen on 10th (ADMc), three at a possible nest site at Holystone on 5th (DRo) with two at Cartington on 10th, Wanneys on 24th and 27th and Holy Island on 25th (MJC/IK/ADMc/SR). Singles were at seven other upland locations.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Ten were at Harthope Valley on 22nd (MJC), four to five at Winters Gibbet (Harwood) on 21st (DM/STH/PJA), four at Scotch Gill Woods on 24th (MJC), three+ at Bamburgh on 24th (BRS) and three at Catcleugh Reservoir on 25th (PRM). Two were at Berwick, Cramlington, Jesmond Dene, Prestwick Carr, Riding Mill and St Mary's Wetland with singles at ten other widespread localities.



A Goldcrest in a Rothbury garden
Janet Dean

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Ten were at Big Waters NR on 1st (IJ), nine at Eachwick on 14th (CDB), four at Weetslade Colliery CP on 14th and Jesmond Dene on 15th (IJ/MJCo) with two at Fawdon and Gosforth Park.

Great Tit *Parus major*

Feeders at Prestwick Carr attracted ten on 14th (PCF), eight were at Jesmond Dene on 15th and Brenkley on 21st (MJCo/GB), seven at Eachwick on 14th (CDB), five at Big Waters on 1st and two at Fawdon and Gosforth Park.

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

A total of four at four locations in Jesmond Dene on 22nd (MJCo), two in an Old Hartley Garden and nearby Holywell Dene all month (RJP) with singles at Big Waters, Eachwick, Linton Ponds and Gosforth Park.

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

At Prestwick Carr four were present on 20th and 30th with three there on 13th (PCF/PRM), two attended feeders at Big Waters regularly during the month (GB/SPP), two at Longhorsley on 15th were excavating possible nest site on 27th (AB/LB) and two were at County Hall (Morpeth) on the same date (TB). Singles at the above locations and East Chevington, Warkworth Lane (Ellington), Holywell Dene, Redesmouth Bridge and Weetslade Colliery CP.

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

A pair plus one were at New Mills Wood (Berwick) on 15th (TBr), three at Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth) on 24th (MJC), two at Postern Burn (Morpeth) on 18th (ADMc) with singles at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) regularly during the month and also Felton Lane, Jesmond Dene, Riding Mill and Thrum Mill (Rothbury).



A Marsh Tit
Janet Dean
Thrum

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Movement north was noted on 8th with small parties at Holy Island totalling 50 (IK), 35 at East Chevington (DM/STH/PJA/IFo) and 30 at Whitley Bay links & Beach (IJ). 25 were at St Mary's on 20th and 16 in the Holywell area on 28th (ASJ) whilst twelve sang at Beacon Lane (Cramlington) on 24th, many in mist at Stobswood Opencast on 17th with one to five at 12 other widespread locations.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

The first was seen over Cresswell Pond on 10th (GeD), with the next at Whiteadder Point & Water (Berwick) on 15th (TBr/BWG) then visiting nest sites at Foxton Hall on 18th (AB/LB). The only multiple count was three at East Chevington on 29th with singles seen there, at Carey Burn (Harthope Valley) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs between 22nd and 29th (TF/JFa/MJC/SR/JSB).

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

Eight at Big Waters on 1st was the largest count (IJ). Up to six were noted at Holywell Dene during the month and four at Newcastle (Hadrian Cycle Way), Longhorsley and Prestwick Carr, with one to two at a further 13 localities. Nest building was noted at Haughton Strother GP (Humshaugh) on 16th and at Longhorsley on 18th and completed at the latter locality by 27th.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

14 were at Holywell Dene by the end of the month (ASJ). Singles were at Big Waters, Cresswell Pond and Gosforth Park NR between 7th-12th with one to two at Bedlington, Berwick, Branton GP, Fawdon, St Mary's Island, Tynemouth and Walbottle from 14th-19th. There was a notable influx thereafter with peaks of six at Monkseaton-Holywell Waggonway on 27th (ASJ) and Kilham on 29th (TRD/JD), by which time numbers at Gosforth Park had increased to five singing males (MJC). Elsewhere during the final ten days of the month there were counts of three from Bedlington (Furnace Bridge), Berwick (New Mills Wood), Castle Island and Linden Hall with one to two reported from a further 35 widespread localities.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Three females were at Cramlington (Northburn) until at least 3rd (LJM) and another female was in a Tynemouth garden until 4th (DRW). An un-sexed individual was also at Holywell Dene on 26th (RJP).

Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus*

Two were still at Morpeth (Coopies Lane) on 3rd (TB).

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Four were in Jesmond Dene on 22nd (MJCo) and three at Alnwick Garden on 21st and Gosforth Park on 10th. Up to two were noted in Holywell Dene and singles at a further 12 localities.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Six were reported from Morpeth (Scotch Gill Woods) on 24th and Staward on 21st (MJC) and five were at Gosforth Park NR on 10th. A count of four at Capheaton on 19th included two singing males, while four were also in the Harthope Valley and at Prestwick Carr. One to two were noted in a further 11 potential breeding areas.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

A total of 18 singing birds were heard in the Harthope Valley (12 at Carey Burn / six at Hawsen Burn) on 22nd (MJC). Elsewhere, three were reported from Jesmond Dene and Scotswood and singles at Big Waters, Eachwick and St Mary's Wetland.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

There were still around 10,000 coming to roost at Holy Island Lough on 11th (IK). Another roost at Yearle contained up to 2,000 during the month (DGB/RHB). Lower numbers were noted elsewhere, including 500 at Flotterton on 8th, 400 at Brunswick Green on 18th and 200-230 at Derwent Reservoir and Elsdon. Flocks of 90-100 were at Cresswell and Plenmeller Common, 50 at Cullercoats and 22-32 at Fawdon.

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

In the Upper Coquetdale study area 12 pairs were located on 29th, seven of which had full clutches (JR). A total of 12 were reported from the Harthope Valley on 22nd (MJC) and three were in Jesmond Dene on 8th (Benton Bank Bridge and Waterfall) and 15th (Coleman's Fields and Waterfall); on the latter date the Waterfall pair were carrying nest material (MJCo). Elsewhere one to two were reported from Bothal Viaduct, Glen Ridley (nest), Hartford Bridge (nest building), Hepple, Ponteland, Ridley Stokoe (nest), Rothbury, Scotch Gill Woods, West Holywell Dene (nest building) and Wylam.

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

The first individuals were a singing male at Hawsen Burn (Harthope Valley) and another male W at Hexhamshire Common, both on 25th (MJC/STE).



One of the first arrivals at Hawsen Burn
A Ring Ouzel by Mike Carr
25th March

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Larger gatherings were 11 at Prestwick Carr on 14th (PCF) and ten at Big Waters on 1st (IJ). Five singing males were heard between Longhirst-Ulgham on 18th and four birds at Eachwick on 14th included three singing males. A female was collecting nest material at Kenton on 13th and one to two birds were reported from a further five localities.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

There was a general and widespread return, as birds began moving through the county towards Scandinavian breeding grounds. The largest gathering was 500 at Tarsset Mouth on 29th (JR). Elsewhere 200-300 were reported from Castron on 5th, nearby Flotterton on 8th, Fontburn Reservoir on 11th and Holystone on 27th. Flocks of 100-166 were noted at Derwent Reservoir, Meldon, Otterburn, Plashetts, Sleafy Hall, Staward, Swallow Pond and Wedder's Leap car park, with 50-85 also at Colt Crag Reservoir, Cottonshope, Eals, Kiln Pit Hill, Harwood Forest, Haughton Castle, Prestwick Carr, Melkridge and Wallington Hall. Up to 40 were reported from a further 15 localities.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

A total of ten were singing at North Plantation (Between Longhirst and Ulgham) on 18th (MJC). Six at Usway Burn (Upper Coquetdale) on 25th included a bird with nest material (MHP). There were counts of five from Cottonshope (Otterburn Ranges) on 29th and from Derwent Reservoir on 25th and three (two singing) at Bothal Woods on 7th. Elsewhere, one to two were reported from a further eight localities.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

The largest gatherings were in the Morpeth area with 60 at Whorral Bank on 2nd and 52 at Fulbeck on 1st (TB/TD). Elsewhere 40-50 were noted at Fontburn Reservoir, Holystone, Linden Hall and Longframlington Common, with ten to 15 at Alnwick (Hulne Park), Cramlington, Derwent Reservoir and Swallow Pond. One to six were reported from a further eight localities.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Three very active pairs were at Harwood Head on 18th (MSH) and six were reported from the Harthope Valley on 22nd (MJC). Elsewhere four were noted at Holystone and at Newcastle (Exhibition Park) and three in Jesmond Dene with one to two at a further eight localities.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

12 singing birds were in the Harthope Valley on 22nd (MJC). Five were at Jesmond Dene on 8th, four at Big Waters on 1st and three at Bedlington (Furnace Bridge) and Eachwick, with one to two at a further four localities.



A common and much liked species
A Robin at Gosforth NR by Mile Carr on 8th March

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

Peak counts were as follows;

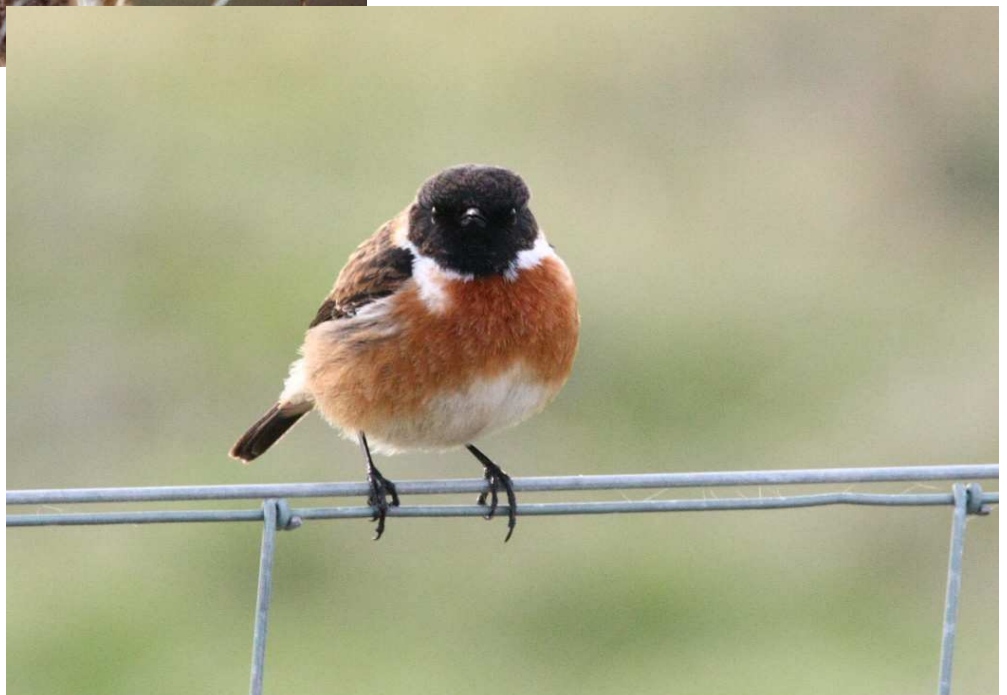
Site	Peak count	Date	Observer	Site	Peak count	Date	Observer
Coastal:				Inland:			
Druridge Pools	10 (five pairs)	15th	TD	Hawsen Burn (Harthope Valley)	4 (two pairs*)	22nd	MJC
Boulmer	4	20th	TRD	West Hartford	2	1st	LJM
Holy Island	4 (two pairs)	15th	NNBC	Winter's Gibbet	2 (a pair)	21st	DM/STH/PJA
East Chevington	3 males	10th	TRD	Carey Burn (Harthope Valley)	2 (a pair)	22nd	MJC
Alnmouth GC	2 (a pair)	18th	AB/LB	Holburn Village	2 (a pair)	27th	MJC
Berwick (Little Beach)	2	22nd	BWG	Longframlington Common	2 (a pair)	23rd	MH
St Mary's	2	14th	CGK/GPK	Big Waters	1 (on passage)	10th	AJJ per GB
Tynemouth	2 (a pair)	22nd	DRW	Cartington	1 (male)	10th	MJC
Cocklawburn	1 (male)	26th	PRM	Longhirst GC	1 (male)	8th	TD
Cresswell	1	8th	TB				
Hauxley-Amble	1 (male)	2nd	HRS				
Lynemouth	1 (male)	18th	TRD				
Whitley Bay links	1	8th	IJ				

* including a pair probably of the nominate race *S.r.rubicola* (Continental Stonechat). On 25th three birds included the same pair plus a male of the normal race *S.r.hibernans* (MJC).



Two Stonechats

Left: a 'continental;' bird at Hawsen Burn on 22nd March by Mike Carr and below: a male eyeballs Gary Eden on 15th March at Newton.



Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

The first arrivals were relatively late, beginning with a male at Rowhope (Upper Coquetdale) on 21st (JR). Singles were at Derwent and Whittle Dene reservoirs on 24th, St Mary's Island and Upper Coquetdale on 25th, Cocklawburn on 26th, St Mary's on 28th and again in Upper Coquetdale at Buckham's Bridge and Shillmoor on 29th.

Dunnoek *Prunella modularis*

Poorly reported this month with four singing along the River Blyth, near Bedlington on 24th(JR). Two frequented an Old Hartley garden during the month and two were at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 8th. Singles at three further sites.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Only four records this month, with 37 at a roost at Southlands School (Cramlington) and 11 at Valley Park (DM), 30 at Cullercoats on 1st(IJ) and four at Eachwick on 14th.

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

As flocks disperse the monthly maximum count was of 36 birds at Chugdon Woods (Ellington) on 29th (TB). At Weetslade, 20 were present on 14th(IJ). Ten to 12 were at four further sites and one to eight at seven sites including birds still attending garden feeders in Tynemouth, Old Hartley and Linden Hall and a pair inspecting a nest box at Morpeth.



A House Sparrow at Rothbury by Janet Dean

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

A noticeable increase in inland sightings within the County occurred during March, with six seen in Upper Coquetdale on 21st and seven on 29th (JR). In Harthope Valley, 12 were noted, including three pairs at the Carey Burn on 22nd (MJC). Two to three were seen at eight further widespread inland sites and three were in Jesmond Dene during the month. Singles were noted at 13 sites including Newcastle City Centre.



A Grey Wagtail in the Harthope Valley on 18th March by Tim Dean

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

Notable counts of 32 in fields at Holywell Pond and 25 at Backworth were made on 27th (SPP). A ten-mile walk in Upper Coquetdale produced sightings of 23 birds on 25th (Mph). Nine were at Hauxley on 22nd (PCF) and eight+ at a reed bed roost in Gosforth Park during the latter half of the month.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba alba*

Two were noted at Holywell Grange on 27th (SPP) with a single Lynemouth Flash on 31st (MH/AA/JSB).

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Northerly passage into the County was much in evidence this month, with large movements noted at Berwick and Cocklawburn on 27th involving counts of 990+ and 375+(PRM). During the month, 100+ were observed returning, passing over Marden Estate Cullercoats (ASJ). Smaller numbers were also seen moving North/North West at Big Waters, Seaton Sluice and Bamburgh. A return to breeding areas both along the coast and inland occurred, with many observed at Holy Island, mainly in small feeding flocks from 21st (IK). 65 birds were noted at Staward on 21st (MJC). In Allendale on 22nd, 40+ were noted, with many displaying birds among these (ASJ). On the same date, 20 were song-fighting in Carey Burn (Harthope Valley) with a similar number on 25th in the Hawsen Burn area (MJC). 38 were newly arrived at Bothal on 29th (TFa/JFa) and 37 seen during a walk of ten miles in Upper Coquetdale on 25th (Mhp). At St. Mary's, 32 birds included 14 song-fighting on 19th (ASJ). One to eight were at five further sites during March.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Five were at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 8th and four on 22nd, including one *Littoralis* bird (IJ). Other sightings of this Scandinavian race were observed at East Chevington (three), Hadston(2), St.Mary's (one) and Berwick Little Beach (one). (ADMc/TF/JFa/MHS/TBr). Other *Petrosus* birds were seen five further sites, including three at Boulmer and Cocklawburn (TRD/PRM).

Two Rock Pipits

Top: a bird on Hauxley Beach on 1st March by Eddie Douglas and below: a 'Scandinavian' bird at Hadston on 125th March by Jonathan Farooqi



Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

Only three singles were seen this month with birds at Rothbury, Humshaugh and Grindon.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

The only large gathering was of 65 birds observed at Holystone (Coquetdale) on 3rd (Dro). Elsewhere, ten were watched fly-catching in the Harthope Valley on 22nd (MJC). One to six were noted at six other sites. Light Northerly passage was observed at Bamburgh on 24th and 28th.

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

A notable count of 50 came from Howick on 8th (NNBC). Four pairs seen in Holywell Dene on 28th (ASJ). Six were at Horncliffe on 19th (MJC). One to five noted at 19 further sites during the month.

Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*

Eleven singing males noted along a Waggonway at Monkseaton/Whitley Bay on 20th (ASJ). Eight were at Ellington on 1st (TB) and 5 in Holywell Dene in the month (RJP). Two to four were at four further sites, including garden feeders at Old Hartley and Eachwick.

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

Some large gatherings noted this month, with 200 birds at Sharpeton and Fenham le Moor on 15th (SW/TRD). 120 at Berwick on 16th (SW) and 30 at Ellington on 14th (TB). One to 15 were at eleven further sites.

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*

38 remained at Hemscott Hill Dunes, with 38 also seen at Druridge Links both on 17th (AA/MH). 24 noted at Cocklawburn on 11th (Mhu). Six birds were on the Snook(Holy Island) on 17th (MJC) and two at Fenham Le Moor on 3rd (JDL).

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis caberet*

Around 120 were at Dipton Wood on 15th (D Le). 12 at Staward on 21st (MJC). One to six were noted in eleven upland/woodland breeding areas during the month. Singing birds noted in young conifers at The Wanneys and Harwood. Two were seen at Valley Park, Cramlington on 1st (DM).

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

A total of around 50 observed in small groups at Harwood on 5th (STE). Ten were at Leaplish (Kielder) on 14th (PRM). Several groups noted elsewhere in Harwood Forest on 15th (IK). At Thrunton, an immature bird was found dead below the nest tree, with the family group perched above (IK). One to five were observed at seven further upland forest sites.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Flocks of 32 and 30 remained together in the last week of the month at Humshaugh and Howdon (Twi/CB). One to eleven were seen at eleven widespread sites within the County.

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

Flocks of 90 at Dipton Wood on 5th and 30 at Holystone on 1st were the largest noted in March (DLe/DRO). 30 also seen at Rothbury and 25 at Hulne Park during the month (JMA). 25 at Harwood Head on 1st and elsewhere in that area a return to breeding sites was evident (IK) and around 20 at Leaplish (Kielder) on 14th (PRM). One to eight were at three other sites.

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

In the last week of the month, 4-5 were watched feeding at Chevington Burn mouth on several days, even approaching to within three metres range. (AA/MH/ et al.). Three were at North Blyth on 4th(DLo), with two noted at Berwick Little Beach and inland at Hepburn Moor, feeding on the road, in the month (BWG/SW). Singles were seen at St. Mary's, Hemscott Hill, Tynemouth and Holy Island.

A Snow Bunting on Hauxley Beach by Eddie Douglas



Yellowhammer *Emberiza citronella*

In the north of the County, around 45 were seen at Bamburgh on 10th and 32 at Berwick on 31st (AJN/MHu). 22 noted at Cresswell on 14th (AA) and 16 at another Berwick site on 8th. One-15 were seen at fifteen sites elsewhere, including well inland, with a return to breeding areas noted and singing males heard from 19th (ASJ/DM/CW/GB/*et al*).

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Ten were at Fomart Knowe on 16th (SW). Nine were at Prestwick Carr and at St Mary's on 14th (PCF/IJ), with a group of eight noted on Holy Island on 18th (STH). Another species showing a return to breeding sites with singing males at Grindon and St. Mary's on 12th, seven singing at the latter site by the month's end. One also singing on a tiny island on Killingworth Lake.(PRM/ASJ). One to six were observed at 22 further county-wide sites. Birds were still attracted to garden feeders at Old Hartley and Berwick (RJP/BWG).

ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN**Escapes****Black Swan** *Cygnus atratus*

A welcome attraction was found at Bothal Pond from 24th to 29th where it was originally found flying in with Whooper Swans (JSB/EC/TB/JFa/TF).

Bar-headed Goose *Anser indicus*

Two were found again at Hauxley on 8th (DM/STH/PJA/IFo) and presumably the same two were located flying SW over Harwood Forest on 15th (IK).

Red-tailed Hawk *Buteo jamaicensis*

One was originally located flying over the observer's garden at Tynemouth on 22nd (DRW) and presumably the same individual was briefly present for five minutes at Swallow Pond on 28th before being mobbed and chased off (SPP).



The Tynemouth Red-tailed Hawk by Duncan Watson over his house
22nd March

Hybrids**Tufted Duck x Pochard** *Aythya fuligula x Aythya ferina*

One was seen again at Holywell Pond on 4th (SPP) and presumably the same individual was relocated at Woodhorn Flashes on 14th (GB).

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Bamburgh Ringing Station, Berwick Wildlife Group, Hauxley Ringing Station, Natural History Society of Northumbria, North Northumberland Bird Club, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

Apologies for any accidental omissions

BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION

This bulletin was compiled by Graeme Bowman (Mute Swan to Ruddy Duck), Steve Laing (Red Grouse to Black-necked Grebe), Trevor Blake (Honey-buzzard to Crane), Steve Holliday (Avocet to Godwit) Ian Forsyth (Turnstone to Skua), Eddie Crabtree (Puffin to Great Black-backed Gull), Tim Dean (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), Alan Jack (Dunnock to Corn Bunting), Dan Turner (WeBS Coastal Counts) and Steve Holliday (WeBS Inland Counts).

Thanks to David Sanders of NNBC for providing data.

Proof reading was by Mike Smith.

Edited by Steve Barrett NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com

Mail distribution by Paul Stewart.

RECORD SUBMISSION

Please email ntbcorg@gmail.com for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and grid references: The use of standard location names and the include grid references as this 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.

Could club members ensure they to submit records direct to NTBC rather than just Birdtrack. There may be an assumption by some members this happens automatically. We do not want to miss records.

LATE RECORDS

It causes great problems for bulletin section writers and for subsequent BIN writers when monthly records are received late. The last date for monthly records is the 8th of the following month. Inclusion of records received after this will be at the discretion of the County Recorder.

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

It is preferable if you re-size your photos before sending and a suggested size is 640 x 480 pixels. Please ensure you include the following information with your submissions: name, species, date taken, locality.

Photographs will not be used elsewhere without the photographer's permission.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual membership costs £10 for a junior, £30 for an individual, and £32 for a family. For membership enquiries please contact ntbc@jobentley.plus.com

Subscriptions were due from 1st October. Members are asked to check that standing orders have been paid.

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. Please submit any new content for the website to the main club email address.

NTBC SIGHTINGS PAGE

The Sightings Page contains current reports by members. Access is from the NTBC website and an email notification is available for new postings.

Members need to submit a request to be added to the website, specifying the email address they wish to post from before they can submit sightings to ntbcorg@gmail.com

SEATON SLUICE WATCH TOWER

Repairs have recently been made to the SSWT and a new lock has been fitted. This means that new keys are required for access. Keys can be collected at indoor meetings or email ntbcorg@gmail.com

Keys are available for £5 for new holders and existing key-holders can exchange keys for £4.

KITTIWAKES

You can now watch live web footage of the Kittiwakes nesting on the Baltic Art Gallery thanks to two new cameras installed by Durham Wildlife Trust and funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. At the moment they seem to be mating and nest building! www.durhamwt.co.uk/kittiwake-cam

NORTHERN EXPERIENCE PELAGIC TRIPS

Programme 2015 (in association with the Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club).

4-hour evening pelagics departing Royal Quays Marina, 18:00 and Mill Dam (South Shields), 18:10. Cost £27.50/person.
Target species; Storm Petrel, skuas, shearwaters, cetaceans
Friday 26th June
Friday 17th July
Friday 7th August

8-hour 'Seabird Special' pelagics departing Royal Quays Marina at 09:00 and Mill Dam (South Shields), 09:10. Cost £45.00/person. Target species; skuas, shearwaters, cetaceans
Saturday 29th August
Saturday 19th September

10-hour 'Northumberland Ultimate Pelagic' to the Farne Deeps departing Royal Quays Marina, 08:00 and Mill Dam (South Shields) 08:10. Cost £65.00/person. Target species; White-beaked Dolphin, Common Dolphin, Minke Whale
Tuesday 18th August
Friday 4th September

4-hour pelagic to the Farne Deeps on a high-speed RIB, departing Seahouses Harbour, 17:00. Cost £65/adult, £35/child.
Target species; White-beaked Dolphin, Common Dolphin, Minke Whale
Tuesday 25th August

4-hour Whale and Dolphin Cruise departing Seahouses Harbour at 10:00. Cost £35/adult, £20/child. Target species; White-beaked Dolphin, Minke Whale, Harbour Porpoise.
Saturday 5th September

Our pelagic trips from Royal Quays in 2015 will take place on the JFK2, in a 10m catamaran. This new vessel offers an outstanding vantage point for observation of wildlife. All of our Royal Quays pelagics are limited to a maximum of 12 participants, allowing all on board a good opportunity to see any birds or cetaceans which are found. Some truly outstanding opportunities for photography occur on our pelagic trips as well, with many birds and cetaceans approaching very close to the boat.

Our Whale AND Dolphin Cruise from Seahouses will be on Glad Tidings V.

Our RIB trips from Seahouses will be on Ocean Explorer.

Our pelagic trips have proved very successful and they are an excellent way to enjoy our offshore wildlife in the company of other birders who are always willing to help any less experienced participants. More experienced birders may well find that the North Sea is a new frontier for their birding. Pelagic birding is very unpredictable but highlights of our trips have included the 1st British North Sea Wilson's Petrel (2002), Long-tailed Skua (2002, 2014), Sabine's Gull (2005), Great Shearwater (2007), Balearic Shearwater (2007, 2013), Pomarine Skua (2007, 2012, 2014), Grey Phalarope (2010, 2012), Red-necked Phalarope (2013), excellent views of Sooty Shearwater in each of the last thirteen years, Harbour Porpoise (2006, 2012, 2013, 2014), Minke Whale (2006, 2007, 2008, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014), Orca (2013) and several very close encounters with White-beaked Dolphin, most recently on our evening pelagics in July/August 2014 and our Farne Deeps 'Ultimate Pelagic' in mid-September 2014.

Participants should bring their own food and drink and warm/waterproof clothing.

To reserve a place on any of these trips, please contact Martin Kitching martin@newtltd.co.uk or (01670) 827465 and send a deposit of £10 per person per trip (cheque payable to 'Northern Experience Wildlife Tours Ltd', non-refundable if you cancel at a later date) to NEWT Ltd, 18 Frances Ville, Scotland Gate, Northumberland, NE62 5ST. The balance of payment is due 2 weeks before sailing.

Martin Kitching

Year: 2015
Month: March

NOTE - special arrangements have been made for access to Longhirst Flash where there is no general access due to opencast coal mining work until approx end 2015.

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2015 No 4

MONTHLY SUMMARY – APRIL

3rd June 2015



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WeBS inland

WeBS coastal

Development Fund update

Swift request

Druridge Bay request

Howdon Wetlands

A Red Grouse at West Burnhope

by Simon Elliott

Sound recording links are given

later in this bulletin



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American Wigeon

Red-crested Pochard

Manx Shearwater

Great White Egret

White Stork

Spoonbill

Rough-legged Buzzard

Golden Eagle

Curlew Sandpiper

Wood Sandpiper

Arctic Skua

Little Auk

Arctic Tern

Glaucous Gull

Iceland Gull

Great Grey Shrike

Hooded Crow

Bearded Tit

Waxwing

Nightingale

Three remained at Grindon Lough until 6th.

A drake at Holywell Pond on 22nd remained until end of the month.

Two males graced Holywell Pond on 11th.

First migrants seen on 19th.

Another sighting with one at East Chevington on 11th.

One photographed on a street lamp at Scremerston on 10th.

One noted at Fenham le Moor on 28th.

Single over Berwick on 9th and two/three in Harthope valley on 22nd.

An adult noted in the county on 23rd.

One at Cresswell Pond on 25th.

Several noted from 25th.

First birds noted from 23rd.

Two late birds in summer plumage seen past Tynemouth on 18th.

Early migrant on 13th at Low Newton.

Singles at East Chevington & St Mary's.

Singles at St Mary's and Snab Point.

One at East Ord near Berwick on 9th.

One in Cresswell and Druridge area from 24th.

Up to three seen at East Chevington during month.

One in Alnwick from 3rd to 6th.

One on Holy Island on 18th was joint earliest for the county and the only rare passerine of the month.

INDOOR MEETINGS

NTBC indoor meetings are held at Northern Rugby Club, McCracken Park, Great North Road, Newcastle, NE3 2DT starting at 7.00pm and generally finish between 9.00pm-9.30pm. The first meeting of the winter seen will be on September 10th.

FIELD TRIPS

7th June 2015

Long Nanny for Terns

16th August 2015

Leighton moss

Contact Steve Anderson seaswan@btinternet.com

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 2012 page 236.

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.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Five flew N at Seaton Sluice on 16th-17th (SSWT). The Tweed Estuary held 202 on 15th (MHu), 91 were at QEII CP Lake on 17th (CDH), 56 at Killingworth Lake on 10th (LJM), 42 at Capheaton (STE), and 12-18 at Bolam Lake, Castle Island and West Ord. Five to nine were at Arcot Pond, Gosforth Park NR and Grindon Lough, and one to four at 17 further sites.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

A single flock of 31 flew N at Seaton Sluice on 5th (SSWT), 23 were at Warkworth Lane on 5th (CGK/GPK) with one remaining on 14th (MH/AA), seven at West Ord on 2nd (MHu) and seven at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 2nd (AJR). One to two were at Gosforth Park NR, Grindon Lough, Haughton Strother GP, Hauxley Reserve, the Wansbeck Estuary and West Ord up to 23rd, while the last of the month was one at Cresswell Pond on 25th (TF/JFa).

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

At least one flew N at Berwick at 23.45 on 5th (PRM) and one flew N at Cocklawburn on 21st (MHu). 120 were at Fenham Flats on 2nd (JDL), 24 at Hauxley Reserve on 17th (HRS), and counts of ten at Cresswell Pond (AJR) and Woodhorn Flashes (PG) on 15th, and Druridge Pools (TB/TF/JFa/JL) on 25th. One to three were also at East Chevington, Foxton, Haughton Strother GP, Hauxley Reserve and Low Newton up to 17th.

White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*

Three, of the Greenland *flavirostris* race, were at Grindon Lough on 6th (AJR).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Five flew N at Seaton Sluice on 7th (SSWT). Peak counts were 238 at Budle Bay on 6th (PRM), 148 at Holywell Pond on 4th (PRM), 64 at Hauxley Reserve on 17th (HRS), and 30-40 at the *Beehive* Flash (Earsdon; MSH), Gosforth Park NR (NHSN), Grindon Lough (PRM) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs (SR). Five to eight were also at Bothal and Cresswell Ponds, and Holywell Dene, and one to four at Arcot and Cocklawburn Ponds, Big Waters, Brenkley, Castle Island, Druridge Pools, Holywell, St Mary's and West Ord. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Derwent Reservoir	1	10	IFo. On 25th
East Chevington north pool	1	9	STH/ADM. On 27th
Haughton Strother GP	1	6	MR. On 21st
Branton GP	1	1+	JD. On 30th

One was on eggs at Gosforth Park NR on 13th (NHSN).

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Two flew N at Seaton Sluice on 5th (SSWT). Largest gatherings were 50 at Hauxley Reserve on 17th (HRS), about 40 at Bywell Haughs on 7th (PRM), 34 at Castle Island on 29th (DM/STH), 20-26 at Bothal Pond (TF/JFa), Catcleugh Reservoir (PRM), Linton (CDH) and Swallow (CGK) Ponds, and Newcastle Leazes Park (DM), and ten to 18 at Big Waters, Bolam Lake and Grindon Lough. Three to six were at Bakethin Reservoir, Cresswell and Holywell Ponds, the Tweed Estuary, and one to two at Arcot Pond, Bank's Pond (Dinnington), Druridge Pools, Havannah NR, Newcastle Exhibition Park, Northumberland Park (North Shields) and Stakeford. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Castle Island	1	5	DM/STH. On 29th
Nunykirk	1	5	TRD/JD. On 29th. A new breeding site

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Singles were at Hauxley Reserve on 5th and 17th (CDB/HRS), Caistron on 19th (JD), and Castle Island on 24th (TB/PG).

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

90 un-raced birds were at Fenham Flats on 2nd (JDL) and 60 were in the Black Law area of Lindisfarne NNR on 5th (IK). A single, of the dark-bellied *bernicla* race, was at St Mary's on 8th (AC).

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

A total of 14 flew N and one S at Seaton Sluice between 4th-17th (SSWT). The Blyth Estuary attracted 73 on 4th (LJM) and 121 on 27th (AC), 55 were at Budle Bay on 6th (PRM), 27 at Foxton on 17th (MSH), and ten to 19 at Castle Island (DM/STH), Cresswell Pond (IF), Druridge Pools (TD), Hauxley Reserve (HRS) and Howdon (CB). Five to six were also at Grindon Lough and Yarrow Slake, three to four at Elswick, Haughton Strother GP, Milkhope Lake, and one to two at Backworth, Beehive Flash (Earsdon), Bothal and Swallow Ponds, Big Waters, Brenkley, Cocklawburn, Holy Island, Longhirst Flash, Lynemouth, New Water Haugh, Prestwick Carr, Shield on the Wall, West Ord and Whitley Bay.

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

Seven (five drakes) were at Smalesmouth (River North Tyne) on 14th (TRD/JD), five at nearby Ridley Stokoe on 12th (CGK/GPK/PS) and three drakes there on 18th (AJH). Three (two drakes) were at Harehaugh (Coquetdale) on 26th (JR), a pair was at Bakethin Reservoir on 11th (JR) and a drake there on 4th (CDB), and single drakes were at Catcleugh Reservoir (PRM) and Sharperton (Coquetdale; JR) on 17th, and Haughton Strother GP on 12th (MR). Two drakes were at Warkworth Lane on 26th (TB), and single drakes on the River Tyne at Bywell Haughs on 7th (PRM) and Swallow Pond on 15th (GPK/SPP).



A pair of Mandarin Ducks at Ridley Stokoe
Janet Dean

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

70 were at Grindon Lough on 20th (PRM) with 61 still present on 29th (PRM). Other peak counts were 36 at Hauxley Reserve on 5th (CDB), 26 at Derwent Reservoir on 5th (IFo), and 12-15 at Bothal Pond, Budle Bay and Druridge Pools. Four to six were at Big Waters, Branton GP, Capheaton, Cresswell Pond and Hoppen Kiln Flash, and one to two were at Holywell and Warkworth Lane Ponds, Ladyburn and QEII CP Lakes, and Low Newton scrape.

American Wigeon *Anas americana*

A drake was at St Mary's Wetland (AC/JBu/IF) and then Holywell Pond (TRD/JD/PHH/IJ *et al.*) on 23rd, remaining at the latter site between 24th-28th (TB/IF/SPP *et al.*). It was noted as having an injured foot when at Holywell Pond on 23rd (SPP).



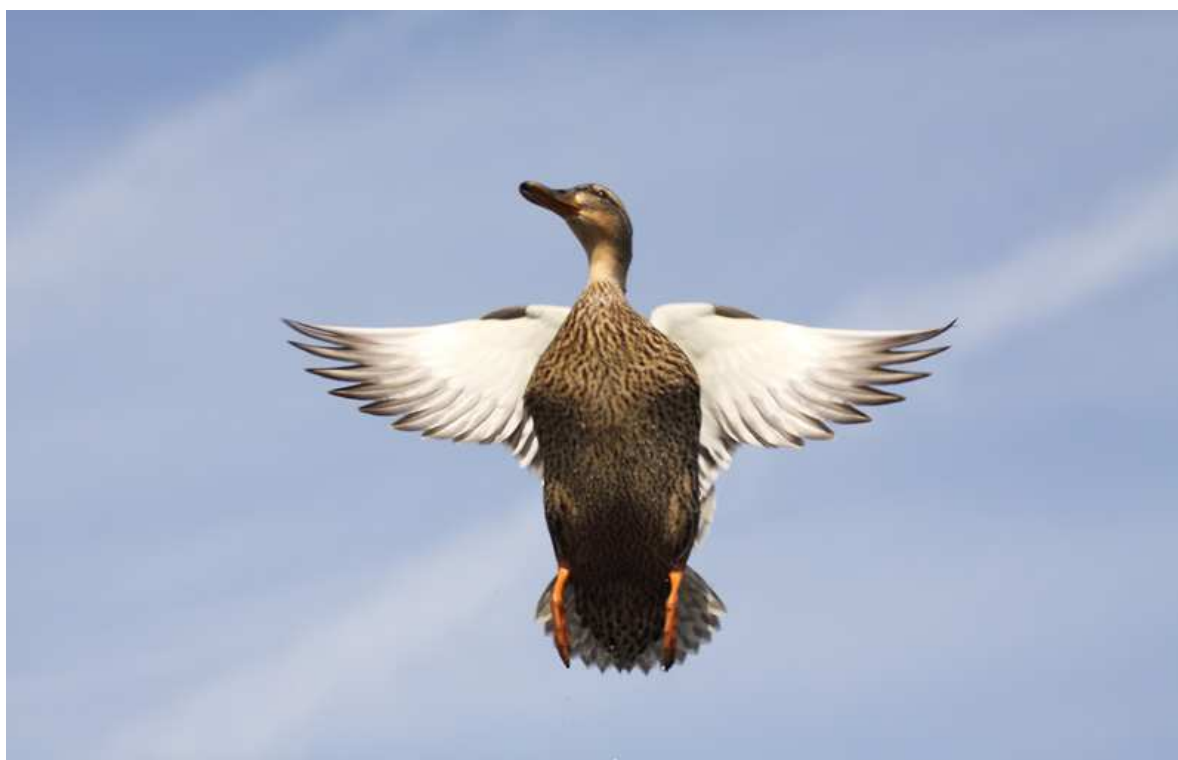
The drake American Wigeon coping with noisy neighbours at Holywell Pond. By Tim Dean on 23rd April

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Peak counts were 54 at Castle Island on 19th (DM), 22 at Hauxley Reserve on 17th (HRS), 16 at Cresswell Pond on 12th (IRD), ten to 14 at Arcot (DM) and Bothal (TF/JFa) Ponds, and the Blyth Estuary (LJM), five to nine at Big Waters, Caistron, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, East Stobswood, Gosforth Park NR, Hauxley Reserve, Linton and Swallow Ponds, and four at Brenkley and Holywell Pond. One to two were also at Backworth and Cresswell Ponds, the *Beehive* Flash (Earsdon), Capheaton Lake, Grindon Lough, Haughton Strother GP, Howdon, Low Newton, QEII CP Lake and St Mary's Wetland. Three at Bolam Lake on 4th (CDB) and two at Little Waters (near Big Waters) on 5th (GB) were the first records of the species at these sites.

Teal *Anas crecca*

A total of 26 flew N at Seaton Sluice between 6th-19th (SSWT). Numbers generally declined leaving peaks of 85 at Budle Bay on 6th (PRM), 75 at Grindon Lough on 2nd declining to 46 by 29th (PRM), 56 at the Blyth Estuary on 4th (LJM), 50 at Druridge Pools (TD) and Howdon (CB), and 20-39 at Arcot and Bothal Ponds, and Elswick. Counts of ten to 16 came from Big Waters, Capheaton Lake, Castle Island, Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Foxton, Gosforth Park and Hauxley Reserves, Longhirst Flash, Prestwick Carr, West Hartford and West Ord, and six to eight were at Brenkley, Holy Island and Middle Ord Pond. One to four were at Bakethin Reservoir, Berwick, Bolam Lake, Hadston Carrs, Havannah NR, Heatherslaw, Linden Hall, Shillmoor and Swallow Pond.



Two ducks - top: a drake Teal at Hauxley NR and below: a duck Mallard takes to the air at Killingworth Lake, both by Chris Barlow

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

A total of 97 was counted along the River Wansbeck between Bothal-Mitford on 16th (TD), 74 were at the Tweed Estuary on 15th (MHu), 50 at Branton GP on 2nd (JMA), and 31-37 at Castle Island and Newcastle Leazes Park (DM). Counts of 12-17 came from Bothal and Cresswell Ponds, Grindon Lough, Hauxley Reserve and Kielder Water and Longhirst Flash. A drake on the roof of a house at Tynemouth on 15th presented an unusual sight (KWY).

Mallard breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Newcastle Leazes Park	2	7 (5,2)	DM. On 20th
Jesmond Dene	1	11	MJCo. On 27th
Derwent Reservoir	1	10	IFo. On 25th
Rothbury	1	10	JMA. On 18th
Backworth Pond	1	6	MNC. On 21st

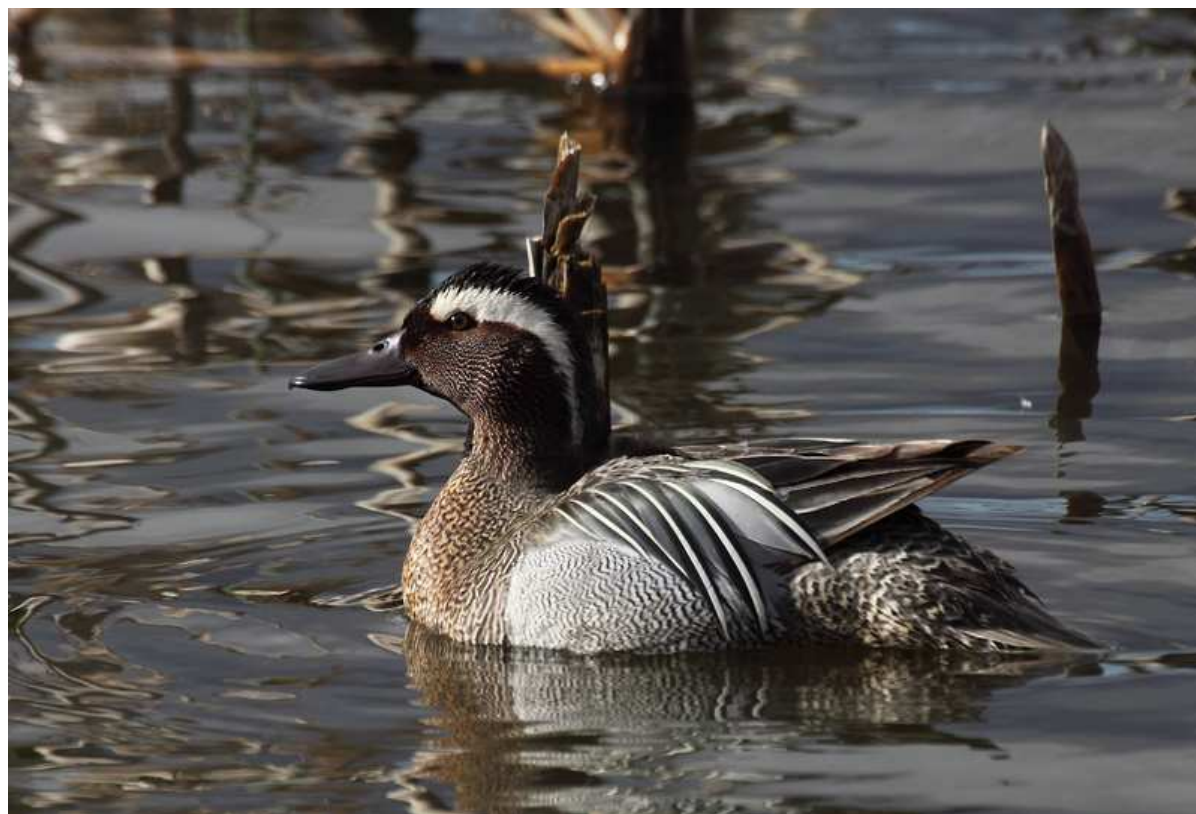
A nest with 12 eggs was noted at an Amble garden on 16th (JMA).

Pintail *Anas acuta*

Two pairs were noted regularly at East Chevington between 19th-27th (TB/AJH/MSH *et al.*), with up to three (two drakes) regularly between 2nd-18th (TD/JL *et al.*). A pair was at Druridge Pools on 11th and 30th (TRD/NFO) and a drake was at Arcot Pond between 2nd-9th (STH *et al.*).

Garganey *Anas querquedula*

A pair was noted regularly at Big Waters between 12th-22nd (GB/CDB *et al.*). Single drakes were at Castle Island-North Seaton on 10th (KE/MSK/NEWT), Arcot Pond on 12th (GMi/STH), and Holy Island Rocket Field on 25th (IK/ADM). A duck was at Warkworth Lane Ponds on 12th (JL).



The drake Garganey at Big Waters by Chris Barlow

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Druridge Pools held a peak of 21 on 20th (MSH), 13 (ten drakes) were at Warkworth Lane Ponds on 14th (MH/AA), ten at Monks' House Pool on 2nd (JDL), five to eight at Arcot (AJR), Cresswell (PRM) and Ellington Ponds (TB), Druridge Pools (PRM), Gosforth Park NR (NHSN), Holy Island (ADM), and three to four at Big Waters and Haughton Strother GP. One to two were also found at Branton GP, Capheaton Lake, Holywell and Swallow Ponds, Grindon Lough, Howdon, Killingworth Lake, Low Newton and West Hartford.

Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina*

Two drakes were at Holywell Pond on 11th (IJ/KWY).

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

20 at Killingworth Lake on 16th (GPK), 14 at Swallow Pond on 24th (GPK), 12 at Holywell Pond on 24th (TB), and 11 at Arcot Pond on 21st (LJM) were the largest peak counts. Three to four were at Big Waters and Gosforth Park NR, and one to two at Bothal and Linton Ponds, and Hauxley Reserve.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Two flew N at Seaton Sluice on 4th (SSWT). The largest counts were 65 at QEII CP Lake on 17th (CDH), 60 at Killingworth Lake on 10th (LJM), 47 at Hauxley Reserve on 5th (CDH), 30-35 at Bothal Pond (TF/JFa), Capheaton Lake (STE), Castle Island (DM/STH), East Chevington (JL), and 20-26 at Big Waters, Bolam Lake, Branton GP, Cresswell and Holywell Ponds, Druridge Pools, Haughton Strother GP, Newcastle Exhibition and Leazes Parks, and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Counts of ten to 18 came from Arcot, Linton and Swallow Ponds, Gosforth Park NR, Grindon Lough, Howdon and Tynemouth Boating Lake.



A handsome Tufted Duck reflects at Howdon NR by Colin Bradshaw

Scaup *Aythya marila*

A drake flew S at Tynemouth on 12th (AC).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

A total of 30 moved N and 13 S at Seaton Sluice between 4th-19th (SSWT). About 40 were at Stag Rocks on 6th (PRM), 30 at Berwick North Shore on 6th (MHu), and 20 at Hadston Carrs (IJ) and Holy Island causeway (PRM). Ten to 17 were at Berwick, the Tweed Estuary and Whitley Bay. A pair were on the River Tyne at Howdon on 12th, with three birds there on 18th (CB).

A drake Eider has a stretch

Stag Rocks

Chris Barlow



Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

Four were at Stag Rocks on 16th (JDL) and four at Cocklawburn on 21st (MHu). The long-staying drake remained at Derwent Reservoir all month (IFo).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

A total of 39 flew N and four S at Seaton Sluice between 4th-17th (SSWT), and nine flew N at Stag Rocks on 6th (CDB). In the north of the county, 78 were at Spittal Bay on 1st (MHu), 58 at Stag Rocks on 10th (DGB), and 40 at Cocklawburn on 10th (STE). Further south, 20 were at North Blyth on 3rd (STH) and 12 at Hadston Carrs on 19th (IJ).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

24 were at Swallow Pond on 5th (CGK), 18 were at East Chevington on 18th (JL), 17 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 7th (SR), and 11-12 at Bolam Lake (GB/LAR), Branton GP (IBDa/KDa) and the Tweed Estuary (MHu). Counts of five to eight came from Bakethin Reservoir, Bothal Pond, Caistron, Capheaton Lake and Grindon Lough, while three were at Hauxley Reserve and New Water Haugh. Singles were also at Big Waters, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Gosforth Park NR and Holy Island.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Seven flew N and two S at Seaton Sluice between 3rd-17th (SSWT). 40 were at Druridge Pools and Links on 18th (IJ), 20 (ten pairs) displayed at the Wansbeck Estuary on 11th (MSK/NEWT), ten were at East Chevington on 18th-19th (IJ/JL) where nine (five drakes) displayed on 14th (JSB/EC), and six to seven were at Holy Island (ADM) and Spittal Bay (MHu). Four were at the Tweed Estuary and one at Cresswell Pond.

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

Moderate numbers involved peaks of ten at the Tweed Estuary on 15th (MHu), eight at Bakethin Reservoir on 17th (PRM), eight on the River Tyne at Heddon on the Wall on 26th (AA), and five to six at Corbridge (AJH), Derwent Reservoir (IFo) and West Ord (MHu). Three to four were found at Berwick, Bygate, Heatherslaw, Tyne Riverside CP (Prudhoe) and Wark, and one to two at Alwinton, Bakethin and Catcleugh Reservoirs, Blindburn, Carshope, Castle Island, Glen Ridley, Harthope Valley, Jesmond Dene, Pauperhaugh and Ridley Stokoe, and one flew SW over Prestwick Carr.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

The Harthope Valley peak count was a minimum of 12 on 22nd (PHH). Elsewhere, one to two birds were at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay), East Chevington NWT, Harwood Forest, Hebron (Morpeth), Hepple Whitefield, Little Bavington and North Sunderland.

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

Large numbers were reported on Hexhamshire Common throughout the month, with 35 pairs encountered during a sixteen km walk across the moor on 21st (STE). The peak count at the Harthope Valley was 20 on 6th (CDB), followed by 12 there on 7th (JD). The only other record was two at Hepple Whitefield on 26th (TRD/JD).



A Red Grouse in the Harthope Valley by Chris Barlow

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

Up to eight were at Hexhamshire Common during the month, including seven displaying males (STE). Seven (including six males) were near Derwent Reservoir on 3rd (CDB), with the same number at Allendale on 12th (CGK/GPK/PS). Three males were foraging in fields near mine shafts at Green Skye (south-south-west of Ninebanks) on 25th (KE) and single birds were at Grindon Lough, Meadow Cottage (Allenheads) and Shield on the Wall Dam.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

An encouragingly good number of records received this month. Almost all sightings were from the east of the county, the exception being four at Westburnhope (Hexhamshire Common) on 5th and 9th (STE). Four (two pairs) were seen at Prestwick Carr (PCF) and Seaton Point (Boulmer) (NFO) on 4th. Three males were singing at West Chevington on 22nd (PRM) and one to three birds were at a further 22 typical locations.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

A visit to Blagdon produced 14 on 18th (LJM). In the Cramlington area four birds (one male and three females) were near Arcot Pond with a further three in a horse paddock at Whitelea on 23rd (DM). Two males were at Hauxley NWT on 5th (CDB) and a single bird at Hartley West Farm (Holywell Dene) on 15th (RJP).

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

Seaton Sluice produced eight flying N and six S between 3rd-17th (SSWT) and a single was seen flying N past Church Point (Newbiggin) on 19th (DM/STH). The peak count in Druridge Bay was a minimum of 32 on 12th (JL) and one to five birds were at scattered locations along the coast during the month, including one in summer plumage off East Chevington on 30th (TRD).

Black-throated Northern Diver *Gavia arctica*

One was observed flying N past Cocklawburn on 1st (Mhu).

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

A single bird was on the sea at Seaton Sluice on 19th (SSWT).

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

Breeding sites held 41 birds (including 15 pairs) at Tynemouth Priory on 18th (SPP) and 26 at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 4th (IJ). Five were at Cullernose Point (Craster) on 13th (TRD/JD) and one to three were at several other coastal locations.

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

The first sightings of the year were four flying N at Seaton Sluice on 19th (SSWT). Four also flew N past St Mary's in the early evening of 30th (MSH/AC).

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

The highest count during the month at Seaton Sluice was 585N in one three-hour stretch (SSWT). Other significant movements were 480 per hour S past Cocklawburn during the morning of 1st (MHu), 300 N off Hadston Carrs (Druridge Bay) on 19th and 200 S at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 12th (IJ). 36 flew N past Snab Point (Cresswell) on 19th (DM/STH) and 30 flew S at Stag Rocks on 6th (CDB). Two to 20 were recorded at a further several coastal locations.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

The monthly maximum at Derwent Reservoir was 17 on 24th (IFo). 13 were present at East Chevington on 27th (STH) and nine were at Berwick North Shore during a WeBS count on 17th (MHu). One to six birds were at many widespread localities, including Bolam Lake, Castle Island, Catcleugh Reservoir, Cresswell Pond, Elswick Wharf (River Tyne), Hauxley NWT, River Tweed Estuary, Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay), St Mary's, Stakeford Bridge, Wark (North Tyne) and Wylam. Three birds of the continental 'sinensis' race were at Bakethin Reservoir on 17th (PRM)

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

At Seaton Sluice this species continues to be scarce with a monthly total of two flying N (SSWT). Five were at Cocklawburn on 1st and four were at Berwick North Shore during a WeBS count on 17th (MHu). The only other record was of two at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 24th (TRD/JD).

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

A good number of sightings, mainly in the south east of the county, included a pair at Druridge Pools and Cresswell on 20th (STE). One to two birds were also seen at The Blyth Estuary, Castle Island, East Sleekburn, Fenham-le-Moor, Holy Island Causeway, Holywell Dene, Horton Burn (Cramlington), Low Newton, Lynemouth Flash, The River Wansbeck Estuary and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

A recent coloniser
A Little Egret at Druridge Pools
25th April
Jonathan Farooqi



Great White Egret *Ardea alba*

One was in the North Pool at East Chevington on 11th (TF/JFa/TRD/JD).



The Great White Egret at East Chevington on 11th April by Jonathan Farooqi

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

The peak counts were seven at Gosforth Park NR throughout the month (NHSN) and the same number recorded during a WeBS count at The River Tweed Estuary on 15th (MHu). Six were at Holy Island on 4th (ADM) and Budle Bay on 6th (PRM). Only two pairs were found so far this year at Hauxley NWT (HRS) and the heronry at Howdon appeared deserted on 10th (CB). One to four birds were at 17 other locations.

White Stork *Ciconia ciconia*

On 10th there were two reports of one seen flying over Chevington South Pool (ADM) and also one photographed on a street lamp at Scremerston (BWG).

Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

The first sighting of the year was at Fenham-le-Moor on 28th (JDL).

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Swallow Pond held the highest number with eight noted throughout the month (GPK/MSH/IF). A peak of five were at Coney Garth (Bothal Pond) on 20th (MSH) and four were at the locations of Arcot Pond, Gosforth Park NR, Haughton Strother GP, Hauxley NR, Holywell Pond and Linton Ponds. Longhirst Flash held three on 19th and either pairs or single birds were also at 13 other typical localities.

A Little Grebe

Hauxley NR

Chris Barlow



Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps Cristatus*

A good number of reports from suitable breeding sites included peak counts of five pairs at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd (IFo), with the same number at East Chevington on 25th (TRD/JD) - a record count at that site. Elsewhere one to four birds were at Airy Holm Reservoir, Big Waters NWT, Branton GP, Caistron, Coney Garth (Bothal Pond), Haughton Strother GP (Humshaugh), Killingworth Lake, QEII CP, Swallow Pond, Whittle Dene Reservoirs and Widdrington Moor Lake. An enthusiastic pair at Swallow Pond were happily doing the "reed dance" in the pouring rain on 12th (SPP).

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

Birds returned to a site in the south east of the county on 12th, increasing to three by 30th. A single bird was also at a further site in mid-Northumberland on 17th.

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Two birds were seen near Whittonstall on 5th (IFo) and singles were noted at Plessey Mill Farm (Cramlington) on 6th (STH), Carterway Heads on 9th (IFo), Low Waskerley on 10th (IFo), Holywell Pond and Holywell Dene on 23rd (ASJ/RJP), Alnwick Moor on 25th (IBDa/KDa) and at Derwent Reservoir on 29th (JSB).

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Most records came from East Chevington with five birds, two males and 3 females present on 7th (MH *et al.*). A male was at Warkworth on (*per* NNBC), Bakethin Reservoir (Kielder) on 17th (PRM) and at Hauxley on 19th (TRD/JD).

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

A pair were at a confidential site on 20th (AH), a male was seen at quartering the hedgerow down Druridge Lane on 2nd (TB) and a ringtail flew SE over Chare Ends (Holy Island) on 18th (ADM/IK). Other singles were at confidential sites on 4th, 5th and 21st (AH/NFO).

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

A pair were displaying at one site on 4th - 6th (GB/NFO/STE) and a single bird flew S over Prestwick Carr on 4th (PCF) and a male was seen at Kielder Forest Drive on 23rd (MSK/NEWT).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Only single birds were noted this month with a male seen throughout the month at Scotland Gate (SLB/MSK) and birds recorded from 20 sites.

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Nine birds were in the air together at Deadwater Fell (Kielder) on 4th (CDB) and at Kielder Water and Forest on 17th (PRM). Seven birds were noted at Harwood Forest on 4th (GB) and at Bebside Recycling Centre (Blyth) on 8th (IF). Six were at Blagdon on 18th (LJM) and five were at Big Waters on 5th (GB). One to four birds from over 37 sites, however a lack of birds was commented on at Plenmeller Common on 24th (JSB/EC).



A Buzzard over Big Waters
by Chris Barlow

Rough-legged Buzzard *Buteo lagopus*

Three were seen in the Harthope Valley on 22nd (PHH) and a bird was seen flying at height into Scotland from Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 9th (Tbr).

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*

An adult was observed at a confidential site on 23rd (MSK/NEWT).

Osprey *Pandion haliaetuss*

Two single birds were seen flying NW up the Wanneys at 16:05 and 17:05 on 6th (MH) and single birds were noted in the Kielder area on 12th, 14th & 23rd (TB/TRD/JD/ MSK/NEWT) and other singles were seen at Derwent Reservoir on 13th (IFo) and at Haughton Strother GP (Humshaugh) on 21st (MR).

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Gosforth Park NR had four plus birds throughout the month (NHSN). Three birds were at Swallow Pond on 3rd (GPK) and at Big Waters on 27th (GB), two birds were at East Chevington on 7th and 11th (ADMc/NFO) and at Holy Island Lough on 22nd (PRM). Single birds were either seen or heard at Cresswell Pond, Grindon Lough, Newton Pool and West Hartford.

A Water Rail

Big Waters

Chris Barlow

**Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*

Ten at Haughton Strother GP (Humshaugh) on 10th (MR) was the highest count this month, five were at Bolam Lake on 4th (CDB) and at Hauxley NWT on 5th (CDB). One to four birds were at 13 sites.

Coot *Fulica atra*

Bothal Pond had the highest count with 29 birds present on 19th (TD), 18 were at Capheaton on 17th (STE), 16 were at Arcot Pond on 6th and 11th (DM) and 15 birds were at Big Waters on 5th (GB). One to eight birds were also noted at 16 sites.

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

Birds were present at Cresswell Pond throughout the month, with several counts of ten to 16 and a peak of 25 on 19th (TB). The Blyth Estuary also held small numbers with six present from 4th-12th, eight on 15th and four on 17th (LJM/AC). Bothal Pond also attracted birds with two on 14th (JSB/EC), one to five until the month's end and a peak of six on 23rd (TB/TF/JFa *et al.*). Birds were also noted at nearby Castle Island, following two on 19th, four including a mating pair were seen on 24th (PG/TB) and three on 29th (STH/DM). Two more were seen a confidential site on 22nd.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Small groups continued to pass through with 60 at Branton GP on 1st the largest flock (TRD/JD). Coastal flocks included 45 at Hauxley NWT on 5th (CDB), ca.40 at Budle Bay on 6th (PRM) and 23 at Cresswell Pond on 29th (STH/DM). Inland gatherings involved 28 at Haughton Strother GP on 10th (MR) and 20 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 3rd (SR). Counts of 12 were made at Stag Rocks and on the Tweed Estuary, ten were in a horse-grazed field at Longhirst GC and single-figure parties were seen at many further locations. Signs of breeding included three pairs at Beltingham on 13th (AJR), a pair on a roof building at Brunswick industrial estate on 3rd (GB) and further pairs noted at Airy Holm Reservoir, Alwin Valley, Glen Ridley, Grindon Lough, Pauperhaugh, Quickeningcote and Windyhaugh.



An Oyster catcher in the Harthope Valley by Janet Dean

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

A group of ca.350 moved S over Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 2nd (MFO) and a party of 26 flew W over Derwent Reservoir on 13th (IFo). A well-watched flock of 'Northern' birds at Prestwick Carr saw counts fall from 250 on 3rd-4th (PCG/GB) to 156 on 26th (STH) and to 100 on 27th (MRS). Inland breeding birds included at least ten pairs on a ten-mile walk over Hexhamshire Common on 21st and a displaying pair at Great Bavington on 17th (STE). Lingered coastal birds saw six at Fisherman's Haven (Berwick) on 5th (PRM) and two at St Mary's Island on 23rd (IJ).

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Only two reports, three in breeding plumage at The Ouze (Holy Island) on 26th (IK) and one at Newbiggin on 2nd (STH).

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

Apart from ca.40 at Druridge Pools on 9th (TD) and 18 at Hauxley NWT on 5th (CDB), most reports referred to breeding birds, the highest of which was 23 pairs near Blanchland on 25th (ASJ) and 35 birds being mostly in pairs at Big Waters on 18th (GB). Ten to 12 at Prestwick Carr on 4th included some displaying birds (GB), three pairs were on Holy Island on 22nd (PRM) and three pairs were on eggs at Haughton Strother GP on 27th (MR). One to two pairs were also noted at six further sites, single-figure reports being made at four additional locations,



One of our most handsome waders
A Lapwing in Allendale by Colin Bradshaw

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

First of the year were four at Haughton Strother GP on 10th following which they remained until the end of the month (MR). The following day saw two arrive at Cresswell Pond (ADMc/NFO/TF/JFa) with one to two there until 20th (STE). A good spread of sightings saw two at Prestwick Carr (15th), Hedgeley (18th), Brenkley opencast (20th), Bothal Pond (25th-30th), Derwent Reservoir (25th plus one on 14th) and Colt Crag Reservoir (25th), with singles seen at Low Newton (13th), Backworth Pond (21st/29th) and Branton GP (27th). A pair was also noted at a confidential site on 19th.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Single-figure reports only, the highest count being five at Cocklawburn (Saltpan Rocks) on 2nd (MHu). Three were noted at Low Newton scrape on 13th, displaying on the beach at East Chevington on 21st and at Hoppen Kiln Flash on 24th (TRD/JD). Pairs were recorded from Blagdon (Milkhope Lake), Bothal Pond, Branton GP, Brenkley opencast, Derwent Reservoir and Hedgeley GP (sitting bird on 5th) and a further single was at Cresswell Pond on 15th.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Following two at East Chevington on 11th (NFO), four appeared at nearby Druridge Pools on 15th (TRD/JD) after which there were increasing numbers reported at the latter site, with 16 noted on 27th (PHH) and an excellent 116 counted in front of the Budge screen during the evening of 30th (EB). Elsewhere, 12 were noted at Boulmer on 30th (TBr), five at Cresswell Pond on 30th (TB), four moved N at Tynemouth on 14th (CB) and from the 16th one to three were recorded at Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir, East Chevington, Fenham-le-Moor, Holy Island, Prestwick Carr, Shilvington (West House Farm) and West Stobswood Pool.

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Passage birds included a peak of ca.100 at Boulmer (Seaton Point) on 4th (NFO), 79 at Foxton (R. Aln) on 17th (MSH), 44 at Prestwick Carr on 4th (PCF), ca.40 in Budle Bay on 6th (PRM), 38 on the Tweed Estuary on 15th (MHu), 30 at Druridge Pools on 9th (TD), 26 at Hauxley NWT on 5th (CDB) and 21 at Newbiggin on 2nd (STH). Grindon Lough also held 12 on 18th (PRM), nine at Blanchland on 25th included displaying birds (ASJ) and six on 9th was the maximum at Howdon (CB). Fewer numbers were seen at a further 13+ sites with bubbling/displaying also noted at Brenkley opencast (two pairs), Hexhamshire Common (large numbers), Longhorsley and Whemley Burn (Longhorsley).

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

The Blyth Estuary attracted four to six during 5th-15th peaking at seven on 12th (LJM/CGK/GPK), before 27 appeared on 27th (AC). The wintering group at Holy Island Rocket Field pools peaked at 13 on 5th with ten remaining until the end of the month (IK). Budle Bay attracted nine on 24th (TRD/JD), two to three were on Druridge Pools during 20th-25th, Castle Island held three on 23rd and one on 29th, two were at Fenham-le-Moor on 16th and a single remained at Cresswell Pond during 14th-15th.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

The St Cuthbert's roost on Holy Island held 400 birds on 26th, all of which were in winter plumage and likely to remain for the summer (IK). Elsewhere, a single was at Hauxley NWT on 17th (HRS) and a fine looking summer-plumaged bird was present at Cresswell Pond from 25th-29th (TF/JFa/IRD *et al.*).

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

At Sheldrake Hole (Holy Island) 80 roosted at high tide on 4th (IK), the peak at St Mary's was 50 on 11th (IJ) and 30-31 were in the Cresswell Pond/Snab Point areas during 19th to 24th. Cocklawburn held 26 on 16th, Berwick North Shore 24 on 17th and 19 were at Hauxley NWT on 5th, with four to five at Stag Rocks and Whitley Bay.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

At Boulmer 60 rested at low tide on 24th (AB/LB), 16 were at Newbiggin Beacon Point on 2nd and two were noted in Budle Bay on 24th.

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

The first two of a light spring passage occurred at Cresswell Pond on 11th, then four there on 15th (TRD/JD *et al.*). One was at nearby Druridge Pools on 18th with five there on 20th and three to four until 29th (IJ/STE *et al.*).

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

One was at Cresswell Pond on 25th (IRD/ADM/EB).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Boulmer Seaton Point had 75 on 4th (NFO) and also 75 were on the beach at Hauxley on 11th (NFO). The most at Snab Point was 50 on 24th (TB) and the St Mary's peak was 40 on 11th (IJ); 29 were at Newbiggin on 2nd and 20 at Newton on 13th. Eight to 18 were seen at Berwick, Cocklawburn, East Chevington and Tynemouth.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Very few reported this month with maxima of eight at Cresswell Pond on 11th, six at Castle Island on 30th and five at Holy Island on 22nd. One to two appeared at Druridge Pools, St Mary's, R Tweed Estuary and Whitley Bay and the only inland records relate to singles at Grindon Lough on 17th, 20th and 29th.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

The majority were recorded early in the month as most winterers departed north, including 29 at Newbiggin Beacon Point on 2nd (STH) and 13 at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 4th (IJ) and Seaton Sluice had nine on 4th/5th. Eight at Sheldrake Hole on 4th is described as a good count for Holy Island; also four were at St Mary's on 1st and two to three at North Blyth on 3rd/4th. Later, eight were at Cocklawburn on 16th, seven at Tynemouth on 12th and two lingered at Cocklawburn on 24th.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

After one at Berwick on 5th, the main arrival commenced on 10th with further singles at Bywell Bridge, Haughton Strother GP and West Ord. By mid-month one to two were at 15 other widespread locations and also five at R Tweed Estuary on 15th and five in the Kielder area on 17th. During the second half of the month one to two appeared at a further nine typical sites, with also three pairs displaying in 100m of the Breamish Valley on 23rd (KE), five at Charlton Mires flash on 25th, two pairs in Upper Coquetdale on 18th and four at Featherstone on 24th.



A Common Sandpiper in Coquetdale by Alan Jack

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Two were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 7th (SR) and one on 12th. One was at Haughton Strother GP on 10th to 18th (MR) and other singles visited Doddington on 16th (TRD/JD) and Earsdon Beehive Flash on 28th to 30th (AC/MSH).

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Passage was light: at the coast two were at Castle Island on 23rd (PG) with one there on 29th and singletons appeared at Cresswell Pond on 12th and 17th and at Druridge Pools on 25th. Another one was found inland at West Hartford on 12th (GM/LJM).

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

One at Cresswell Pond on 25th (CDB) soon flew N and is likely to be the one discovered at Druridge Pools on the same day (TB/STH). Another was found at Arcot Pond on 28th/29th (GM *et al.*).

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Concentrations were still evident in the first half, notably 186 in the WeBS on R Tweed Estuary on 15th (MHu), 127 at Howdon on 6th (CB) and 120+ in Budle Bay, also on 6th (PRM); 34-44 were noted at Hauxley NWT, Holy Island and St Mary's. It soon became widespread inland, including up to ten at Grindon Lough from 2nd, 16 at Rowley Burn on 19th and four at Greenlee Lough on 20th. Territorial behaviour was recorded in the shape of two pairs at Westburnhope on 21st and by one in the Breamish Valley on 23rd.

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Two flushed from Hadrian Wood near Swallow Pond on 5th (SPP) and singles were seen in Harthope Valley on 5th and 23rd and at Dukeshouse (Hexham) on 25th. Roding was witnessed at Westburnhope on 5th, Grindon Lough on 18th and at Harwood Forest on 23rd.

A Snipe drumming at Westburnhope

For a sound recording see the link at the end of this bulletin

by Simon Elliott



Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Haughton Strother GP again held the largest gathering, 22 on 2nd (MR) and five to nine were at Arcot Pond, Backworth, Blagdon, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Hauxley NWT, Prestwick Carr and West Hartford. Smaller numbers were found at another 11 typical localities. 'Large numbers' were displaying at Westburnhope during the month (STE), five were doing so near Blanchland on 25th and one was calling at Harwood Forest on 4th.



A Common Snipe at Howdon NR by Colin Bradshaw

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

A dark morph was off East Chevington burn mouth on 23rd (TF/JFa) and one flew N at Seaton Sluice on 25th (SSWT).

Auk *sp*

At Seaton Sluice, the maximum movement observed during the month was 800 N in 1.5 hours on 19th (SSWT) and on 30th, 75 flew N in half an hour at St Mary's Island (MSH); both these records comprised mainly Guillemots.

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

The few records received consisted of eight N at Seaton Sluice on 10th (SSWT), eight at Whitley Bay on 12th (IJ) and one to three elsewhere at Bamburgh, Berwick (one bird washed up at high tide) and Newbiggin.

Razorbill *Alca torda*

The maximum count at Seaton Sluice was 60 N in two hours on 4th (SSWT) and at Berwick Needle's Eye on 10th, a total of 90 were on the sea and cliffs (STE) with four noted at Cocklawburn on 1st (MHu).

Guillemot *Uria aalge*

300 flew N in two hours at Seaton Sluice and, of 800 Auks moving N there on 19th, most were identified as Guillemots (SSWT). Elsewhere, six were at Berwick Needle's Eye on 10th (MHu) with one or two at Bamburgh, Newbiggin and Whitley Bay.

Little Auk *Alle alle*

A very unusual record was of two birds together, in summer plumage, flying N at Tynemouth on 18th (SPP).

Little Tern *Sternula albifrons*

The first of the year was a single moving N at Cresswell Snab Point on 27th (ADMc).

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

Well-reported with 35 records submitted. During the first week one to four were recorded at five locations between St Mary's Island and Holy Island but numbers increased rapidly from 15th onwards when maximum counts were 75 moving S in one hour at Seaton Sluice on 17th (SSWT), 70 at Holy Island (St Cuthbert's Island) on 18th, 15+ at Cocklawburn on 21st (MHu) and 14 at Lindisfarne NNR, Guile Point on 19th (IBDa/KDa). Single-figure counts came from 14 other localities.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

The first record of the year was one passing the Seaton Sluice Watch Tower on 10th followed by singles at East Chevington on 11th (TRD/JD), Killingworth Lake on 12th (CGK/GPK/PS), Swallow Pond on 13th (GPK) and two at East Chevington on 17th (IF/TF/JFa). Thereafter, maximum counts were 30+ at East Chevington on 27th (MSH) and 26 at Druridge Bay CP on 26th (IF) with, elsewhere, up to four at Arcot Pond, Big Waters, Gosforth Park NR and Holywell Pond (GB/PHH/IF/LJM/NHSN).

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

The only sightings were two flying past the dunes near Newton Pool on the early date of 13th and one reported from the Farne Islands on the same day (TRD/JD).

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

On the Tynemouth Priory cliffs up to 300 birds were present on 18th (SPP) with an estimated 180 nesting on the cliffs at Cullernose Point on 13th (TRD/JD). At Seaton Sluice the maximum count was 500 N in three hours (SSWT, undated). A WeBS survey on the River Tweed Estuary found six on 15th (MHu), six bathed in a pool at Howdon on 18th (CB), five were at Low Newton on 13th (TRD/JD) and a more unusual inland record was a single at Swallow Pond on 28th (SPP).

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

The Plenmeller Common colony held at least 1,500 birds on 24th (EC/JSB), around 60 pairs, many nest-building, were at Holy Island Lough on 26th (IK) and the nesting platform at Gosforth Park NR was home to at least 10 pairs during the month (NHSN). Gatherings elsewhere included 320-350 at Hauxley NWT on 5th and 17th (CBD/HRS), 100 at Powburn and 50 at Branton on 2nd (JMA) with around 20 at Bothal Pond and on the River Tyne at Newcastle Business Park; single-figure counts came from six other localities.

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

An adult was at East Chevington on 27th (PHH/STH/ADMc) and another, possibly the same individual, was at nearby Druridge Bay CP on 30th (TRD).

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

Only a few birds remained in the county following the spring exodus with two at Warkworth on 5th (MPu) and two adults in full plumage, apparently a pair, which flew off together in a NE direction from Widdrington Moor Lake on 18th (JL).

Common Gull *Larus canus*

The maximum monthly count at Seaton Sluice was 360 N in two hours (SSWT, undated) but otherwise passage was light. A gathering of 250 was observed at Haughton Strother GP on 2nd (MR) with lesser counts of 100 at Bridge of Aln and 50 at Powburn on 2nd-4th (JMA) and 12 at Cocklawburn on 21st (MHu). Single birds were at three other sites.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

The maximum count recorded at Swallow Pond was 42 on 8th (GPK) with 20-25 at Blagdon (Milkhope Lake), Seaton Sluice and West Hartford (LJM/SSWT) and ten to 20 at Big Waters (GB), Castle Island (DM) and Jesmond Dene (MJCo); up to ten were at 15 other widespread localities including well inland at Branton GP and Greenlee Lough.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

Significant movement was witnessed at Seaton Sluice from 5th-7th when a maximum of 345 moved N on 6th in two hours (SSWT). Concentrations of 50-125 were recorded up to mid-month from Berwick (North Shore) (MHu), the Black Middens (JMA), Castle Island (DM), the River Tweed Estuary (MHu) and Tynemouth Priory (JMA) with up to 10-25 at the North Shields Fish Quay, St Mary's Island, Tynemouth Boating Lake and West Hartford with single-figure counts at six other localities.

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoideus*

An immature was reported regularly at St Mary's Island/Wetland from 3rd-26th (AC/IJ *et al.*).

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

An immature was present at St Mary's Island on 10th (AC/MSH) and an immature was seen to land briefly on the sea at East Chevington on 17th before flying off N (TF/JFa).

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

Very few records, comprising an immature at Grindon Lough on 2nd and two there on 17th (PRM), with one to three at Berwick (North Shore), Hauxley NWT, the River Tweed Estuary and the River Tyne at Newcastle Business Park.

Rock Dove *Columba livia*

A high count of 57 on the Environment Agency roof (Newcastle Business Park) on 2nd, eight at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 6th (DM) and two well inland at Deadwater Fell (Kielder) on 4th (CDB).

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

The peak monthly count at Howdon was 32 on 13th (CB) with 18 at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 11th, ten at Ellington on 18th (TB), at Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 16th (MNC) and four at Westburnhope on 5th, East Cramlington Pond on 24th and Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 25th. One to three were at 12 widespread localities.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

A large count of 500 feeding in a field at Plessey North Moor (near Cramlington) on 1st (PCF), 45 at Big Waters NR on 20th (GB), 16 at Howdon on 9th (CB), 14 at Jesmond Dene on 20th and one to six at six further locations.

Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

At Byker, nine flew NW over McDonalds at dusk on 23rd with two NW over the fire station on 28th (SPP).

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Three reports - three at Wallsend Metro on 24th (CDH), two at Eachwick on 10th and one at Hauxley NWT on 5th (CB).

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

An early returning bird was at Rothbury on 7th (JD), the main influx commencing on 18th with one at Prestwick Carr (PCF/STH) peaking with three at Beanley Moor on 23rd (KE) and two at Quarry House Moor on 20th/21st (AH), Longhorsley Moor on 21st (AB/LB) and Harwood Forest on 23rd (STE). Singles were at nine other inland locations.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

The pair at Cresswell Pond were active all month with two on 6th and 22nd and one on several other dates (TB). Two left their roost site at Eland Hall (Ponteland) on 8th with a single hunting in daylight at nearby Prestwick Carr on 4th (GB). A single hunted early morning at East Chevington on 9th and 14th (MH/AA/MH) and seen at nearby Hadston on 10th, Widdrington, Chevington Moor and Druridge Pools on 20th and West Chevington on 16th and 22nd. Singles were also at Alnwick Moor on 10th, Rock on 21st, near Corbridge on 22nd and Branton on 27th with an A1 casualty at Newham on 4th.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Two present at Shiremoor all month (CGK *et al.*) with singles at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd (IFo), Backworth on 18th (CGK/GPK), Big Waters on 19th (GB) and South Newsham (Blyth) on 26th (STH).

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

A pair called most nights at Rothbury during the month and at Harwood Forest W on 23rd (TRD/JD/STH) with a pair at Gosforth Park having two chicks (compared with four last year) (NHSN). At Hauxley ringing station a female had two young on 26th (IF) and young called from a garden nest box at Stamfordham on 26th (EC). Singles called at Grindon Lough on 18th (PRM) and was seen at 10.30am at Holywell Dene on 21st (RJP).

Long-eared owl *Asio otus*

A male called at Bakethin Reservoir (Kielder Forest) on 17th (PRM) and birds were at confidential breeding sites in south east Northumberland on 6th and east Northumberland on 26th (DM/IF).

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

At Quarry House Moor for most of the month with five on 4th and 12th falling to four on 20th and three on 21st (AH). One hunted at Stobswood Pools at 18.40 on 7th (NFO), at Needles Eye (Berwick) on 22nd (MHu) and circled high overhead eastward at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) on 29th (MSH). Inland at Mohope Fell one was flushed by walkers from a nest scrape without eggs on 25th (KE).

Swift *Apus apus*

The first was over Bakethin Reservoir (Kielder Forest) on 17th (PRM) with singles at Lynemouth on 24th (TB), Corbridge on 25th (AJH), Holywell Pond and East Chevington on 27th (SPP/STH/ADMCo) with the only multiple report eight at East Chevington on 30th (MSK/NEWT).

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

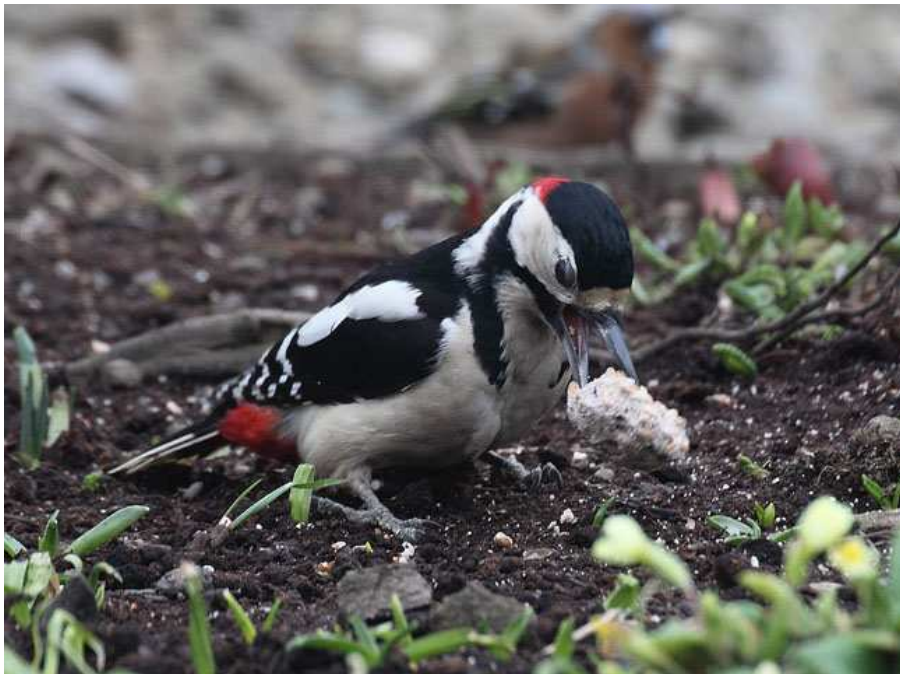
All reports singles at Dissington Bridge / Darras Hall on 7th (CW), Redesmouth Bridge on 8th (IRD), Holywell Dene on 14th (RJP), Bothal (R. Wansbeck) on 16th (TD), Jesmond Dene on 20th (MJCo) and Haughton Strother GP (Humshaugh) on 27th (MR).

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Well reported as birds called with the high count three at Kielder Water and Forest on 17th (PRM), a pair at Gosforth Park NR all month and two at Dukeshouse (Hexham) on 25th (AJH) with singles heard at all these sites on many other dates during the month. One called all month at Rothbury (TRD/JD) and birds were at 12 other inland locations and three on the coast.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

A total of six were at Harwood Forest on 6th with four drumming and two pairs (STE), five at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN) all month and three the peak monthly count at Holywell Dene (RJP). Three were at Prestwick Carr and Arcot Pond on 6th (DM/PCF), Jesmond Dene on 12th (MJCo), Kielder Forest on 17th (PRM) and Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 20th (TB) with two visiting an Old Hartley Garden, at Northumberland Park (North Shields), Grindon Lough and Ellington. Singles were at 17 other widespread localities.



A Great Spotted Woodpecker at Eachwick by Chris Barlow

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Two birds were seen at Longhorsley Moor on 7th (AB/LB), West Chevington on 10th (TB), Derwent Reservoir on 12th (JMA), Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 16th (ASJ) and at Kielder on 17th (PRM). Single birds were recorded from 33 sites.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Only two records this month involving a female at the Snook (Holy Island) on 4th (ADM) and a male at Letham Shank (Berwick) on 9th (TBr).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Two birds were seen at an inland location on 6th (JD) and single birds were noted at four other inland sites. Other singles were at Holy Island and Berwick on 4th (ADM/PRM), East Sleekburn on 6th (JR), Seaton Sluice on 6th and 7th (SSWT), Redheugh Bridge (Newcastle) on 8th (DM), Prestwick Carr on 16th (PCF) and at Holy Island on 20th (ADM).

Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor*

One was in the A1 car park East Ord on 9th before flying NW up the River Whiteadder (MHu).

Magpie *Pica pica*

A roost at Arcot Pond held 20 on 9th (STH), 12 at Howdon on 11th (CB), six at Jesmond Dene on 12th with singles at Eachwick and Heaton.

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Four pairs at Harwood Forest on 23rd the high count (STE), seven at Gosforth Park NR during the month (NHSN), four at Havannah NR on 7th (STH) and Arcot Hall on 6th (DM), 3 at Jesmond Dene on 20th (MJCo) with two at nine locations and singles at a further ten.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

150 the highest count at Big Waters on 27th (GB), 58 at Howdon on 18th and 16 there on 6th (CB), eight the largest flock recorded in the observer's garden at Eachwick on 12th (CDB) and four in Jesmond Dene on 6th (MJCo).

A Jackdaw
Howdon NR
Colin Bradshaw

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

Rookery counts of 10-12 nests at QEII CP on 17th, 5 AON at Holywell Dene on the same date (CDH) and at Seaton Burn on 3rd (DM) with single birds moving north at distance over sea at Seaton Sluice on 16th (SSWT) and on seed tray of garden bird feeder at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 23rd (TD).



Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

At Blagdon 45 were in the Boghouses area on 18th (LJM), 38 flew E at Howdon late afternoon on 9th (CB) and 34 (29N,5S) moved over sea at Seaton Sluice between 4th and 19th (SSWT). Ten were at North Shields Fish Quay car park on 11th, five at Deadwater Fell (Kielder) on 4th and at Jesmond Dene on 12th with a pair nesting on the top-most strut of a pylon at Wideopen (near Hazlerigg) on 5th and two at Eachwick on 11th.

Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix*

One was found by D Elliot at Hemscott Hill (Cresswell) on 24th (TB) and presumably the same bird re-located in field N of Bells Farm (Cresswell) on 30th (MSH/TRD).



The Bell's Farm Hooded Crow by Tim Dean on 30th April

Raven *Corvus corax*

Three at Kielder Forest on 17th and Murder Cleugh (near Uswayford) on 22nd (PRM/JMA), two at Thrunton Woods and Harwood Forest on 5th (JD/NFO), at Longhoughton on 6th. Pairs apparently feeding young at the nest were found at two sites in the middle of the county (MH/IK). Singles were at East Ord (Berwick), Harwood Forest, Kielder Forest and Riddles Burn (Otterburn Ranges).

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

The only large count was 40+ at Kielder Forest on 17th (PRM) with three at Jesmond Dene on 27th (MJCo), two at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 4th and 28th (DM), Prestwick Carr on 6th (PCF) and Carshope Bridge (Upper Coquetdale) on 22nd (JR). Singles were at Berwick, Barns Park (Cramlington), Holy Island and Brandling Park (Newcastle).

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Just four at Jesmond Dene on 6th and Eachwick on 11th (MJCo/CDB) with one at Holywell and Heaton.

A Blue Tit at Howdon NR

Colin Bradshaw

**Great Tit** *Parus major*

16 were found over 1.5km at Attlee Park (Bedlington) on 26th (LJM), eight at Jesmond Dene on 12th (MJCo), four at Hauxley NWT on 5th and Eachwick on 10th (CDB) and present at Iris Brickfields (Heaton).

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

In Jesmond Dene three were found on 6th & 12th (MJCo), two in an Old Hartley garden during the month (RJP) and singles at Rothbury on 8th, Grindon Lough on 17th and Longhirst on 20th.

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

Pairs excavated nest holes at Prestwick Carr on 6th and at Longhorsley Moor on 7th with birds present at both sites later in the month (PCF/AB/LB). Singles were at Backworth, Big Waters, Derwent Reservoir, Havannah NR, Holywell Dene, Linden Hall (Longhorsley) and Swallow Pond (Wallsend).

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

Two were at Warkworth Lane (Ellington) on 3rd (TB), in the observer's garden at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 7th (TD), Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 27th (STH), Nunnykirk and Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth) on 29th (TRD/JD/TD). Singles were at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) during the month and Fontburn Reservoir on 21st.

Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus*

Present at East Chevington all month with three noted on 10th (two male, one female) & 23rd (ADMc), two calling on 24th (IF) and singles on five other dates.

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

The largest count was 17 at St Mary's on 11th where six also sang (ASJ), 14 on Town Moor (Newcastle) on 24th (DM), ten on moors north of Alnham on 4th (JMA), six at Arcot Pond on 15th (AJR) and five at Longhorsley Moor on 7th (AB/LB). Four were at Ponteland on 3rd, Longhorsley on 6th and Doddington on 18th and one to three at seven other locations.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

Very well reported, the highest counts being 400+ at Branton on 27th with 200+ there on 11th & 30th (IBDa/KDa/JD), 229 north in an hour at Hornccliffe on 9th (JDL), ca.200 at Killingworth on 26th and Druridge Bay CP on 30th (IF/TRD), 180 at West Ord Berwick on 19th (MHu), 140 at Bothal Pond on 25th (TF/JFa), 120 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 14th (SR) and over 100 at Big Waters on 13th, 19th and 27th, Kielder Water on 17th and Castle Island on 19th. One to 85 were at these and 24 other widespread localities.

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

A late and slow return with the first one noted over Magdalene Fields (Berwick) on 4th & 5th (PRM), one at Derwent Reservoir on 5th (IFo), two at Haughton Strother GP on 6th (MR), four at Churchill Farm (Backworth) and three at East Chevington both on 9th (SPP/MH). Many singles were reported till the first double-figure count of 15 at Big Waters on 12th rising to 30 on 13th (CDB/SPP). Numbers rose quickly thereafter to peak at 140+ in cold conditions at Derwent Reservoir on 19th (IFo) and 100+ at West Ord (Berwick) on the same date (MHu) with 70 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 24th, 45 at Arcot Pond on 15th and 30 at Kielder on 14th and 17th.



A newly arrived Swallow in Coquetdale by Alan Jack

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

The first bird was reported from Gosforth Park NR on 2nd (NHSN) with notable gaps till the second of two at Bamburgh on 8th (RNa) and third of one at Whittle Dene on 12th (SR). Things then gathered pace slowly with the highest counts only ten at Swallow Pond (Wallsend) on 19th (CGK/GPK) and at Rothbury on 28th (TRD/JD) with counts of four to six from ten typical locations between 19th and 30th.

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

Two pairs were nest building at Haughton Strother GP (Humshaugh) on 2nd and a pair was visiting a nest at Longhorsley on 9th. Four were at Bakethin, two pairs at Newbiggin (Mound) and at Prestwick Carr and three at Hauxley NR. Single pairs were also reported from Castle Island, Cramlington (Valley Park), Eachwick, Hadrian Cycle Way, Jesmond Dene, Newcastle (Leazes Park) and Rothbury.

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

One was singing at Hareshaw Linn (Bellingham) on 22nd (AJR) and another was at Branton GP from 27th-28th (IBDa/KDa).

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Passage peaked with 26 at Holy Island on 11th (ADM). Count of birds in breeding territory were numerous and widespread, including 20, nearly all in song, over a 3km stretch at New Mills Wood (Berwick) on 8th (TBr), 17 singing birds between Arcot Pond-Arcot GC on 6th (DM), 16 singing at Holywell Dene on 23rd (ASJ), 11 singing at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 16th and at Newburn Riverside CP on 18th (PCF) and ten singing males at Cramlington (Beacon Lane) and at Wallsend. Elsewhere seven to nine were reported from Big Waters, Cramlington (Village Green), Dissington Bridge-Darras, Jesmond Dene, Linden Hall, Longhorsley Moor and Swallow Pond and five to six were at East Sleekburn and Marden Quarry. One to four were noted at a further 50 widespread localities.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

The first were two at Swallow Pond on 9th (GPK). An influx deposited 40 on Holy Island on 25th (ADM), while in breeding areas 32 were singing at Wingates and 21 at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 18th (ASJ), 14 were at Ford Moss on 11th, 13 were in song at Kielder Water on 17th, at Longhorsley Moor on 21st and at Cramlington (Village Green) on 27th and 12 were singing at Arcot on 16th. Ten to 11 were reported from Branton GP, Newburn Business Park and Prestwick Carr with one to six noted at a further 31 widespread localities.

A newly arrived Willow Warbler
Howdon NR Colin Bradshaw

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Passage peaked with ten at Holy Island on 25th (ADM). Counts of birds in breeding territory were numerous and widespread, including ten between Arcot Pond-Arcot GC on 19th (DM), eight in Jesmond Dene on 27th (MJCo), six at Bothal, Cramlington (Village Green) and Marden Quarry, five at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley), Castle Island, Longhorsley Moor, Mitford and Whittle Dene Reservoirs and four at Close House (Wylam), Haughton Strother (Humshaugh) and Linden Hall; nest building was noted at Close House on 18th (KE). Elsewhere one to three were reported from a further 37 suitable breeding localities, with the first song reported at West Ord on 5th.

**Garden Warbler** *Sylvia borin*

There were only two reports with singles at Holy Island on 22nd (PRM) and Longhorsley Moor on 23rd (AB/LB).

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

The first report was from near Tranwell on 20th (ADMc). Others were at West Chevington on 21st, East Chevington and Castle Island on 23rd, Hartburn on 24th, Low Stanners (Morpeth) on 25th and Ellington and Swallow Pond on 30th. Two were at East Chevington on 26th (TF/JFa).

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

The first at Cresswell Pond on 17th (IF) was followed by further singles at Druridge Pools and East Chevington on 18th. Six were singing at Arcot Pond by 26th (LJM) and five were at Brier Dene Farm on 27th. Three were found on Holt Island on 25th and one to two were reported from Backworth, Branton GP, Castle Island, Darras Hall, East Sleekburn, Ellington, Needles Eye (Berwick), Prestwick Carr, Swallow Pond, Twizell, Warkworth Lane, West Hartford and Woodhorn Flashes.

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

The first report was from St Mary's Island on 16th (AC/MSH). In the Cramlington study area a total of 13 territories were established by the end of the month, including five at Arcot Pond and five at West Hartford (STH/LJM *et al.*). More than three were at Gosforth Park NR during the month, with the first bird noted on 21st; three were also at St Mary's Island on 23rd and at Cresswell Pond on 24th. up to two were reported from East Chevington and singles at Backworth, Cresswell Pond, Dodd's Well (Berwick), Druridge Pools, Ellington, Hadrian Pond (Wallsend), Harwood Forest, Holywell Pond, Prestwick Carr and Spring Wood.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

The first was at Branton GP on 10th (IBDa/KDa). Then up to five were at Arcot Pond and East Chevington, three at Cresswell Pond and one to two at Backworth Pond, Big Waters, Gosforth Park NR, Holy Island, Prestwick Carr, St Mary's Island and Warkworth Lane.

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

The first was heard at Gosforth Park NR on 16th, where up to two were noted during the month (NHSH). One to two were also noted at East Chevington from 23rd-30th and singles were at Holywell Pond on 18th, Big Waters and Druridge Pools on 25th, Cresswell Pond on 29th and Dukes Pond and Swallow Pond on 30th.

Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus*

A single was at Alnwick (Chapel Lands) from 3rd-6th (JMA).

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Breeding was confirmed at Blagdon where six seen on 18th and 21st included a bird carrying food to a nest hole on the latter date (LJM). Five were at Mitford and four at Bothal on 16th (TD) and three were reported from Beacon Hill (Longhorsley), Holywell Dene and Jesmond Dene. Two were singing at Haughton Strother (Humshaugh) on 13th and at Attlee Park (Bedlington) on 26th and two were also noted at Arcot Hall GC, Capheaton and in the Harthope Valley, where the pair were preparing a nest hole on 6th. Singles were reported from a further 14 potential breeding areas, although a singing male at Marden Quarry on 13th was considered exceptional (AC).

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Five were heard singing at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 16th (ASJ). Two were in Jesmond Dene and at Warkworth Lane and singles at Big Waters, Chirtonbridge Bridge, Close House (Wylam), Kielder Water, Prestwick Carr, Thrunton woods and Wallington.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

12 singing at Haughton Strother GP (Humshaugh) on 21st was a notable increase on recent years (MR). Ten were at Holy Island on 4th and at Prestwick Carr on 18th and six were singing at Longhorsley Moor on 6th. Up to five were noted at five further localities.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

There were gatherings of 100 at Big Waters on 3rd and 69 at Hauxley NR on 5th; 14 were at Tynemouth on 11th and one to six at a further six localities.

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

Two pairs were feeding young in Jesmond Dene (Waterfall and Ouseburn Park), there were two breeding pairs in Holywell Dene (DHWB/KWY) and there appeared to be two territories in Atlee Park (Bedlington-LJM). Elsewhere two were at Furnace Bridge (Bedlington) and at Beltingham (South Tyne), with singles at Blakehopeburnhaugh, Felton, Harthope Valley, Hethpool (College Valley), Ford (Routin Lynn), Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth), Thrum Mill (Rothbury), Warkworth and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

Up to six were noted in the Harthope Valley during the month (DGB/Ida/KDa *et al.*) and four were at Sipton Burn (Allendale) on 12th; elsewhere in breeding areas a male was at Goat Crag (Ford) on 18th and a female at the summit of Simonside on 23rd. On the coast, five were on Holy Island on 20th and two there on 22nd.

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

A pair abandoned two newly hatched young at Gosforth in early April (STE). Six were at Jesmond Dene on 20th (MJCo) and three at Hauxley NR. Also noted at Heaton and St Marys Island.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

A large pre-migration gathering was feeding on sheep pasture at Stamfordham on 8th (EC). On the same date ca.200 were at Grindstonelaw (JSB) and 240 were at Kielder on 12th (CGK/GPK/PS). Elsewhere during the month 120-150 were noted at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) and Elsdon and 50-60 were at Capheaton, Knowesgate, Linden Hall and Yearle with up to 30 at a further 12 localities, including four on Holy Island on 25th and eight at Alwinton on 26th

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

On 16th, seven were at Bothal, and four at both Mitford and Morpeth (TD). Four were also at Acklington on 11th and at Arcot Hall GC (in full song) on 6th. One to two at Heaton, Jesmond Dene, Leazes Park and Tynemouth, included nest building in a garden at the latter site.

A Song Thrush at
Blakehopeburnhaugh
Janet Dene

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

50 at Knowesgate on 12th was the largest gathering (TB) and 20 were at Deadwater on 17th. One to six were at three further localities and a single at Holy Island on 18th was the final record.



Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

There were at least two pairs at Gosforth Park NR during the month. Four were noted in song during a 6.5km walk at Wallsend on 14th and four (two occupied nests) were at Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 16th. A pair was feeding young in a nest at Marden Quarry on 13th, nest building was noted at Harwood Forest on 23rd and a dead juvenile was found below a tree in Holywell Dene on 28th. Further pairs were reported from Cramlington (Whitelea), Jesmond Dene, Ingram and Newcastle (Exhibition Park / Leazes Park and Percy Street), with singles also at Close House (Wylam), Howdon and Kielder Water.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Nine singing birds were at Longhorsley Moor on 21st (AB/LB). At Holy Island there were counts of seven on 11th, five on 18th and four on 25th. Five were in Jesmond Dene on 27th, four in the Harthope Valley on 6th and singles at Eachwick, Hauxley NR and Heaton.

Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos*

A showy individual was found on Holy Island (Chare Ends) on 18th (ADM/IK). Present from mid-morning until dusk, it had apparently departed the next day.

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

The first was a male at Windyhaugh (Upper Coquetdale) on 22nd (JR), followed by two males at Morralee Wood on 24th (JSB/EC) and another male at Dukeshouse (Hexham) on 25th (AJH).



A cock Pied Flycatcher on 30th April at Dipton by Colin Bradshaw

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

Single female types were at Chirdonburn Bridge on 5th (JR), Holy Island (Snook) on 8th (PRF), Tynemouth (Priory Haven beach) on 12th (DRW) and Tynemouth (Spanish Battery) on 18th (DRW/SPP/IJ).

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

The first was a singing male at Haughton Strother (Humshaugh) on 10th (MR), followed by another male at Derwent Reservoir on 11th (IFo). Up to four males and a female were noted at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) from 16th (ASJ *et al.*). One to two were on Holy Island on 18th and another on 24th increased to three on 25th (IK/ADM) and three were also at Fontburn Reservoir on 21st (JD). There were two at Nunnykirk, Spring Wood (Netherwitton) and Wallington and singles at a further ten inland localities.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

The first was at Bygate (Upper Coquetdale) on 22nd (JR). Another was at Fenton Hill (Wooler) and a pair in the Breamish Valley on 23rd.

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

A total of four pairs were noted between Druridge Pools and East Chevington on 16th (JMA).

Peak counts were as follows;

Site	Peak count	Date	Observer	Site	Peak count	Date	Observer
Coastal:				Inland:			
Cresswell Pond	3	6th	TB	Harthope Valley	4 (2 pairs)	8th	DGB/RHB
Druridge Pools	3 (2 male/1 female)	2nd	TB	Alwin Valley	2 (a pair)	26th	JR
Boulmer	2 (a pair)	24th	AB/LB	Harwood Forest (Gibbet)	2 (a pair)	5th	NFO
Cocklawburn	2 (a pair)	21st	MHu				
East Chevington	2 (a pair)	21st	TRD/JD				
Holy Island (Excavations)	2 (a pair)	11th	ADM				
Newton(Football Hole)	2 (a pair)	13th	TRD/JD				
Hauxley NR	1	5th	CDB				
St Mary's Island	1 (female)	10th	MSH/AC				
Warkworth Gut	1 (female)	26th	NFO				

Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Peak passage occurred on 25th when 37 were on Holy Island (ADM), 18 at Cresswell Pond (STH), seven at Prestwick Carr and five at Ellington and Holywell Dene; ten were at Fenham-le-Moor on 28th. Earlier in the month an influx produced 11 at New Water Heugh (R Tweed) on 15th, ten at St Mary's Island on 17th and nine at Derwent Reservoir and five at Holy Island on 18th. Four to six were also reported from Backworth, Beal, Brierdene Links, Druridge Pools, Haughton Strother GP, Shillmoor, St Mary's Island and Tynemouth during mid-month. One to three were noted at a further 11 coastal and 21 inland localities.

A bird probably of the **Greenland race** *O.o.leucorhoa* was at Prestwick Carr on 27th (MRS)



A newly arrived cock Wheatear at Cresswell Pond
18th April by Jonathan Farooqi

Dunnoch *Prunella modularis*

12 were noted at Prestwick Carr on 4th (PCF). Other records came from Newcastle Civic Centre (3), an Old Hartley garden (2), Jesmond Dene (2) and Eachwick (1).



A Dunnoch at Arcot Pond by Alan Jack

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

The month's only high count came from a 1km stretch of the Horton Burn (Cramlington) on 15th and involved 36 birds. 16-20 attended garden feeders at Marden Estate, Cullercoats during the month, as did four at a Tynemouth garden on 6th (LJM/ASJ/CB).

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

At Haughton Strother G.P. 26 were counted on 2nd (MR). 20 noted at Big Waters on 18th (IJ) and at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) 15 seen on 27th (TBr). Throughout the month up to 13 attended feeders in an Old Hartley garden (RJP). On 23rd 12 birds were noted in gardens at Eglington (KE), and 12 were noted at Cresswell Pond on 29th. One-seven were at a further 22 sites in the month, including two at garden feeders in Tynemouth and seven at Linden Hall. Several observers noted an increase in sightings of this species, with a pair nest prospecting at Beacon Lane (Cramlington) for the first time (DM).

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

The first arrival was seen at Cresswell Pond on 12th (IRD), with further birds noted at Whittle Dene and Derwent Reservoirs on 14th. Singles seen at a further three sites later that week. On 18th, three were at Prestwick Carr (ADMc). Two were noted during the month at Cresswell, Druridge, Ryal, Low Newton and Prestwick Carr, while three to five were at Cresswell in the second half of the month. Five also at Prestwick Carr on 19th and six at Whittle Dene by 24th (PCF/SR). A "Channel" Wagtail was reported at Cresswell on 22nd (PRM).



A Yellow Wagtail at Cresswell by Tim Dean on 25th April

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Four Pairs were noted in Harthope Valley on 6th (CDB). Four birds seen on the Wansbeck at Bothal, at Morpeth and at Atlee Park (Bedlington) during the month. Three were in Jesmond Dene on 22nd (MJCo). One or two were at a further 21 widespread sites, including Sipton Burn in the west and two sites in Newcastle City Centre.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla yarrelli*

20 were counted in a flock with Meadow Pipits at Branton on 1st (TRD/JRD). Elsewhere, sparsely reported with one or two at nine further sites only.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

On 15th at Cresswell Pond, a single was joined by an incoming flock of ten others (MHS). At Derwent Reservoir, three seen on the 10th had increased to seven by 14th (IFo). Three were also at Cresswell and Humshaugh on 13th. One or two noted at a further 13 sites during the month.

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

One seen flying N at Grindon on 2nd was the first arrival (PRM). The next report was of three to four song-fighting at Beacon Hill on 21st (ASJ/EC/JSB), with two seen in Harthope Valley and at Longhorsley on the same day (AA/AB/LB). The following day, a large count of 20 was made in Harthope Valley (PHH), and eight were singing in Harwood Forest by the 23rd (STE). One or two birds were seen at a further three sites.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

The 12th of the month saw two large flocks at Ridley Stokoe (150 birds) and at Deadwater Fell (Kielder) (100 birds), the former grounded by heavy Spring snow! (CGK/GPK/PS/TB). Passage continued this month with 55 moving N at Grindon, 54 heading N on 7th at Seaton Sluice and 50 moving through Branton G.P. 30 were back in Harthope Valley by 6th (CDB) and 24 were on Longhorsley Moor the following day (AB/LB). 14 at Prestwick Carr on 4th (PCF). Three were moving N at Big Waters on 2nd. Single birds observed at several other sites.



A meadow Pipit on 26th April
Hepple Whitfield
by Tim Dean

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Ten+ were at Magdalene Fields (Berwick) on 4th with four+ the following day, also at Berwick at the Harbour (PRM). On 10th four were also at Berwick Little Beach (MHu). Three+ were at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 4th and three at Holy Island on 22nd.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

Two were reported this month, with single birds at Harwood on 6th and Holy Island on 12th (STE/AH).

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

12 noted in Harthope Valley on 6th (CDB). Six seen at various sites within Jesmond Dene on 20th (MJCo) and five were at Eachwick on 11th (CDB). One to three were at six further sites, including three pairs at nests with eggs in Upper Coquetdale in the last week of the month.

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Four pairs were at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd (IF0). Three pairs were noted at Scotland Gate. During the month, four to five were seen in gardens at Fulbeck Morpeth, Rothbury and Old Hartley. Elsewhere, one to four were present at 17 other sites.



Two cock photographs by Colin Bradshaw, both from Howdon
above: a Bullfinch and below: a Greenfinch

**Greenfinch** *Carduelis chloris*

Sixteen were observed at Howdon on 2nd (CB). One to three were at only three further sites.

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

Several flocks still together this month, with 55 the largest at Needle's Eye, Berwick on 22nd (Mhu), 22 and 20 also at sites in Berwick. At Ellington, 27 noted on 15th. One to 20 were at nine further sites. At Holywell, at least eight pairs were nesting in gorse along Waggonways (ASJ).

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

The only bird observed this month was a single male at Holywell Pond feeding station on 9th (SPP).

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*

Five at Cresswell Pond on 15th was the sole record during April (AJR).

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis caberet*

Displaying birds evident at Sweethope (4), Beacon Hill(3) and Simonside (4) during the month (MH/ASJ). Four were seen at Harthope, Longhorsely and Grindon and one or two at Bamburgh, Harwood and Grindon again during the month.

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

Three small flocks totalling 20 birds were seen at Harwood on 6th (STE). A group of nine present there on 4th (GB). On 2nd, five noted at Blakehopeburnhaugh. Two to four noted at four Kielder locations within the month. Singles were also seen at Grindon and Harwood on 2nd and 5th.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Chare Ends (Holy Island) held a large flock for April of 50 on 2nd (ADM). 12 were at Holywell on 11th and seven at the nearby Dene on 18th (IJ/RJP). Seven to eight nesting pairs were noted along a Waggonway also in this area (ASJ). One-seven at eight further sites, including seven at Holy Island on 22nd (PRM).

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

35+ were at Kielder Water/Forest and six at Catcleugh on 17th (PRM). Four were noted at Bakethin on 4th with three there on 12th. Singles were at Harwood and in Upper Coquetdale during the month.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

Six singing males and one female were noted at Beacon Hill on 16th, with five singing males at Holywell on 10th (ASJ). Eleven were seen at Whitelea Horse Paddock (Cramlington) on 5th (DM). Seven were at Hartley West Farm on 7th (RJP), and four birds were attending Big Waters feeding station on 3rd (GB). Two males singing and a female carrying nest material at Ford Moss (AB/LB), two at Ingram on 2nd and two singing males in Harthope Valley, where it is uncommon, and a single singing at Heatherslaw the following day were examples of inland territories (JMA/ASJ/PRM). Elsewhere, two were noted at Darras Hall and Prestwick Carr and singles at Eachwick (in garden) and Big Waters during the month.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

17 were counted on Holy Island on 17th, with 15 at St. Mary's, involving 11 singing males and four females on 10th (PRM/ASJ). Fourteen singing males were at East Chevington on 10th (ASJ). Ten were also noted at St Mary's on 23rd (IJ). 13 were noted as establishing territories at Gosforth Park during the month (NHSN). Eight singing males were present at Cresswell Pond on 10th, with eight also at Cocklawburn on 21st (ASJ/MHu). Seven males also in song were at West Hartford on 4th and seven at Prestwick Carr on 25th (LJM/PCF). One to six were also at a further sixteen sites as widespread as Upper Coquetdale and Holywell Dene.

A Reed Bunting

Howdon

Colin Bradshaw



ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN

Escapes

Lesser White-fronted Goose – *Anser erythropus*

The long-staying escapee was seen again at Hauxley on 5th (CDB).

Budgerigar - *Melopsittacus undulatus*

One survived an attack by three Magpies in a garden at Southfield Lea, Cramlington on 18th (DM).

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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, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

Apologies for any accidental omissions

BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION

This bulletin was compiled by Graeme Bowman (Mute Swan to Ruddy Duck), Steve Laing (Red Grouse to Black-necked Grebe), Trevor Blake (Honey-buzzard to Crane), Steve Holliday (Avocet to Godwit) Ian Forsyth (Turnstone to Skua), Eddie Crabtree (Puffin to Great Black-backed Gull), Tim Dean (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), Alan Jack (Dunnock to Corn Bunting), Dan Turner (WeBS Coastal Counts) and Steve Holliday (WeBS Inland Counts).

Thanks to David Sanders of NNBC for providing data.

Proof reading was by Mike Smith.

Edited by Steve Barrett NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com

Mail distribution by Paul Stewart.

RECORD SUBMISSION

Please email ntbcorg@gmail.com for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and grid references: The use of standard location names and the include grid references as this 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.

Could club members ensure they to submit records direct to NTBC rather than just Birdtrack. There may be an assumption by some members this happens automatically. We do not want to miss records.

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

It is preferable if you re-size your photos before sending and a suggested size is 640 x 480 pixels. Please ensure you include the following information with your submissions: name, species, date taken, locality.

Photographs will not be used elsewhere without the photographer's permission.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual membership costs £10 for a junior, £30 for an individual, and £32 for a family. For membership enquiries please contact ntbc@jobentley.plus.com

Subscriptions were due from 1st October. Members are asked to check that standing orders have been paid.

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. Please submit any new content for the website to the main club email address.

NTBC SIGHTINGS PAGE

The Sightings Page contains current reports by members. Access is from the NTBC website and an email notification is available for new postings. Members need to submit a request to be added to the website, specifying the email address they wish to post from before they can submit sightings to ntbcorg@gmail.com

SEATON SLUICE WATCH TOWER

Keys can be collected at indoor meetings or email ntbcorg@gmail.com

Keys are available for £5 for new holders and existing key-holders can exchange keys for £4.

NTBC DEVELOPMENT FUND NEWS

Swift Awareness and Conservation.

Nest boxes have been funded for this project, which involves surveying and monitoring breeding sites around Morpeth, raising awareness via local media and putting up nest boxes for this declining species. This is a 5-year project coordinated by Graham Sorrie, who is looking for more people to help with the practical side of things.

Please contact Graham via the Hon. Sec. if you are able to help or email ntbcorg@gmail.com

Making Space for Birds on the Beach. The fund is supporting the fencing and signing for the small patch of Druridge Bay favourable to breeding Ringed Plover. You may have seen the site and the associated publicity in the local press. Please contact Iain Robson if you are able to volunteer any time.

HOWDON WETLANDS

The club has a private arrangement with Northumbrian Water to arrange access for club members to this site. A security briefing and a key is needed. A club member has asked for this but in the interests of efficiency if anyone else is keen to avail themselves of this facility then a group briefing will be arranged. If you are interested, in the first instance make sure your membership is up to date and contact the Hon. Sec. with some indication of when you are available email ntbcorg@gmail.com

SOUND RECORDINGS

Simon Elliott has recorded some interesting bird song which you can access as follows;

1. Red grouse male giving perch song. Hexhamshire Common 5th April 2015.
2. Snipe drumming. Hexhamshire Common 5th April 2015.

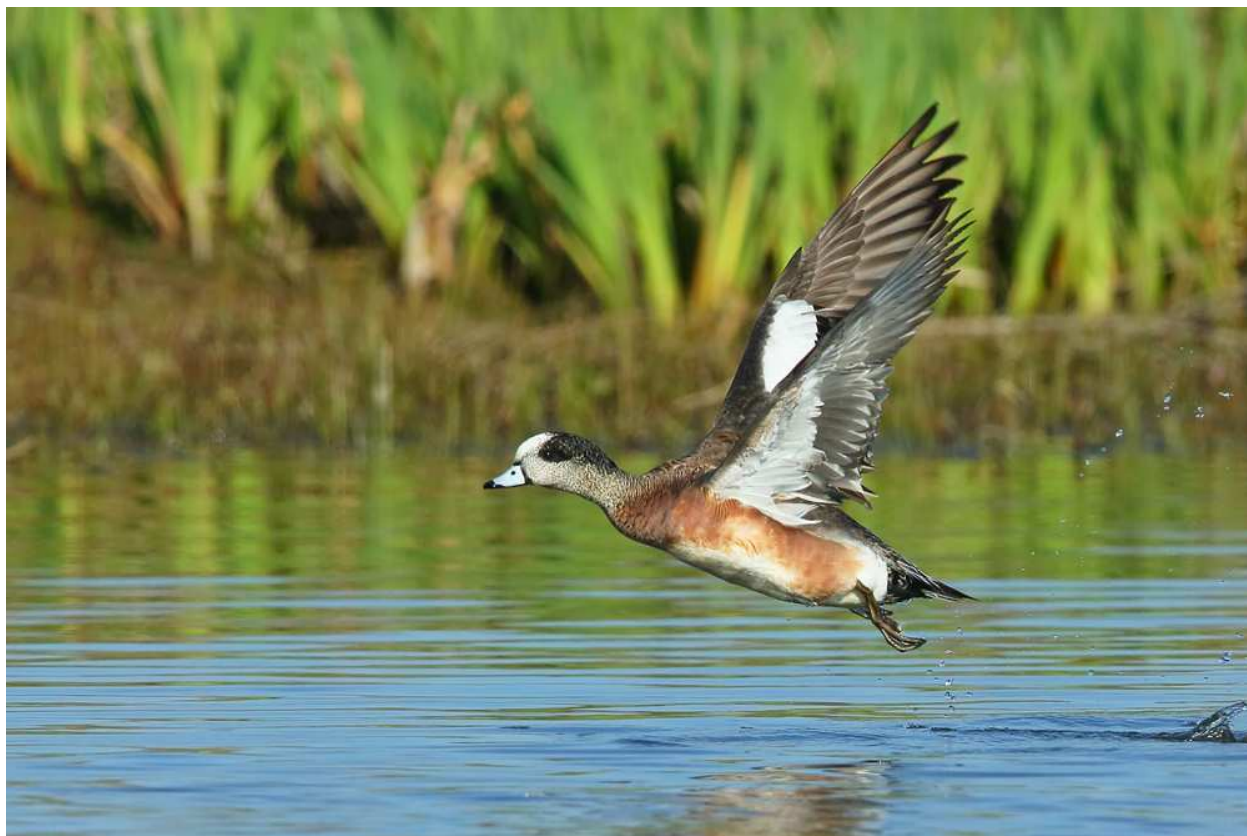
The photographs are shown earlier in the bulletin and these are hyperlinks to recordings that go with each photo.

<https://soundcloud.com/simon-elliott-5/red-grouse-perch-song>

<https://soundcloud.com/simon-elliott-5/snipe-drumming>

Also here's a link that goes with Simon's Whimbrel record from Druridge Pools on 20th April.

<https://soundcloud.com/simon-elliott-5/whimbrel-leaving-roost>



The drake American Wigeon at St. Mary's wetland
Colin Bradshaw

COASTAL WEBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND

APRIL 2015

[illegible]

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2015 No 5

MONTHLY SUMMARY – MAY

5th July 2015



CONTENTS

WeBS inland

WeBS Coastal

New WeBS Coastal organiser

Data manager position

Birding on foot - new records set for species seen and stamina by a club member



A proud duck Goldeneye with four young, photographed on 6th May by Tim Dean
There were two broods, of four and 13, of this rare breeder in the County in 2015.

INDOOR MEETINGS

NTBC indoor meetings are held at Northern Rugby Club, McCracken Park, Great North Road, Newcastle, NE3 2DT starting at 7.00pm and generally finish between 9.00pm-9.30pm.

The winter season will start on 10th September.

FIELD TRIPS

16th August 2015

Leighton Moss

please contact Steve Anderson seaswan@btinternet.com

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 2012 page 236.

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.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Eight flew S at Cramlington on 10th (LJM) and an immature bird flew W at Derwent Reservoir on 10th (IFo). The Tweed Estuary attracted 110 on 18th (MHu), 39 were at Capheaton Lake on 13th (STE), 39 at Killingworth Lake on 17th (LJM), and 12 at Big Waters. One to four were at Arcot and Bothal* Ponds, Bakethin Reservoir, Bolam Lake, Castle Island*, Cocklawburn Pond, Druridge Pools, Greenlee* and Grindon Loughs, Hedgeley GP, Howdon, Newcastle Leazes Park, Sweethope Lough and Warkworth. A lone adult, with five young, at Woodhorn Flashes on 25th appeared to be 'paired' with a Greylag Goose. On 31st a second adult Mute Swan was present but the Greylag was still 'on guard' (STH).

* includes singles on nests. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Killingworth Lake	2	12 (8,4)	GB/LJM. From 17th
East Chevington	1	10	MSH. On 26th
Gosforth Park NR	1	8	NHSN. On 23rd
Big Waters	1	7	GB. On 24th. Led to Big Waters from Little Waters
Druridge Pools	1	7	TRD/JD. On 31st
Holy Island Lough	1	7	IK. On 25th
Hauxley Reserve	1	5	HRS. On 22nd
Newcastle Exhibition Park	1	4	DHWB. On 31st



A mute Swan with five of seven young
by Tim Dean 31st May at Druridge Pools

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Singles were at South Law (Lindisfarne NNR) on 6th (IK), Holy Island Snook on 9th (ADM), Haughton Strother GP on 10th and 13th (MR), and the Tweed Estuary on 18th (MHu).

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Ten were at Budle Bay on 20th and 22nd (CGK/GPK), five at Druridge Pools on 12th (LJM), three at Haughton Strother GP on 25th (MR), and singles at Branton GP on 19th (LJM) and Holywell Pond on 20th (MSH).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

81 were at Holywell Pond on 28th (SPP), 24 at Woodhorn Flashes on 25th (STH), 16-17 at Bothal Pond (TD), Hauxley Reserve (HRS) and Hedgeley GP (DM/ALT), five to ten at Gosforth Park NR, Grindon Lough and Low Newton, and two to three at Arcot, Linton and Middle Ord Ponds, Brenkley and Newcastle Leazes Park. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Branton GP	5	32	LJM. On 19th
Haughton Strother GP	4	28	MR
Gosforth Park NR	2+	19	10 adults also. NHSN
Low Newton	2	8 (4,4)	TD. On 13th
Woodhorn Flashes	1	8	STH. On 25th
Marden Quarry	1	5	KWY. On 10th
Craggside	1	4	LJM. On 30th

A nesting pair was also at Spindlestone (CGK/GPK).

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

A flock of 42 flew N at Tynemouth on 30th (DRW) and 13 flew N at Seaton Sluice on 24th (SSWT). Peak counts (adults) were 66 at Capheaton Lake on 13th (STE), 53 at Swallow Pond on 26th (SPP), 45 at Hauxley Reserve on 22nd (HRS), 40 at Linton Ponds on 24th (CDH), 33-36 at Fellhouse Fell (Plenmeller Common) and Grindon Lough, 20-25 at Bothal Pond and Newcastle Leazes Park, and 11-13 at Big Waters, Hedgeley GP and Swallow Pond. One to four were also at Bakethin Reservoir, Newcastle Exhibition Park, the Tweed Estuary and Wallington. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Branton GP	5	22	LJM. On 19th
Castle Island	3	10 (4,4,2)	STH. On 15th. Additional to brood in April.
Hedgeley GP	2	7 (4,3)	DM/STH. On 10th
Newcastle Leazes Park	2	3 (2,1)	DM. Brood of one on 18th and brood of two on 26th
Linton Ponds	1-2	11	TD. On 23rd
Bank's Pond, Dinnington	1	8	PCF. On 6th. Same brood relocated to Brenkley from at least 6th (GB)
Druridge Pools	1	5	TD. On 15th
Swallow Pond	1	6	SPP. On 4th
West Stobswood Pool	1	5	MSH. On 25th
Cresswell Pond	1	4	TD. On 15th
Duke's Pond, Wallsend	1	3	LJM. On 27th
Widdrington Moor Lake	1	1	MSH. On 25th

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

A flock of 16 flew N at Seaton Sluice on 24th (SSWT). Two were at New Water Haugh (River Tweed) on 24th and 26th (MHu), and singles at Castle Island on 4th and 9th-10th (GB *et al.*) and Hauxley Reserve on 15th (TRD).

Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiaca*

One was at Gosforth Park NR on 16th (NHSN).

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

A total of 11 flew N and eight S during the month (SSWT). Peak counts were 84 at the Blyth Estuary on 9th (GB), 65 at Budle Bay on 9th (CGK/GPK), and ten to 18 at Cresswell Pond (TD), Druridge Pools (TD) and Howdon (CB). Eight were at Hauxley Reserve, four at Bell's Pond, and one to two at Arcot, Backworth and Bothal Ponds, Boulmer, Elswick, Grindon Lough, Haughton Strother GP, Hedgeley GP, Prestwick Carr, Wallington, Warkworth, West Ord and Widdrington. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Branton GP	1	12	LJM. On 19th
Caistron	1	10	TRD/JD. On 16th
Hoppen Kiln Flash	1	7	GPK. On 31st

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

A drake was at Ridley Stokoe on 2nd and four (three drakes) 4th (JR), a pair was at Blakehopeburnhaugh on 23rd (JD), a drake at Snabdaugh (North Tyne) on 9th (JR), and a female came off a nest in a tree at Low Carritheth (Hesleyside) on 16th (JR). In the south east, two drakes were at Druridge Pools on 29th-30th (STH/IFo/PHH) and single drakes at Cresswell Pond on 24th (TD) and Howdon on 7th (CB).

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

Grindon Lough held 22 on 4th (AJR), declining to 11-12 by 20th-22nd (SJH/MRS). Two pairs were at Beadnell flash on 11th (TRD), and one to two birds at Budle Bay, Druridge and Monks' House Pools, Haughton Strother GP, Hauxley Reserve, Holy Island Lough, Low Newton, Plenmeller Common and Widdrington Moor Lake up to 25th.

American Wigeon *Anas americana*

A drake, first noted in April 2015, was at Holywell Pond on 1st (MSH) and 4th. On the latter date it was heard calling regularly (CGK).

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Two flew N at Seaton Sluice on 9th (SSWT). A concentration of 66 was noted at Bell's Pond (Druridge Bay) on 4th (GB). Other peak counts were up to 12 at Low Newton scrape (TD/TRD), eight to ten at Arcot Pond (DM/LJM), Bothal Pond (TD/TF/JFa), Castle Island (GB), and five to six at Big Waters, Druridge Pools and Hauxley Reserve. Three to four were at the Blyth Estuary, Caistron, Capheaton Lake and East Chevington, and one to two at Backworth, Cresswell and Linton Ponds, Brenkley, Grindon Lough, Haughton Strother GP, Longhirst Flash, and West Hartford.

Teal *Anas crecca*

17 were at Druridge Pools on 4th (GB) and 20 on 8th (TD). Peak counts elsewhere were 16 at Grindon Lough on 20th (SJH), eight at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN), and five to seven at Bakethin Reservoir, Bell's Pond and Big Waters (GB/DM). One to two were also at Arcot Pond, the Blyth Estuary, Harwood Forest, Hoppen Kiln Flash, Low Newton, Lynemouth and Plenmeller Common.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Largest counts (excluding young) were 46 at the Tweed Estuary on 18th (MHu), 26 at Grindon Lough on 20th (SJH), 22 at Newcastle Leazes Park on 18th (DM), and 12 -14 at Bothal Pond, Hauxley Reserve and. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Branton GP	4	14	LJM. On 19th
Capheaton Lake	3	19 (9,7,3)	STE. On 13th
Holywell Dene	1	11	RJP.
Derwent Reservoir	1	8	IFo. New brood on 15th
Nelly's Moss, Craggside	1	6	MJC. On 25th
Airy Holm Reservoir	1	5	IFo. On 16th
Beehive Flash, Earsdon	1	4	MSH. On 15th
Longhirst Flash	1	4	TD. On 17th
Hedgeley GP	1	3	DM. On 10th
West Ord	1	3	MHu. On 17th



A Mallard takes her brood to water in the Upper Coquet valley. By Tim Dean on 1st May

Pintail *Anas acuta*

A pair was at Arcot Pond on 24th-25th (STH/LJM), and single ducks at Druridge Pools on 4th (GB/TF/JFa), 9th-10th (TRD/DM *et al.*) and 15th (TD), and Low Newton scrape on 9th (CGK/GPK) and 13th-14th (TRD/JD/SPP).

Garganey *Anas querquedula*

A drake flying N at Seaton Sluice on 9th (SSWT) was a notable sea-watching record. More typical coastal records concerned a drake regularly at Druridge Pools between 4th-25th (TF/JFa/STH *et al.*), with two drakes on 23rd (PHH/ADM/NFO), two drakes at Cresswell Pond on 23rd (IRD) and one on a small pool nearby on 12th (ADM), and single drakes at East Chevington south pool on 17th (TF/JFa) and Monks' House Pool on 23rd (MSH). Inland, a pair was noted at Hedgeley GP on 19th (LJM).

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Ten (seven drakes) on 15th was the peak count from Druridge Pools (TD), with one to six regularly throughout the month. Three to four were at Bell's Pond (GB), Gosforth Park NR (NHSN) and Monks' House Pool (MSH), and one to two at Big Waters, Castle Island, Cresswell Pond, Holy Island Lough and Low Newton scrape. A pair roosting with Eiders at St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) on 24th was an unusual record (IK).

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Peak counts were 14 at Swallow Pond on 26th (SPP), eight at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN), and four to five at Arcot Pond (STH), Bothal Pond (TF/JFa), Holywell Pond (MSH) and Killingworth Lake (GB/LJM). One was also at Capheaton Lake.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Four flew N at Seaton Sluice on 14th (SSWT). The largest concentrations involved 49 at Druridge Pools on 22nd (MSH), 37 at Hauxley Reserve on 22nd (HRS), 36 at Swallow Pond on 4th (SPP), and 21-28 at Bothal Pond (TF/JFa), Haughton Strother GP (MR), Linton Ponds (CDH) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs (SR). Counts of ten to 14 came from Arcot and West Allotment Ponds, Capheaton and Killingworth Lakes, Gosforth Park NR, Hedgeley GP, Holy Island Lough and Newcastle Leazes Park, and three to eight were at Bakethin and Coatenhill Reservoir, Big Waters, Cocklawburn and Middle Ord Ponds, Derwent Reservoir, Grindon Lough, Howdon, Monks' House Pool and Newcastle Exhibition Park.

Scaup *Aythya marila*

A drake was at Druridge Pools on 4th (TF/JFa) and 9th (AA/TRD/JL)



A fine drake Scaup
Druridge Pools
9th May
by Jonathan Farooqi

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

Six flew N at Newbiggin on 25th (STH). A high-tide roost at Black Law (Lindisfarne NNR) on 24th contained 230 drakes (IK), 93 (83 adult drakes) were off North Blyth on 31st (STH), 27 (26 adult and one immature drake) at Hartley Bay on 30th (SPP), 11 at Warkworth, and two to three at Boulmer and the Tweed Estuary. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods/crèches	No. of young	Observer/notes
Budle Bay	1+	11	TM. Small ducklings with four drakes and five ducks on 22nd
Howick Bay	1	4	TD. On 26th.

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

The long-staying drake was again at Derwent Reservoir, until at least 19th, and was in almost full breeding plumage (IFo).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

Five flew N at Snab Point on 9th (JL) and three N at Newbiggin on 25th (STH). 80-100 were at Islestone (Bamburgh) on 22nd (TM), 30 were off East Chevington on 4th (GB), and two at Holy Island.

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

One flew N at Seaton Sluice on 9th (SSWT). Singles were at Cresswell Pond on 3rd (STH), Castle Island on 4th (GB) and East Chevington regularly between 25th-31st (TRD/JD/TF/JFa/ *et al.*). Breeding was confirmed at a confidential site (as used in previous years):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
North Northumberland	2	17 (13,4)	TRD/JD. Brood of 4 from 6th and new brood of 13 on 30th



A Goldeneye duckling at a breeding site on 6th May by Tim Dean

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

11 flew N at Seaton Sluice (SSWT) and one N at Newbiggin on 9th, with one S at the latter site on 4th (GB). 15 were on the sea off East Chevington on 4th when three were on the north pool (GB), and one to nine were noted there on several dates between 5th-17th (AA/TN *et al.*). The species was noted throughout the month at Budle Bay with a peak of ten on 9th (CGK/GPK), three to four were at Cresswell Pond (STH) and Stag Rocks (CGK/GPK), and one was at Holy Island.

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

Peak gatherings were 22 at New Water Haugh on the River Tweed on 4th (MHu), 15 at West Ord on 31st (MHu), 11 at the Tweed Estuary on 18th (MHu), six to seven at Dilston (DM *et al.*) and Warkworth (JEd), three to five at the Blyth Estuary, Castle Island, Derwent Reservoir and Hexham. One to two were also noted at Allen Banks, Alwinton, Bellingham, Caistron, Corbridge, Cupola Bridge, East Chevington, Foxton Bend, Harthope Valley, Jesmond Dene, Ridley Stokoe, Sharperton and Snab Point. A duck was seen flying into a nest hole in a tree at Warkworth on 8th (JEd).

Quail *Coturnix coturnix*

The first calling birds of the year were one at 3.30 am at Pithouse Fell (Slaley) on 10th (DM/STH/ALT/HD) and one in the Brunton area (Newton-by-the-sea) on 14th (MJC).

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

Three were in the Carey Burn area (Harthope Valley) on 10th (DM/ALT) and one to two birds were at Allendale, Hethpool (College Valley), Holywell Dene, Langley Castle, Middleton Hall, Whitfield and Widdrington. On 8th a very tame pair were "waltzing" down the observer's road in Rothbury (TRD).

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

The peak count during the month at Fellhouse Fell (Plenmeller Common) was 21 on 20th (SJH). The Hawsen Burn area (Harthope Valley) held 20+ birds on 6th, and six were at Allendale Common on 10th (DM/ALT). One to five were at Knock Shield (Allendale), Pithouse Fell (Slaley), Rowley Burn, Simonside and Sipton Burn. The first confirmed breeding record of the year was of a pair with seven chicks at Blanchland on 23rd (RB/MB).

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

In the Allendale area, on 10th, three were at Carrshield Moor, two were at Meadow Cottage and one was at Shieldbridge (DM/STH/ALT/HD). Later in the month singles were also recorded at Knock Shield (Allendale) and Rowley Burn.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Four were at Newton on 11th (TRD), but otherwise it was mostly pairs seen at various locations including Derwent Reservoir, Doddington, Druridge, East Thirston, Embleton, Linden Hall (Longhorsley), Pegswood, Prestwick Carr, Wingates (Longhorsley) and Woolsington Ponds. Singles were at Cresswell and Whitelea (Cramlington).

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

One flew N during an hour's sea watch at Newbiggin on 25th (STH). Two were at Holy Island on 15th (SR) and Druridge on 21st (TRD/JD). Singles were at Newbiggin and off Snab Point (Cresswell).

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

One flew S past Snab Point (Cresswell) on 10th (ADMc) and a "cracking" summer plumaged adult was well appreciated close to the shore at the mouth of the River Tyne, off Black Midden Rocks, at Tynemouth on 15th (MK/SPP/DRW).

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

Very few were recorded at Seaton Sluice Watch Tower with a maximum of 30 flying S in two hours on 3rd (SSWT). 12 nests were counted at Needles Eye (Berwick) on 26th (MHu). Two were found on The River Tweed Estuary during a WeBS count on 18th (MHu) and a single was at Druridge on 9th.

A Fulmar passes Tynemouth
Colin Bradshaw

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

Passage was noted with 19 S and seven N during one hour at Newbiggin on 25th (STH), 18 N during an hour at Seaton Sluice on 14th (SSWT), 12 past Holy Island on 24th (SR/AH) and one to two birds elsewhere at the coast.

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

Movements during the month included an impressive 1,200 per hour S past Berwick Pier during the morning of 3rd (MHu), 118 N in one hour at Seaton Sluice on 14th and 100 S in two hours on 3rd (SSWT). 70 were in a tight flock feeding offshore at Alnmouth on 28th (MJC). Ten were off Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) on 12th (TRD) and two to four birds were recorded elsewhere at the coast.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

On 18th a WeBS count produced 82 in The River Tweed Estuary and the regular low-tide roost upstream at New Water Haugh (River Tweed) peaked at 68 on 17th (MHu). 15 was the monthly maximum at Derwent Reservoir on 4th (IFo). One to ten birds were at Bakethin Reservoir, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington and Hauxley NWT.

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

The only records from Seaton Sluice were three N, all immatures, on 14th (SSWT). 14 were roosting at Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 17th (MHu) and an adult was in Blyth Harbour on 25th (CDH). Two nests were found at Needles Eye (Berwick) on 26th (MHu).

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Regularly recorded in the Cresswell Pond/Druridge Pools area throughout the month with up to four birds there on 17th and 23rd (TF/JFa/IRD) and a colour-ringed individual (left leg - white 'F' on a red ring, right leg - black 'T' on a yellow ring) which had been seen at Nosterfield (North Yorkshire) on 10/04/15 and also in North Yorkshire in 2014 (TF/JFa/STH/IFo). Elsewhere one to two birds were noted at Beal causeway, Budle Bay, East Chevington NR, Fenham-le-Moor, The River Wansbeck Estuary and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Great White Egret *Ardea alba*

A splendid individual in full breeding dress was at Chevington North Pool on 11th (ADMc).

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

The highest count was eight at New Water Haugh (River Tweed) on 24th (MHu). Seven, on 17th, was the peak count at Howdon (CB) and a minimum of five birds were present at Gosforth Park NR during the month (NHSN). Five were present at Ladyburn Lake (Druridge Bay CP) in the late evening of 30th (STH) and one to four birds were at many other localities.

Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

At least two individuals recorded - an adult at New Water Haugh (River Tweed) on 18th (MHu) and an immature bird at Cresswell Pond on 25th (TF/JFa). Sightings were also made at East Chevington, Druridge Pools and Cresswell Pond (TRD/JD/SPP/AA/MSH).

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

The peak counts were six, with at least two pairs hatching three young by the end of the month, at Gosforth Park NR and adjacent pool throughout the month (NHSN) with the same number, three pairs, at Capheaton on 13th (STE). Big Waters NWT held five birds, including two pairs, on 21st (GB) and both Arcot Pond (LJM) and Nelly's Moss (Craggside) (MJC) had two pairs present during the month. One to three birds were at Caistron, Cocklawburn Pond, Coney Garth (Bothal Pond), Haughton Strother GP, Hauxley NWT, Hedgeley GP, Holburn Moss, Holy Island, Laverock Hall Farm (Blyth), Linton Ponds, Longhirst Flash and Wallington Hall.



Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps Cristatus*

East Chevington proved a popular location for this species with numbers peaking at nine during a WeBS count on 16th (JL). Seven were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 30th (SR), with six at Airy Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield) on 7th (IFo). Widdrington Moor Lake held a maximum of two pairs on 25th (MSH) whilst one to two birds were recorded at Caistron, Coney Garth (Bothal Pond), Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Haughton Strother GP (Humshaugh), Hedgeley GP and Killingworth Lake. At Swallow Pond a pair were observed in display again after they had their nest washed out (SPP).

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

A pair at a site in the south east of the county were displaying and actively nest prospecting towards the end of the month. A further single bird was observed at a site in mid-Northumberland.

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Single birds were noted near Whittonstall on 9th (IFo), Blanchland (RB/MB) and near Nafferton Farm (GB/LAR) on 23rd and at Shildon Cottage (Blanchland) on 30th (JMA).

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Most records came from Druridge Bay area with a male and two different females noted throughout the month (ADMc *et al.*). Away from the breeding area a female was seen at Gosforth Park NR on 5th (NHSN) and a pair were noted at a confidential site in the SW until the 20th, but gamekeeper activity was noted in the area and no further sightings were reported (*per* SJH).

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

An immature female was seen at a confidential site on 13th (ADMc).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Two separate males were noted at Allen Banks on 26th (MJC). Single birds this month were reported from Bamburgh, Blanchland, Castle Island, Cramlington, Greenhaugh, Holywell Dene and Longframlington. A bird was noted on the nest at Jesmond Dene on 11th (MJCo).

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Five birds were seen in the Harthope Valley on 23rd ASJ), with four were noted there on 6th (DM/ALT) and four were also seen at Mounce's Viewpoint (Kielder) on 2nd (DM/STH/LJM). Three were at Thorngrifton Common on 10th (DM/STH/ALT/HD) and at Rowley Burn on 23rd (AJH). One to two birds were reported from over 11 further sites.



A Buzzard roosts at Allenbanks
by Tim Dean on 28th May

Osprey *Pandion haliaetuss*

Two birds were seen at Derwent Reservoir on 10th and 14th (IFo/IK/ASH/TW *et al.*). A bird soared off high S over the Budge Fields (Druridge Pools) on 19th (ADMc); other singles were at St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) on 23rd (IK), Gosforth Park NR on 30th (NHSN) and at Big Waters on 31st (GB *et al.*).

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Gosforth Park NR had four plus birds again throughout the month (NHSN) and three birds were at Swallow Pond on 10th (DM/STH/ALT/HD) and at Big Waters on 27th (GB). Two birds were also at Swallow Pond on 29th (CGK) and singles were either seen or heard at Big Waters on 3rd and throughout the month (GB), Gosforth Park NR on 10th (DM/STH/ALT/HD) and at Swallow Pond on 19th (SPP).

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

12 adults and five young were at Wallington Hall on 21st (LJM), nine were at Hauxley NWT on 22nd (HRS) and six were at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 18th (DM). One to three birds were seen at Arcot Pond, Castle Island (Ashington), Cocklawburn Pond, Corbridge, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Grindon Lough, Jesmond Dene and Thrum Mill.

Coot *Fulica atra*

53 adults at Woodhorn Flash on 25th was the highest count (STH), 42 birds were at Bothal Pond on 30th (TD), 33 were at Swallow Pond on 26th (SPP) and 31 were at Killingworth Lake on 17th (LJM). 11 birds were at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN) throughout the month at Grindon Lough on 10th (DM/STH/ALT/HD) and at Linton Ponds on 24th (CDH). 10 birds were at Arcot Pond, nine were at Craggside (Rothbury), eight at Leazes Park (Newcastle) and seven at Exhibition Park (Newcastle). One to four birds were also noted at 5 further sites.

Crane *Grus grus*

A bird flew from the North, circled low over Bell's Pond (Cresswell) and then drifted off South West on 4th (GB).

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

Up to 16 were present on Cresswell Pond throughout the month. A gradual build-up of sitting birds saw four on nests on 18th, five on 19th and six from 26th (ADM/MSH/TD *et al.*) with the first chick seen hatching on 31st (ADM). The Blyth estuary again held small numbers with two on 9th (GB) and five on 19th (AC), as did Druridge Pools where there were two on 4th, one on 9th, five on 10th and one on 19th ((TF/JFa/GB *et al.*). Elsewhere, Bothal Pond held four on 2nd (TF/JFa), one to three were on Castle Island on three dates, two were at *Beehive* Flash (Earsdon) on 13th, one to two were at Lynemouth Flash on four dates between 18th-25th and a single was at East Chevington on 15th. A further two were noted at a confidential site on 15th.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Non-breeding birds were counted in the roosts at Holy Island and numbered 300 on 4th and 160 on 23rd (IK). Further south, Hauxley NWT held 46 on 22nd (HRS) and peaks of 20 were seen at Newbiggin and Cresswell Pond on 1st and 4th respectively (STH/GB). The WeBS count at Berwick north shore produced 14 on 15th (MHu) and seven flew N at Seaton Sluice on 25th (CDH). Up to six breeding/non-breeding birds were also seen at Alwinton, Bothal Pond, Brenkley, Carey Burn, Castle Island, Cramlington (Southfield Green), Fellhouse Fell, Hedgeley GP, Howdon, Middleton Hall, Prestwick Carr, Redesmouth, Sipton Burn, Smalesmouth and the Tweed estuary.

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

The last of the passage 'Northern' birds at Prestwick Carr involved 29 on 2nd (PCF), otherwise it was a case of there being very few inland reports which included singles at Fellhouse Fell on 20th and Knock Shield (an agitated bird) on 23rd plus 'several' heard on Allendale Common on 10th.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Passage birds in the Holy Island area included 150 (Black Law) on 12th (TRD) and 130 (The Heugh) on 16th (IK) and a further 70 were seen from the Causeway on 12th (TRD). Nearby Budle Bay held 65 on 8th (CGK/GPK) with 60 still present on 21st (TM) albeit with much turnover of birds in between no doubt.

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

An estimated 40-50 pairs at Acton Fell included some with young, on 15th (ASJ). Some 31 were counted at Grindon Lough on 20th (SJH) and 20 at Big Waters on 24th included at least four sitting birds (GB). Small numbers, perhaps post-breeding, seen elsewhere included 19 at Cresswell Pond on 29th (STH/IFo), 14 at both Bothal Pond on 2nd and Laverock Hall (Blyth) on 14th and 11 at Hauxley NWT. Four breeding pairs were noted at Haughton Strother GP during the month (MR) and one to six were logged at Arcot Pond, Brenkley, Gosforth Park (adjacent pool), Grindon Lough, Howdon and West Hartford. Two broods of two were noted at the *Beehive* Flash (Earsdon) on 15th (MSH) and a pair drove off a cock Pheasant which had strayed near chicks while feeding, at Prestwick Carr on 27th (IK).

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

Reports from 'confidential sites' included one to two pairs noted at four locations. Reports from elsewhere included up to five at Haughton Strother GP during the month (MR), up to four at Bothal Pond between 2nd-8th (TD/TF/JFa *et al.*), three at Lynemouth Flash on 18th (MSH), one to two at Druridge Pools between 15th-22nd (several observers) and singles at Cresswell Pond on 4th and 31st (IRD *et al.*), Castle Island on 9th (GB), Gosforth Park (adjacent pool) on 11th and 30th (NHSN), Big Waters on 13th (GB), Hoppen Kiln Flash on 16th (GPK) and Colt Crag on 20th (IRD).

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

A strong passage took place with the highest count being ca.500 seen from Holy Island Causeway on 12th (TRD). A series of counts at the Blyth Estuary revealed a strong movement through the site with 68 on 7th (STH), ca.200 on 9th (JL), 335 on 13th (LJM), 212 on 23rd (JL) and 195 on 25th (LJM). At nearby Seaton Sluice some 97 moved N on 9th (SSWT). Budle Bay also proved attractive with 170 on 20th and 200 on 22nd (CGK/GPK) and on the Tweed Estuary 166 were noted on 31st (MHu). Further good coastal counts included 50 at Football Hole on 29th (AJH), 23 at St Mary's Island on 19th (ASJ) and 14 at both Cocklawburn and Cresswell Pond on single dates. Inland Derwent Reservoir saw an exceptional influx with 43 on 7th, 27 on 8th and 22 on 10th (IFo), whilst at Humshaugh GP some ten on 12th fell to two the next day (MR). One to six were also reported from an additional 12 sites including potentially breeding pairs at Brenkley opencast and Hedgeley GP.

Whimbrel *Numerius phaeopus*

The large flock seen from the Budge Hide at Druridge Pools at the end of April remained in part until the 1st when 70 were noted (ADMc) before reducing to five on 4th (GB) and two on 8th (TD). Poor weather on the 9th resulted in 12 being grounded on Newbiggin GC and ten passing S at Tynemouth (GB/DRW); on the 12th, seven moved N over St Mary's Wetland (SPP). The maximum noted at Budle Bay was 12 on 7th with birds present throughout the month (CGK/GPK). Six were counted at Seaton Point (Boulmer) on 2nd (NFO), five were on the Blyth Estuary on 9th (JL), four at Stobswood Pools on 2nd (NFO) and three were at Prestwick Carr on 4th with two also here on 2nd (PCF). One to two were also reported up to the 11th at Castle Island, Haughton Strother GP, Linden Hall, Lindisfarne NNR (South Low), Low Newton, Lynemouth Flash, Newton Point and Stag Rocks, whilst later singles were at Druridge Pools on 17th and Hauxley NWT on 25th.

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Very few reports received this month, the most being seven on the Tweed Estuary on 18th (MHu). One to two were also reported at Berwick north shore, Brenkley, Gosforth Park NR (adjacent pool) and the Wansbeck Estuary.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

A good-sized group could be found at Druridge Pools with counts of 14 on 4th/9th (TF/JFa/TRD) and 22 on 19th (TF/JFa) plus one to two on 12th/24th. The Blyth estuary continued to hold birds with 12 on 12th (LJM) and three on 15th (STH). Nearby Castle Island also attracted 11 on 30th (TF/JFa) and eight flew N at Cresswell Pond on 31st (RD/IF). The wintering group at Holy Island Rocket Field pools peaked at ten on 4th before dwindling to six by mid-month (IK). Additional reports of one to four were also made at Cresswell Pond, East Chevington and Hoppen Kiln Flash.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

The St Cuthbert's roost on Holy Island held 210 birds on 4th all of which were in winter plumage (IK). Nearby, five were seen on Ross Back Sands beach on 24th and two were in Budle Bay on 9th (CGK/GPK). Singles also appeared at the Blyth Estuary on 7th, Low Newton scrape on 14th and the Tweed Estuary on 31st.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Tynemouth held the most, 44 on 3rd (DRW), and 34 on the rocks at Seaton Sluice on 9th (SSWT) is described as unusual. 26 were at Stag Rocks on 8th (CGK/GPK) and 21 arrived at St Mary's from the south on 19th (ASJ). Also 15 flew into Cresswell Pond on 3rd (STH), bathed and left after five minutes. Three to five were noted at the Blyth Estuary, Newbiggin and Newton.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

There were four coastal records of low numbers: six in Budle Bay on 20th, up to three at Newbiggin on 1st and 4th and two at Holy Island causeway on 12th.

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

Three males in breeding plumage were at Druridge Pools on 4th (GB) and single males were seen there on 8th and 10th. One was on the mudflats at Fenham-le-Moor on 24th (TF/JFa).

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

One was at Holy Island on 10th (SR/AH).

Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii*

At Druridge Pools a party of four was found on 19th (TF/JFa), from the south-facing hide and two were also in the 'Budge' fields on 21st (ADMc/BB).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

The peak at St Mary's was 77 on 19th (ASJ), seen arriving from the south and the most at Newbiggin was 75 on 8th (STH). Berwick, Boulmer Haven, Cocklawburn and the Tweed Estuary held 18-28 at times and three to six appeared at Holy Island and Newton. Evidence of overland passage came in the form of two inland records: one at Derwent Reservoir on 6th to 7th (IFo) and two at Haughton Strother GP on 31st (MR).

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Peak passage was evident in the first fortnight. At Seaton Sluice 54 flew N on 9th. Around 2,500 were on the island side of Holy Island causeway on a falling tide on 12th (TRD), all in breeding plumage. At nearby Lindisfarne NNR 800 were present on 6th (IK) and 300+ were in Budle Bay on 9th (CGK/GPK). The top count at the Blyth Estuary was of 174 on 13th (LJM), 38 were in the Tweed Estuary on 10th, 20+ at Amble Braid on 10th and seven at Hoppen Kiln Flash on 9th. Few were seen far inland: up to eight at Derwent Reservoir, seven at Grindon Lough, very active with some 'singing' on 22nd and three records of singles at Haughton Strother GP.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

At Stag Rocks 25-30 were present on 9th/10th (CGK/DM *et al.*), 18 at Newbiggin on 1st (STH) and 13 in Budle Bay on 20th (TM). Five or fewer were also noted at Seaton Sluice and Tynemouth early in the month.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

A WeBS counter was rewarded with one at Widdrington Moor Lake on 16th (JL) and possibly the same individual visited Cresswell Pond and later Druridge Pools on 17th (TF/JFa/TRD/JD). One was seen well and photographed in Budle Bay on 20th (GPK).



A Little Stint at Cresswell on 17th May by Jonathan Farooqi

Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos*

One found at Low Newton scrape on 11th remained to 14th (PHH *et al.*).



A Pectoral Sandpiper with a Lesser Yellowlegs at Low Newton by Tim Dean on 11th May

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

In breeding areas at least six pairs were in the Breamish Valley on 19th and 23rd (ASJ/LJM) and four pairs in Harthope Valley on 23rd (ASJ); seven, most not paired at that stage, were at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd (IFo). Single pairs or individuals were noted at another 18 widespread areas inland. Two on R Tyne at Newburn on 3rd and four at Tynemouth on 9th would be on passage, as were singletons at another 12 locations; most of the latter were coastal but inland Big Waters, Bothal Pond and Gosforth Park NR also contributed.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

There were two singles early in the month: at Earsdon *Beehive* Flash on 2nd (AC) and at St Mary's Wetland on 5th (AC).

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

All records involved singles in the first half: at Bothal Pond on 2nd, West Hartford on 3rd, Castle Island and Holy Island on 4th, Lindisfarne on 6th, Blyth Estuary and Budle Bay on 9th, Low Newton scrape on 12th and, the one at any distance inland, at Haughton Strother GP on 13th.

Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes*

One was present at Low Newton scrape during 11th to 13th (TRD *et al.*).



A Lesser Yellowlegs at Low Newton by Tim Dean on 11th May
The finder commented that it is 'likely to be last year's bird returning'.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Two were at Druridge Pools on 4th (TF/JFa) and 17th (TF/JFa) and two were on Charlton Mires flash on 8th (JEd). Singles were also at Druridge Pools on 8th to 9th and 18th (TD/TRD/MSH) and at Charlton Mires on 6th to 7th (AH). Elsewhere, singles were found at Hoppen Kiln Flash on 9th (CGK/GPK), Low Newton scrape 11th to 13th (PHH *et al.*), West Stobswood Pool on 16th (JL) and at Holy Island on 30th (ADM).

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Six were noted at Rowley Burn on 23rd and four at each of Grindon Lough, Plenmeller Common and Hauxley NR during 20th to 22nd. One to two were seen at Bothal Pond and Druridge Pools early in the month.

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

One was in the Harthope Valley on 10th with two there on 23rd (CGK/GPK). One was in Thrunton Wood on 9th and one was 'roding' at Harwood Forest on 15th (STE).

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Up to six were at Plenmeller Common throughout, including four display-fighting on 20th (SJH) and six were very active on the moors west of Lambley village on 1st (MRS). On 10th one to two were 'drumming' in two areas of Allendale, at Pithouse Fell and Druridge Pools (DM *et al.*); display was also noted at Tarsset Burn on 13th (CW) and at Shield on the Wall on 22nd (MRS). Small numbers were seen at four other sites.

Black-winged Pratincole*Glareola nordmanni*

One at Bothal Pond during 29th to 31st attracted crowds of appreciative observers. The finder, Dave Dack, has had a remarkable touch in finding and identifying pratincoles in the last year or so in the County!



The much visited Black-winged Pratincole
photographed at Bothal Pond by Tim Dean on 29th May

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

A dark morph adult flew N at Seaton Sluice on 1st (SSWT).

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

One flew S at Holy Island on 15th (IK), heavily mobbed by gulls.

Auk *sp*

At Seaton Sluice, 1,260 moved N in two hours on 14th (SSWT).

Guillemot *Uria aalge*

On 3rd at Seaton Sluice, 900 auks, the majority considered this species, moved S in two hours (SSWT). The auk colony at Needles Eye (Berwick) held 132 nests whilst 110 birds rested on the sea on 26th (MHu), 34 were at Cocklawburn on 7th (MHu) with up to six at three other localities on various dates.

Razorbill *Alca torda*

At Needles Eye, 27 nests were counted on 26th, with five birds on the sea (MHu). At least 60 lingered offshore at St Mary's Island on 27th (SPP) and 28 were at Dunstanburgh Castle on 7th, either on the cliff ledges or on the sea (JMA). One or two were reported at three other localities

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

Three were recorded off Beadnell on 10th (DM *et al.*) and one prospected nest sites at Needles Eye on 26th (MHu).

Little Tern *Sternula albifrons*

Ten were on the beach at Ross Back Sands on 24th, eight at Budle Bay on 9th (CGK/GPK) and at the Long Nanny colony site, seven were present on 11th (TRD). Two were at Beadnell on 10th (DM *et al.*) and further south, three were in Hartley Bay on 30th (SPP), two flew in to the East Chevington north pool on 31st (TRD/JD) and a single flew N at Newbiggin on 4th (GB).

Black Tern *Chilidonias niger*

One flew S at Warkworth in the evening of 29th (Birdguides) and one was at the Whittle Dene Reservoirs from late evening of 30th (PCF) remaining there throughout the following day.

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

At the Seaton Sluice Watch Tower 70 moved N in one hour on 1st and on 14th, in two hours, 70 flew N and 74S (SSWT). The largest concentrations were recorded in high-tide roosts comprising 205 at Budle Bay on 22nd (CGK/GPK) and around 80 at Cocklawburn on 7th and Berwick Meadow Haven on 10th (MHu). Elsewhere, 30-60 were at Berwick North Shore, Holy Island and Newbiggin (Beacon Point) with 10-15 at Bamburgh, Low Newton, Newbiggin and the River Tweed Estuary. One to eight were at six other localities.

Gull-billed Tern *Galocheilidon nilotica*

A few very lucky observers, whilst watching the Black-winged Pratincole at Bothal Pond during late-evening on 29th, were treated to a brief sighting of this rare visitor, the first record in the county since 2006 (Mark Eaton/IF/IRD). The bird also briefly visited this site again in the late evening of the following day, the 30th (Birdguides).

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

At least ten pairs were nesting at the Gosforth Park NR and the adjacent pond during the month (NHSN/TD) with up to four pairs on the raft at Whittle Dene Reservoirs (DM/CW) and three pairs at Holywell Pond (MSH/SPP). Big Waters held up to ten birds on 14th (TD/SPP) but no record came in of attempted breeding there and, similarly, six birds were noted at Hauxley NWT (HRS). One to three were at Arcot Pond, Bothal Pond, East Chevington, Killingworth Lake, Leazes Park, Merryshields GP and Tynemouth. Unusual behaviour was noted at Killingworth Lake where three adult birds actively came down for white bread being given to the wildfowl on 30th (GB).

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*

Two were present on the beach at the Long Nanny tern colony on 14th (TRD/JD) with a single seen there on 30th (MSH); the only other record was a single adult passing N at the Seaton Sluice Watch Tower on 9th (SSWT).

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

The number noted at the Long Nanny colony was ca.500 on 11th and 14th, a 'reduced number so far this year' (TRD). Ten were noted in the low-tide roost at Berwick Meadow Haven on 10th (MHu) and three at Emmanuel Point on 12th (TRD).

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

Recorded passage of 160N in one hour on 1st, 320S and 255N in two hours on 3rd and 14th respectively came from Seaton Sluice (SSWT) and at Berwick Pier 580 per hour moved S on the morning of 3rd (MHu). The Berwick Needles Eye colony held 1,120 nests on 26th when 180 birds were on the sea (MHu), at Dunstanburgh Castle, 200 pairs were present on 7th (JMA) and 56 nests were on ledges at the Newcastle Quayside on 11th (IFo). WeBS surveys in the Tweed Estuary recorded 34 on 18th and three at Berwick North Shore (MHu).

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

At the Gosforth Park NR at least 14 pairs were nesting with the first chicks hatching from 23rd (NHSN) and at Swallow Pond, seven occupied nests were on the raft and island (LJM/SPP). 410 were present at Hauxley NWT on 22nd (HRS).

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

A single at East Chevington north pool on 10th (DM) heralded the usual spring influx which built to a maximum there of 13, all 1st-summers during the last week of the month (NFO *et al.*) and elsewhere six were at Hauxley NWT on 22nd (HRS) and six at Ladyburn Lake on 30th (STH). Three flew S at Cresswell Pond on 25th (TF/JFa) with singles seen at Bamburgh on 22nd (TM) and Holy Island on 17th SR/AH).



A Little Gull lands beside a Black-headed.
Druridge Bay CP by Chris Barlow

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

A single record only of a 1st-summer at Newbiggin on 4th (GB).

Common Gull *Larus canus*

A flock of 78, all 1st-summer birds, was noted at Haughton Strother GP on 1st (MR) and 18 1st-summers were in Budle Bay on 22nd (CGK/GPK) with 12 on the beach at Amble on 10th (DM *et al.*).

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

On Fellhouse Fell (Plenmeller Common) 11 were present on 20th with breeding suspected there (SJH) and a single occupied roof-top nest was sighted on the Blyth Riverside Industrial Estate (LJM). Gatherings included 26 at Swallow Pond (SPP), 25, mostly adults, on Newcastle Town Moor (GB), 15 on the River Tweed at New Water Haugh and in the Estuary (MHu), 11 at West Hartford (STH) and eight in Jesmond Dene (MJCo).

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

In the Blyth area, 23 occupied roof-top nests were on the Riverside Industrial Estate and three birds sat on nests on the staithes at North Blyth (STH). Large flocks included 368 in the River Tweed Estuary on 18th (MHu) and 320 roosted on the sea at Newbiggin on 25th (STH) with at least 100 at the North Shields Fish Quay on 27th (JMA). Smaller groups elsewhere comprised 60+ flying E in a loose flock at Corbridge (MR), 60 at Tynemouth Boating Lake (JMA), 50 at the Black Middens (JMA) and 34 at West Hartford (DM). Up to 25 were recorded at ten other localities.

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucooides*

A 1st-summer was recorded almost daily at the QEII CP Lake from 4th-29th, a very late-staying bird (possibly enjoying the near Arctic weather experienced this month without the urge to fly to Greenland).



Three fine photographs of a first summer Iceland Gull at QEII CP

top: swimming by Chris Barlow

Centre: landing by Tim Dean

and bottom: standing by Jack Bucknall



Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

An immature was seen flying S over Beacon Hill, Longhorsley on 4th (ADMc).

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

A single bird was occupying a nest at Needles Eye, Berwick on 26th, the first breeding record for the site (MHu). From WeBS surveys, ten were in the Tweed Estuary and five at Berwick North Shore (MHu) with singles at Hauxley NWT and Howdon.

Rock Dove *Columba livia*

Just two reports of 13 at Southfield Green (Cramlington) (DM) and present at Jesmond Dene on 4th (MJCo).

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Up to four visited an Old Hartley Garden during the month and four were at Brenkley on 25th (RJP/GB), three at Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 9th (KYY), Carrshield Moor (Allendale on 10th (DM/STH/ALT/HD), Derwent Reservoir on 19th (IFo) and Wallington Hall on 21st (LJM). One to two were at seven other widespread localities.

Wood pigeons on a Fawdon TV aerial by Chris Barlow

**Woodpigeon** *Columba palumbus*

A school field at Monkseaton attracted 550 on 25th (ASJ), 30 were at Howdon on 16th (CB) and 12 at Jesmond Dene on 12th (MJCo).

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Two pairs at were Dinnington on 4th and three at Hepscott on 5th (PCF) with two visiting an Old Hartley garden on 1st and 2nd (RJP) and unusually at the Big Waters feeding station on 2nd and 3rd (GB). Singles at Howdon on 17th and Needles Eye (Berwick) on 26th were also regarded as unusual by the observers (CB/MHu).

Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*

Three lucky observers saw one flying S over the Budge hide at Druridge Pools on 10th (GB/RSF/ADMc).

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

Six called at Harwood Forest on 15th (STE), five were at Tosson Hill (Simonside area) on 17th (MJC), three at Harthope Valley on 23rd and Wanneys on 29th (ASJ/IK). Two were at seven upland locations and at Budle Bay on 22nd which included a hepatic female (CGK/GPK). An encouraging 24 singles were at other widespread localities.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

At Cresswell Pond two hunted at 3pm on 3rd (STH) and two were at Druridge on 9th (TRD). Singles were at these and eight other locations including many daytime sightings. One road casualty was on the A1 slip road at Clifton (Morpeth) on 27th (IRD).

A Druridge Barn Owl by Tim Dean

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Four were at Shiremoor on 15th with a family party noted later in the month, two at Backworth and a pair on territory at Brada Quarry (near Bamburgh) throughout the month (CGK *et al.*). Singles were at Holywell Dene on 4th, near Prudhoe on 8th, Green Pits (Allendale) on 10th, West Hartford on 15th, Druridge Pools on 24th and Easington Grange on 29th.



Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

A pair fledged at least two from a nest box at Stamfordham on 12th (EC) the four remaining around the garden for the rest of the month. Three were in the Pithouses Fell area (Slaley Forest) on 10th (DM/ALT/STH/HD) with two at Aydon Castle on the same date, at Gosforth Park NR during the month and the observer's garden at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 15th, 21st and 25th (NHSN/TD). Singles were at Derwent Reservoir (downy chick), Bamburgh and nearby Warren Mill.



A Tawny Owl at Ingram by Alan Jack

Long-eared owl *Asio otus*

One was regularly at a confidential site in the SE of the county with one at Cresswell Pond on 3rd (JL).

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Hopefully an indication of breeding with four at Quarry House Moor on 4th and three there on 21st (AH), two at Fellhouse Fell (Plenmeller Common) on 21st and 22nd (SJH) and one at the Snook (Holy Island) on 16th (ADM).

Swift *Apus apus*

Large gatherings over water of 150+ at Killingworth Lake on 17th (LJM), 100 at Bothal Pond on 30th (IF) and 60 at West Ord (Berwick) on 24th (MHu). 15 to 50 were at these locations and at Arcot Pond, Backworth, Big Waters, Castle Island, Beehive Flash (Earsdon), Morpeth, Swallow Pond (Wallsend), Hillheads (Whitley Bay) and Whittle Dene. One to ten were at 26 other widespread locations.

Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

One was found by Nigel Foggo at Middle Duddo Farm (1mile north of Bellasis Bridge) on 24th and later seen by a few lucky observers before vanishing (ADMc).

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Rare this month with only singles seen at Ponteland Park on 7th (CW), Corbridge on 10th (STH/DM/ALT/HD), Wallington and Pauperhaugh (Rothbury) on 15th (JD/IRD) and Haughton Strother (Humshaugh) on 27th (MR).

Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*

One was at Crooked Lonnen (Holy Island) on 10th (SR/AH).

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

A pair present at Gosforth Park NR all month (NHSN) with two yaffling at Dipton Wood on 10th (DM/STH/LJM). All other reports were singles calling at Rothbury all month (TRD/JD), at Smalesmouth, Bakethin and Whitley Chapel on 2nd, Holystone and Haughton Strother on 4th, Nunnykirk on 6th, Harthope Valley on 10th, Tasset Burn (Sidwood) on 15, Slaley Forest on 16th and Comb (near Falstone) on 25th and 30th.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

A peak count of five at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN), four feeding young at two nests in Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 11th (MNC) and three at Wallington Hall on 21st. Pairs feeding young in nest were noted at Swallow Pond on 26th, Simonside on 30th and Haughton Strother on 31st (SPP/ASJ/MR). One to two were at 16 other widespread localities.

Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

Three flew calling over Heaton Road (Newcastle) on 30th (SPP) with singles seen and heard over Walker Riverside Park on 11th (LJM) and Gosforth Garden Village on 29th.

Kestrel *Falco tinninculus*

Four birds were seen near the A1 at the Felton bypass on 4th (JMA); three were in the Harthope Valley on 6th (DM/ALT). Two birds were at Blanchland on 23rd (RB/MB) and pairs were feeding young at Needles Eye (Berwick) on 26th (MHu) and at Priory Cliffs (Tynemouth) on 31st (CRW). Single birds were recorded from eight sites.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

A male was at a site in the South West of the County throughout the month (SJH) and another single bird was observed at a site in Central Northumberland on 23rd (JD).

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

A probable first-summer bird was observed hunting insects for about five minutes at Allen Banks on 23rd (GB/LAR).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Two birds were noted throughout the month in Budle Bay (CGK/GPK) and two were seen at an inland location on 23rd (CGK/GPK) and single birds were noted at two other inland sites (STH/ALT/DM/HD/JD). Other singles were at Dunstanburgh Castle on 21st (TM), Embleton Bay on 3rd (Jed) and on Holy Island on 4th where a sub-adult female took a small wader from the high-tide roost on St Cuthbert's Island (IK).

Magpie *Pica pica*

Just two reports of 16 at Howdon on 17th (CB) and three in Jesmond Dene on 24th (MJCo).

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Breeding recorded for the first time at Northumberland Park (North Shields) with three on 30th (MNC), two at Bluebell Woods (Morpeth) and Banqueting Hall (Jesmond Dene) on 4th (GB/MJCo), Tilhill (Dipton) on 10th (STH/ALT/HD/DM) and Harwood Forest on 15th (STE). Singles were at seven other locations with a juvenile noted at Swallow Pond on 31st (SPP).

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

An evening roost at Big Waters NWT on 21st numbered 200 (GB). 122 were at Howdon on 17th with 76 there on 7th (CB), seven at Chapel Lands (Alnwick) on 6th (JMA) and four at Jesmond Dene on 24th (MJCo).

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

Nest counts of 16 at Cramlington Hall on 11th, 14 at the *Blackbird* pub (Ponteland) on 2nd and two at Craster Quarry on 7th with 9 birds at Chapel Lands (Alnwick) on 6th (JMA).

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

Pairs with nests were at Longhorsley Moor on 7th (AB/LB), Hareshaw Head (Bellingham), Makendon (Upper Coquetdale), Otterburn, Buteland Fell (Redesmouth) and Sundaysight, all on 9th (JR). Five were at Jesmond Dene on 11th (MJCo).

Raven *Corvus corax*

A family of two adults with two juveniles flew at Hethpool (College Valley) on 20th (TRD/JD), two were at Harthope Valley on 23rd and Slaley on 30th (CGK/JPK/JMA). Singles were at Chew Green (Upper Coquetdale) on 6th, Breamish Valley on 19th and heard at Simonside on 22nd.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Highest count of five at various locations in Jesmond Dene on 11th (MJCo), with two at Holywell Dene on 13th (RJP) and singles at eight other localities.

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

On 23rd seven nestlings were in a garden nest box at Fulbeck (Morpeth) (TD), a pair were feeding young at a nest in a metal pole at the Big Waters NWT feeding station on 24th (GB) and two were at Jesmond Dene on 11th (MJCo).

Great Tit *Parus major*

Four were at Jesmond Dene on 11th (MJCo) with singles at Howburn Woods (Morpeth) on 6th and Craster Heugh on 7th (JMA).



A Great Tit at Howdon wetland by Colin Bradshaw

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

One to two were in an Old Hartley garden during the month and two in Jesmond Dene on 24th (MJCo).

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

A pair were feeding young in the nest at Longhorsley Moor on 7th (AB/LB) and near a nest site at Prestwick Carr on 15th (PCF). Singles were at Holywell Dene on 5th, Derwent Reservoir on 7th and Wallington Hall on 21st.

A Willow Tit at Beacon Hill
by Alan Jack

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

On 5th two were at Spindleston (GPK) with singles at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 4th, 8th and 13th (NFO), Nunnykirk on 6th and 10th (DM/ALT/TRD) and Fontburn Reservoir on 25th (IF).

Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus*

At least one of two at East Chevington south pool on 15th was a male (ADMc).

**Skylark** *Alauda arvensis*

Of 44 at Simonside on 10th 24 were singing, 21 at St Mary's Island on 8th included nine singing, 15 singing at Acton Fell (Blanchland) on 15th and 13 in the Holywell area on 10th (ASJ). Four were at Warkworth Dunes on 1st, two at Laverock Hall (Blyth) on 14th and one at Holywell Dene on 10th.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

Cold weather resulted in large gatherings feeding over water with 200 at Branton GP on 2nd (JD), 125 at Castle Island (R. Wansbeck) on 9th, 100 at Big Waters NWT on 2nd (GB) at Derwent Reservoir on same date and at Killingworth Lake on 7th (IFo/ASJ). 20 to 50 were at Arcot Pond, Bothal Pond, Boulmer, Bygate (Upper Coquetdale), Ingram, Langlee (Harthope Valley), along the river Pont between Ponteland and Stamfordham, St Mary's Wetland and Island. One to 16 were at four locations including Town Moor Newcastle.

A Swallow at Druridge Pools
Tim Dean on 20th May

**Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

Killingworth Lake attracted 300+ in cold weather on 7th (ASJ) with 250-300 at Swallow Pond on 19th and 200-250 there on 9th (SPP). One to 35 were at eleven locations including a pair feeding young at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 20th. Light passage north was noted at East Chevington on 11th and Old Hartley on 13th (MSH/AC).

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

Poor rainy weather at Swallow Pond saw 200+ on 19th and 100-150 on 9th (SPP), 100 were at Killingworth Lake on 7th (ASJ), 60 at East Chevington on 29th (STH/IFo), 46 at East Ord (Berwick) on 24th and 45 at Bothal Pond on 31st (IF). One to 35 were at 16 other widely spread localities.

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

Family parties of nine were at Comb (Falstone) and seven at Redmire Bridge on 25th (JR). Four were noted at Prestwick Carr on 31st and up to two at a further seven localities with a pair feeding young in a nest at Laverock Hall (Blyth) on 14th.

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

Up to three singing males were heard at Sidwood (Tarsset Burn) and Allen Banks during the month (EC/MD/IF/ AJH *et al.*). Singles were also at Howburn Woods (Morpeth) on 6th (JMA) and at Matthew's Linn (Kielder) on 8th (MD/IF).

A Wood Warbler at Allen Banks by Jack
Bucknall

**Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita*

14 on Holy Island on 9th had declined to nine by the following day (ADM); one to five were noted here on a further five dates to the end of the month. A dawn walk through Jesmond Dene produced ten on 10th (RJP) and seven were noted at Gosforth Park NR and at Jesmond Dene. Counts of five came from Cramlington (Crowhall Lane) and Plessey Woods, four were at Aydon (Corbridge), Bolam Lake Longhorsley Moor and Tynemouth and one to three at a further 20 widespread locations.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Counts of singing males included 30 in the Harthope Valley on 23rd, 29 at Wingates on 30th and 20 at Beacon Lane (Longhorsley) on 23rd (ASJ). On the coast the peak count of migrants on Holy Island was 20 on 7th (IK), with 11 recorded there on 4th and 9th. Elsewhere there were counts of 11-12 from Prestwick Carr and Tosson Hill, nine at Longhorsley Moor, six at Howdon and five at Aydon (Corbridge) with one to three at a further seven localities.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Ten at Tynemouth on 3rd was the highest count for the month (CB). Counts of eight (singing) came from Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 20th and Holywell Dene on 10th, while seven + were at Bamburgh on 14th. Further singing birds included, six at Marden Quarry on 10th, five at Cramlington (Crowhall Lane) on 4th and five at Jesmond Dene on 11th; four were singing at Aydon (Corbridge), Cramlington (Valley Park) and Haughton Strother GP (Humshaugh), while four were also reported from Bolam Lake, Holy Island (4th), Merryshields GP (Stocksfield) and Northumberland Park (North Shields). One to three were noted at a further 16 localities.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

The species was quite well reported, particularly from inland breeding areas, although three migrants were found on Holy Island on 4th (TF/JFa). In the Longhorsley area three were singing at Linden Hall on 7th and three at Beacon Hill on 23rd, while three were also at Fontburn Reservoir and Wingates. Counts of two came from Branton GP, Caistron, Dinnington, Longhorsley Moor and Middle Ord (Berwick) with singles reported from a further 24 potential breeding localities.

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

Three singing males were at East Chevington on 4th (TF/JFa) and in the Holywell area on 12th (ASJ). Two were at Cramlington (Village Green) on 10th, Holy Island on 7th and Spindleston on 25th. Single migrants were at Holy Island on 9th-10th and at Tynemouth on 9th, while further single, mostly in song were reported from Backworth, Budle Bay, Castle Island, Cramlington (Blue Star Sports / Northumberlandia / Whitelea), Cresswell Pond, Darras Hall, Dinnington, Holywell Pond, Newbiggin, Ponteland and Radcliffe.

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

Two to three migrants were on Holy Island on 4th, 7th and 9th-10th (IK/ADM); another from 16th to the end of the month was in song throughout (IK). In inland breeding areas 12 were singing at Cramlington (Village Green) on 15th (LJM) and ten were in the Holywell area on 27th (ASJ). Counts of nine came from the Breamish Valley, Holywell Dene and St Mary's Island and six from Arcot Pond and Aydon (Corbridge). Five were reported from the Holburn area and from Prestwick Carr and four were noted at Blyth (Laverock Hall), Bolam, Corbridge, Newbiggin GC and Tynemouth. One to three were reported from a further 16 potential breeding localities.

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

At least three were noted at Gosforth Park NR this month (NHSN). Three were also reported from East Chevington on 4th, Prestwick Carr on 2nd and St Mary's on 10th, while two were at Arcot Pond. Singles were also noted at Berwick Castle, Big Waters, Budle Bay, Cramlington (Valley Park and Whitelea), Tasset Burn (Shilla Hill) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

By far the highest numbers were reported from Prestwick Carr, where 11 on 10th rose to 16 by 23rd (PCF). Up to eight were noted at East Chevington, Low Newton and St Mary's Wetland and six were at Arcot Pond. Three singing males were at Holy Island Lough on 7th and up to six were noted across the island on several further dates to the month end. At least six were at Bamburgh on 14th and four at Branton GP on 19th with one to three reported from a further 13 localities, including Shield on the Wall, where the species is a major rarity.

A Sedge Warbler at East Chevington
3rd May by Jonathan Farooqi

**Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Seven + were noted at Gosforth Park NR during the month (NHSN). Three were in song at Bates minewater treatment works (Blyth) on 7th (STH) and two were at Big Waters on 14th and Low Newton on 13th. On Holy Island, singles were in the Straight Lonnen on 5th, the Crooked Lonnen on 10th and at the lough on 12th. Further singles were reported from potential breeding habitat at Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Hauxley NR, Holywell Pond, Killingworth Lake, Marden Quarry (passage bird in song), QEII CP, St Mary's Wetland and Woodhorn Flashes.

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

There were some good counts during the month, with up to seven at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN), six in song at Wallington Hall on 21st and a minimum of five at Allen Banks on 27th. Two pairs were at Comb (Falstone) on 4th and three at Nunykirk on 6th and Simonburn on 2nd. A pair was noted with nest material at Sidwood (Tasset Burn) on 4th and one to two were reported from Beacon Hill (Longhorsley), Brenkley, Brierdene, Dipton Wood, Harthope Valley, Holywell Dene, Jesmond Dene, Plessey Woods, Sheepwash, Smalesmouth, Spindleston and Thrum Mill.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

A pair was feeding three fledged young at Holywell Dene by 8th (ASJ). Three were reported from Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 27th and one to two were noted at Allen Banks, Berrington, Dipton Wood and Rothbury.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

A total of 13 were recorded over 1km at Prestwick Carr on 10th (PCF). A dawn walk through Jesmond Dene produced eight on 10th and six were noted at Longhorsley Moor on 15th. A nest with four eggs was found at Tosson Hill on 17th. Three in Jesmond Dene and one at Howburn Woods (Morpeth) were the only other reports.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

Breeding records were received from Alnwick, where a dead nestling was found at Arkle Court on 2nd and a pair was nest building on 4th; nestlings were heard food-calling at Fairfields on 12th, a pair was nesting in a shower vent at Chapel Lands on 16th and two fledglings were seen at St James Estate on 26th (JMA). An adult attended a tree-hole nest with large young at Brenkley on 29th (GB) and young fledged from a nest under eaves at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 25th (TD). At Prestwick Carr a feeding flock of 130 juveniles was found on 30th, a mixed flock of 25 adults / juveniles was at Brenkley on 29th and 25 were at Darras Hall on 28th.

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

A pair with two juveniles was at Harthope on 23rd (ASJ) and another pair with two juveniles was on the River Pont at Eachwick on 26th (EC). An adult was feeding two juveniles at Jesmond Dene (Waterfall) on 7th and likewise an adult and two juveniles were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 26th. An adult and one juvenile was seen at Holywell Dene on a number of occasions and two adults were carrying food at Alwinton on 17th. Elsewhere one to three were noted at Allen Banks, Barrowburn, Bothal, Coldgate Mill, Dilston, Ewarty Shank, Hethpool, Howburn Woods (Morpeth), Paperhaugh, Plessey Woods, Ponteland Park, Rothbury and Tarsset Burn.

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

On Holy Island, two passage birds were noted on 4th and 9th (TF/JFa/ADM) and another migrant was at Beacon Lane (Cramlington) on 5th. In inland breeding areas up to three were noted in the Harthope Valley (ASJ *et al.*), one at Simonsides and one at Sipton Burn (Allendale).

A Ring Ouzel in the Harthope Valley
by Tim Dean on 10th May

**Blackbird** *Turdus merula*

Breeding was noted at Alnwick (Chapel Lands and Thomas Percy School) and at Laverock Hall (Blyth). Counts of 14 were received from Ponteland Park and ten at Bolam Lake, both on 28th and five were noted at Jesmond Dene and Ponteland (Old Railway).

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

Two were at Mounce's Viewpoint (Kielder) on 2nd (DM/STH/LJM).

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Noted as 'common' in woodland at Sidwood (Tarsset Burn), where at least 20, including many family groups were recorded on 15th (EC). Eight were in the Harthope Valley on 6th and six singing males were at Ingram (Beamish Valley) on 23rd. Three to four were at Leazes Park and Valley Park (Cramlington) and one to two at a further six localities, which included adults feeding young at Comb (Falstone), Cottonshope (Otterburn Ranges), Laverock Hall (Blyth) and Rothbury.

"Feed Me"

Song Thrushes at meal time
at Allen Banks by Chris
Barlow

**Mistle Thrush** *Turdus viscivorus*

Eight were in the Harthope Valley on 6th (DM/ALT), six at Ingram (Breamish Valley) on 23rd and up to five at Gosforth Park NR. Family parties were noted at Exhibition Park and Leazes Park on 20th and 28th respectively. Two fledged young were at Low Carrith on 9th and a bird was seen carrying food at Comb (Falstone) on 9th and 30th. One to three were reported from Howdon, Jesmond Dene and Prestwick Carr.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

The first arrival was at Holy Island on 4th-5th (TF/JFa/IK). Birds were widespread by mid-month, and noted as 'common' in woodland at Sidwood (Tarset Burn), where at least 15 were recorded on 15th (EC). Up to six were in the Harthope Valley on 23rd; four were at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 30th and three at Fontburn Reservoir on 25th. Further migrants were noted at Holy Island on five dates from 9th-30th. Two were reported from Allen Banks, Berwick, Hethpool, Ingram, Linden Hall, Middleton Hall, North Middleton, Stamfordham and Tosson Hill and singles were at a further ten inland localities.



A Spotted Flycatcher at Ingram by Alan Jack

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Nine were at Longhorsley Moor on 15th, six on Holy Island on 24th, three at Jesmond Dene on 4th and an adult was seen carrying food at Laverock Hall (Blyth) on 14th.

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

In breeding areas up to four were at Allen Banks, two at Nunykirk and one at Low Carritheth. A migrant was at Tynemouth on 9th-10th.



A Pied Flycatcher at Allen Banks
by Chris Barlow

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

A female type was at Druridge Bay CP Visitors Centre on 3rd (TF/JFa).

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

An influx at Holy Island produced counts of 13 on 4th, four on 5th, 19 on 9th and 11 on 10th (ADM/TF/JFa/IK). Further migrants were reported from Hartley Bay on 7th and Newbiggin GC and Tynemouth on 9th. In breeding areas, six singing males were noted at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 20th, and between here and Simonside a total of 11 singing males were heard (ASJ). Four singing males (plus a female) were noted at Letah Wood (Hexham) on 26th (AJH) and there were four established territories in the Haughton Strother (Humshaugh) area (MR). Elsewhere during the month, four singing males were reported from Allen Banks and Sidwood (Tarset Burn) and three at Bolam, Fontburn Reservoir, Harthope Valley, Hesleyside, Holystone and Tosson Hill. One to two were also reported in breeding areas at Bothal Woods, Comb (Falstone), Derwent Reservoir, Dipton Wood, Lambley, Nunnykirk, Prestwick Carr, Rothbury, Stamfordham and Wallington. A female at Coronation Park (Berwick) on 22nd was a new record for the BWG in that area (MHu).

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

Coastal records were singles at Holy Island on 5th, Budle Bay on 6th, two at St Mary's Island on 7th and a single at Amble on 13th. Once again upland areas produced the bulk of records with 16 (13 males) in the Breamish Valley by 23rd (ASJ), nine (four pairs + a male) at Harwood Forest on 15th (STE) and up to six in the Harthope Valley. In Upper Coquetdale there were three at Makendon Bridge, two males at Alwinton and a male at Shillmoor. Three were at Simonside on 22nd, two at Prestwick Carr on 7th and singles at Ewartly Shank and Hethpool.

Whinchats

Top: a male at Carey Burn by Mike Carr on 30th May and bottom: a female in the Upper Coquet valley on 1st May by Tim Dean



Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

Peak counts were as follows;

Site	Peak count	Date	Observer	Site	Peak count	Date	Observer
Coastal:				Newbiggin GC	1 (male)	29th	IFo/STH
Ross Links	4 (family party)	24th	CGK/GPK	Newbiggin GC	1 (female)	9th	GB
Druridge Pools	4 (2 pairs)	22nd	SPP	Newbiggin Ash Lagoon	1 (male)	29th	IFo/STH
Cresswell Pond	3	4th	IRD	Tynemouth	1 (juvenile)	23rd	DRW
East Chevington	3	8th	TRD				
Blyth (Gloucester Lodge Fm)	3 (2+1 young)	13th	LJM	Inland:			
Seaton Sluice	3 (2+1 young)	25th	CDH	Tosson Hill	4	17th	MJC
Cocklawburn	2 (a pair)	19th	MHu	Simonside	4 (2 pairs)	22nd	TRD/JD
Long Nanny	2 (feeding young)	21st	DHWB	Hawsen Burn	4 (2+2 young)	23rd	ASJ
Berwick Little Beach	1 (male)	15th	MHu	Wanneys	2 (singing males)	29th	IK
Lynemouth	1 (male)	4th	GB	Ewartly Shank	1	19th	JD

Wheatear *Oenanthe Oenanthe*

Well reported from Holy Island where an influx began with eight on 4th; thereafter counts included 20 on 6th, 22 on 9th, ten on 10th, 12 on 16th and nine on 24th (ADM). Elsewhere along the coast six were at Newton Point and five at St Mary's Island on 7th and nine at Budle Bay on 9th. Inland passage produced 11 at Brenkley on 10th (GB) and six to seven at Prestwick Carr from 4th-6th (PCF). One to three were reported from a further 12 inland and six coastal localities.

Birds showing characteristics of the **Greenland race** *O.o.leucorhoa* included eight on Holy Island on 7th, three on Holy Island on 25th and singles at Berwick Little Beach on 15th, Cocklawburn on 7th and inland at Stamfordham on 25th.

Duncock *Prunella modularis*

Poorly reported this month, with only four records. Three were at Laverock Hall Farm, two in a Marden Estate garden and singles at Holywell and Jesmond Dene.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

20-25 were at feeders in a Marden Estate garden all month included several young. Four birds also attended feeders at a garden in Tynemouth on 9th, where it is a scarce bird (ASJ/CB). An unusual nest site was observed at Holy Island church. A pair had made a home inside a statue of Christ (IK).

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

On 1st, ten birds were at Haughton Strother and ten were coming to feeders at Linden Hall throughout the month (MR/NFo). Seven were at Cresswell on 20th (TRD/JD). In an Old Hartley garden, five included young being fed during the month (RJP). One to five were at a further 13 sites, including three juveniles at Big Waters feeding station on 27th, and two birds visiting feeders at Melkridge, representing the first sighting here for 25 years (GB/SJH).

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

11 at Cresswell on 4th was the month's highest count, with ten at Whittle Dene on 26th (IRD/SR). Four were at Old Hartley on 13th (AC/MHS). Three were at Bothal Pond on 31st (TFa/JFa), with singles reported at this site on several other dates. Two were noted at Druridge, Budge Fields on 22nd (SPP). Singles were at 12 further sites, with one seen at Bradford Kaims on seven dates (GPK).

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Harthope Valley on 23rd provided the most birds this month, with 11 counted consisting of three pairs and five fledged young. Two fledged young also seen at Allenbanks on 15th (ASJ). At Eachwick on the River Pont, a pair and six fledged young were noted on 26th (EC). Two pairs were in Jesmond Dene and the Breamish Valley during the month. Four at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 28th (DM), with one to two birds at a further 13 sites.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla yarrellii*

A roost of 40 Pied/White Wagtails was noted at Newcastle Airport on 18th, declining to 30 by 20th (IF). Five were at Alwinton on 17th (RB/MB). Two were carrying food at Laverock Hall Farm near Blyth on 14th (JR). Pairs feeding fledged young were at St Mary's and at Whitley Bay Sea Front during the month (ASJ).

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

Three noted at Bothal Pond on 4th (TF/JFa), with two at Cresswell Pond on the same day and two also at Low Newton on 14th. Singles were seen at a further six sites and also at the above sites on subsequent dates throughout the month.

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

Three singing/displaying birds were observed at Simonside/Tosson Hill on 10th, with five there on 17th(ASJ/MJC). Four were at Slaley Forest over an 800m stretch on 15th (IFo) and at least three were singing in woodland along the Tarsset Burn on 13th (CW). Two were displaying at Comb, Beacon Hill, Acton Fell Slaley, and Holystone during May. Singles were watched at seven further inland sites and passage birds noted at Holy Island on two dates, and at Newbiggin Golf Course (SR/JR/STH).

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

A minimum of 40 nesting pairs were observed at Simonside on 10th, with many feeding young in nests. Much display/singing occurred. Noted also as common in both the Ingram and Harthope Valleys during the month (ASJ). At the coast, there 15-17 nesting pairs at St Mary's, with birds feeding fledged young here and nearby at Whitley Bay Promenade on 17th (ASJ). Eight were at Sweethope on 2nd(DM *et al.*). Five were observed at Longhorsley Moor on 15th (AB/LB).

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Two pairs observed feeding young at both St. Mary's Island and Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 30th (ASJ) and two birds were at Newbiggin on 4th (GB). The only other report was of a single at Holy Island on 12th (TRD).

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Eight were at Prestwick Carr on 2nd and six at Howdon on 6th. Five noted at Jesmond Dene on 4th and three attending feeders at an Old Hartley garden during the month.



Finches at Howdon wetland by Colin Bradshaw

A pair of Bullfinch and a cock Chaffinch

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula papyrus*

Three pairs were in Holywell Dene on 8th, with two pairs and two females at Howdon on 6th (ASJ/CB). Up to four noted in an Old Hartley garden throughout the month (RJP). Two Pairs seen at Harwood on 15th (STE) and a pair with two fledged young were in Marden Quarry on 12th (KWY). Pairs also at three Cramlington sites, Prestwick Carr and Dipton, with singles at Jesmond Dene, Sandy Lane and Big Waters during May.

Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*

There were two records only this month, with 16 at Howdon on 6th and three at Linton Ponds noted on 24th.

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

Some sizeable flocks were reported this month, with 100 at Waren Mill Caravan Park on 9th being the largest (CGK/GPK). 64 were at Cocklawburn (MHu) and 40 at Ross Links during the last week of May (CGK/GPK). 29 were seen at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd (IFo). Eleven were at Valley Park, Cramlington on 6th and ten were at Blagdon on 29th. Several pairs feeding fledged young were noted during the month at Holywell. It was considered a common species in the Ingram Valley on 10th (ASJ). Two to three were reported from Longhorsely, Milkwell (Corbridge) and Holywell Dene.



A linnet at Carey Burn on 30th May by Mike Carr

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis caberet*

In the Wanneys area, the species was thought to be breeding in good numbers on 27th, with singing/display noted (IK). Several singing/displaying birds and pairs noted in wooded upland areas at Wingates, Simonside, Ingram and Harthope during the month (ASJ). Four at Harthope on 6th (DM/AT). Three were at Holystone on 4th and four at Fontburn on 24th (NFO). Three also noted at Harthope on 10th (TRD). Singles at two Kielder sites, Sipton Burn and Branton in the month.

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

Four small groups totalling ten birds were noted at Harwood on 15th (STE). Eight were observed at Slaley Forest on 28th (IFo). Six+ seen at Bakethin and three at Mounce's viewpoint on 2nd (DM/STH/LJM). One to two were at three further sites.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Eleven were counted over a kilometre stretch at Prestwick Carr on 10th (PCF). Eight were seen on feeders at Nunnykirk on 6th (DM/ALT). One to four were at four further sites.



A Goldfinch at Howdon wetland by Colin Bradshaw

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

At least 30 were at the Tasset Burn on 28th (PHH). Elsewhere the only reports were of several birds at Wingates, Simonside, Ingram and Harthope in the month (ASJ).

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citronella*

Eight were singing at Holywell throughout the month and seven singing at Beacon Hill on 23rd (ASJ). During a cycle ride from Ponteland, taking in Black Heddon, Wallridge, Ingoe, Matfen and Stamfordham on 19th, an encouraging total of 37 singing males were noted (ASJ). Another ride from Stannington to Tranwell via Bellasis Bridge revealed 23 singing birds. Further inland, six males sang in the Breamish Valley and two at Harthope on 23rd (ASJ).

At Big Waters on 2nd, four attended the feeding station (GB) and four were also at Laverock Hall, Blyth on 14th (JR). One to three noted at five further sites.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

At Gosforth Park 14 were seen during the month, with the same number at St. Mary's (12 singing males/two females) (NHSN/ASJ). Seven singing males noted at Prestwick Carr on 14th (PCF). Two pairs were nesting in a Rape field at Old Moor, Berwick on 31st (MHu). One to two were recorded at a further eleven sites as widespread as Howdon on Tyneside, and Knock Shield (Allendale).



A handsome cock Reed Bunting
Howdon wetland by Colin Bradshaw

ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN**Hybrids****Canada Goose x Greylag Goose** *Branta canadensis* x *Anser anser*

Singles seen at Swallow Pond on 26th (SPP) and at Killingworth Lake on 17th (LJM).

Tufted Duck x Pochard *Aythya fuligula* x *Aythya ferina*

One still present at Swallow Pond on 4th (SPP).

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Bamburgh Ringing Station, Berwick Wildlife Group, Hauxley Ringing Station, Natural History Society of Northumbria, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

Apologies for any accidental omissions

BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION

This bulletin was compiled by Graeme Bowman (Mute Swan to Ruddy Duck), Lindsay McDougall (Red Grouse to Black-necked Grebe), Trevor Blake (Honey-buzzard to Crane), Steve Holliday (Avocet to Godwit) Ian Forsyth (Turnstone to Skua), Eddie Crabtree (Puffin to Great Black-backed Gull), Tim Dean (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), Alan Jack (Dunnock to Corn Bunting), Dan Turner (WeBS Coastal Counts) and Steve Holliday (WeBS Inland Counts).

Thanks to David Sanders of NNBC for providing data.

Proof reading was by Mike Smith.

Edited by Steve Barrett NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com

Mail distribution by Paul Stewart.

RECORD SUBMISSION

Please email ntbcorg@gmail.com for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and grid references: The use of standard location names and the include grid references as this 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.

Could club members ensure they submit records direct to NTBC rather than just Birdtrack. There may be an assumption by some members this happens automatically. We do not want to miss records.

DATA MANAGER

Alan Tilmouth has been carrying out the NTBC Data Manager role for some while and will soon stand down. The Data Manager collates all electronic records and this forms the core of the Club database. This enables the production of the Bulletin and BIN and provides bench marks for environmental studies of our area

Can you take over this important role? Without a member to carry out this job we will not be able to produce our current publications.

Please contact any committee member if you would like to help. Full training will be given.

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

It is preferable if you re-size your photos before sending and a suggested size is 640 x 480 pixels. Please ensure you include the following information with your submissions: name, species, date taken, locality.

Photographs will not be used elsewhere without the photographer's permission.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual membership costs £10 for a junior, £30 for an individual, and £32 for a family. For membership enquiries please contact ntbc@jobentley.plus.com

Subscriptions were due from 1st October. Members are asked to check that standing orders have been paid.

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. Please submit any new content for the website to the main club email address.

NTBC SIGHTINGS PAGE

The Sightings Page contains current reports by members. Access is from the NTBC website and an email notification is available for new postings.

Members need to submit a request to be added to the website, specifying the email address they wish to post from before they can submit sightings to ntbcorg@gmail.com

SEATON SLUICE WATCH TOWER

Keys can be collected at indoor meetings or email ntbcorg@gmail.com

Keys are available for £5 for new holders and existing key-holders can exchange keys for £4.

WETLANDS BIRD SURVEY

Dan Turner is handing over the organisation of the coastal WeBS to Kathy Evans. Dan has been carrying out the role since 2004 with great help from Julie Roper for several years.

Our grateful thanks are given to Dan for all the work he has put in to this valuable survey..

Kathy's contacts are

Telephone 0191 2845072

email kathyevans121@gmail.com

BIRDING ON FOOT

Earlier this year I'd pondered on the feasibility of trying to record 100 bird species in a day entirely on foot, a change from the usual dash round in a car type 'bird race'. On paper it seemed possible, given the right route. At 5 am on Bank Holiday Monday 4th May 2015, I set out from Bluebell Woods at Morpeth to put it to the test. The weather was very favourable, being mild and dry all day, with a moderate south westerly breeze. Following the River Wansbeck east from Morpeth a diversion was made to Bothal Pond before re-joining the river and continuing to Castle Island and on to the Wansbeck Estuary. From there it was north along the coast to Newbiggin-Lynemouth and then up Druridge Bay as far as Amble. By the end of the day I'd walked about 23 miles and registered a total of 117 species: well above expectations. Highlights included Barnacle Goose, Pintail, Goldeneye, Goosander, Avocet, Little Ringed Plover, Knot, Purple Sandpiper, Ruff, Whimbrel, Greenshank, Mediterranean Gull, Little Tern, Barn Owl at three sites, Yellow Wagtail, Redstart and, best of all, a Crane at Bell's Pond. A number of potential additions managed to 'get away' and these included Marsh Harrier, Kittiwake, Tawny Owl, Garden Warbler and Bullfinch.

I'm not aware that anyone in this county has attempted a serious 'pedestrian bird race' before (most being motorised) but in May 2007 Andy McLevy scored 117 by cycling only (covering a similar route, with the addition of Beacon Hill). On the right day a total of 120 species may be possible on foot but personally I don't think this could be achieved away from Druridge Bay (e.g. on Tyneside or the north of the county) but it would be interesting to see if anyone could do so but beware, if you try it, you might have trouble walking over the following few days!

Graeme Bowman



A Lesser Whitethroat
East Chevington
Chris Barlow

COASTAL WEBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND

MAY	2015
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	Site																														
	Berwick North Shore (including Little Beach)		Tweed Estuary		Tweed: A1 By-Pass to Gainslaw House		Spirit - Cocklawburn		Lindisfarne NNR (including Budle Bay)		Budle Pt - Seahouses		Seahouses - Beadnell		Howick - Boulmer		Ain Estuary		Newbiggin - Cambois		Blyth Estuary		Tyne North Pier - Fish Quay		East Howdon, (north bank only)		Redheugh - Scotswood Bridge, (north bank)		Scotswood - Newburn Bridge, (north bank)		
	TOTAL	MHu	MHu	TB	MHu	AC	AC	KE	MLC	JAR	TAC	RC	LJM	DMT	DMT	DMT	DMT	PF	PF	PF	PF	PF	PF	PF	PF	PF	PF	PF	PF	PF	
		15	18	23	14	17	17	17	28	1	4	2	5	12	7	1	1														
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		74	3	34											14																
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		2,297	76	445	50	33	240	52	4	327	221	161	0	215	264	96	152	13													

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

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Bulletin 2015 No 6

MONTHLY SUMMARY – JUNE 2015

8th August 2015



CONTENTS

Committee nominations

WeBS inland

Newton Bio Blitz

Binoculars for sale

CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Mandarin

Red-crested Pochard

Long-tailed Duck

Velvet Scoter

Goldeneye

Great White Egret

Spoonbill

Osprey

Crane

Avocet

Curlew Sandpiper

Temminck's Stint

Little Stint

Red-necked Phalarope

Long-tailed Skua

Golden Oriole

Bearded Tit

Wood Warbler

Two males at Druridge Pools.

Male present at Hauxley on 29th and 30th.

Unusual summer record with one in Newbiggin Bay on 24th.

Male past Bamburgh on 24th.

Bred again at regular site for 3rd year running with two broods this year.

One at Newton Pool on 1st.

Regular sightings of two in Druridge Bay from 6th.

A ringed Kielder juvenile from 2011 seen at Derwent Reservoir.

Two at Warkworth Lane on 2nd.

Bred at Cresswell Pond but young taken by fox.

One in Budle Bay on 3rd.

Adult at Derwent Reservoir from 25th to 30th.

Several sightings mid-month.

Summer-plumaged female at Grindon Lough from 12th.

A second-summer past St Mary's, Seaton Sluice and Newbiggin on 23rd.

Male singing at Gosforth Park on 4th in private area.

One at Cresswell Pond on 14th.

Only sightings all month were of one at Allenbanks, declining rapidly.



Gannets pass the Farne Islands
by Tim Dean
5th June

COMMITTEE NEWS

Nominations are required for the NTBC committee. Nominations can be made by any member and must be seconded. These should be submitted to the Club Secretary a minimum of 30 days before the AGM on 8th October. The committee welcome new blood.

INDOOR MEETINGS

NTBC indoor meetings are held at Northern Rugby Club, McCracken Park, Great North Road, Newcastle, NE3 2DT starting at 7.00pm and generally finish between 9.00pm-9.30pm.

The first meetings of the 2015-2016 season are:

10th September**Tim Dean 'Birding in Peru – Amazon to the coast'**

A illustrated talk on birding at Amazon Lodge, the foothills of the Andes, the ancient sites of Ohachapoyor and finally the dry forest on the NW coast.

8th October**AGM followed by Stewart Sexton 'From the Notebooks'**

A look back through Stewart's note books - a good reason why birders have them.

12th November**Andrew Kinghorn 'Larus White-headed Gulls in North East England residents, migrants and vagrants'.**

The talk will be about how to identify all of the common and potential scarce and rarer *Larus* Gulls that occur in Northumberland. The talk also covers potential future firsts including American Herring Gull *Thayers* and slaty-backed Gulls

10th December**Colin Bradshaw 'Spoon Forks and Chopsticks'**

Eight intrepid north-east birders braved bizarre food, awful driving and noisy brothels to chase a host of the world's rarest birds and watch a small patch of ground for some great sibs.

FIELD TRIPS

16th August 2015

Leighton Moss

please contact Steve Anderson seaswan@btinternet.com

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 2012 page 236.

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.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

The Tweed Estuary held 110 on 1st (JMA) and 268 on 15th (MHu), 56 (adults) were at Capheaton on 30th (STE), 54 at Castle Island on 28th (STH), 43-46 at Killingworth and QEII CP Lakes (STH/LJM), and 12 at the Coquet Estuary. Two to six were at Arcot Pond, Ashington, Greenlee Lough and Newcastle Leazes Park. Breeding data were as follows (additional to May):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Capheaton Lake	1	6	STE. On 7th (not present on 30th)
Linton Ponds	1	5	CDH. On 21st
Bothal Pond	1	4	TF/JFa. On 5th. Two cygnets soon disappeared
Broomlee Lough	1	4	MRS. On 16th
Wallsend Dene	1	3	CDH. On 28th

A brood of eight young at Gosforth Park NR in May was reduced to five (NHSN) and a brood of four at Newcastle Exhibition Park was reduced to one by 9th (DHWB/GB).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

A novel record concerned a flock of 39 that flew S over the top of the 'Bomber II' ride at 'The Hoppings' on Newcastle Town Moor on 26th ! (ADM), while 22 flew N at Cocklawburn on 12th (MHu) and four N at East Ord on 1st (MHu). Peak counts involved 289 at Hauxley Reserve on 30th (HRS), 67 at Marden Quarry on 27th (KWY), 31 at Druridge Pools, 22 at Prestwick Carr and 13 at Bothal Pond. One to five were also at Bothal and Linton Ponds, and Newcastle Leazes Park. Breeding data were as follows (additional to May unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Hedgeley GP	4	11	LJM. On 9th
Druridge Pools	3	21 (8,8,5)	TD. On 10th. One brood of 8 almost adult-sized
Newton Pool	3	16 (7,5,4)	TD. On 12th. Large young; probably includes brood from May
Cresswell Pond	1	4	MSH. Recently hatched young on 11th.
Middleton	1+	--	JMA. Two pairs with young in flooded field on 4th

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

30 flew W at Seghill on 5th (IF), 17 N at East Chevington on 3rd (STH/IFo) and nine N at Cramlington on 1st (DM). Castle Island held 102 on 28th (STH), 87 were at Killingworth Lake on 13th (LJM), 69 at Hauxley Reserve on 30th (HRS), 55-60 at Cresswell Pond (TB) and Linton Ponds (adults; MSH), 26-46 at Grindon Lough, Holy Island, Linton and Swallow Ponds, and Newcastle Leazes Park, and ten to 18 at the Blyth Estuary and Bothal Pond. Four to five were also at Druridge Pools and the Tweed Estuary.

Breeding data were as follows (additional to May unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Hedgeley GP	4	21	LJM. On 9th. Could include broods from May
Linton Ponds	2	15+	CDH/STH <i>et al.</i> Brood of 9 young on 3rd and broods of 8 & 7 large young on 21st. Includes young from May?
West Stobswood Pool	1	8	MSH. Pair with eight well-grown young on 11th
Druridge Pools	1	8	TD. On 10th.
Greenlee Lough	1	3	MRS. On 16th
Longhirst Flash	1	2	TD. On 23rd
Swallow Pond	--	19	SPP. On 31th. Includes brood from May?

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Two unseasonable birds flew S at Holy Island on 6th (IK).

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Budle Bay held a peak of 110 adults on 26th, up from 64 on 8th and 10th (CGK/GPK/MSH). Other peak counts of adults included 28 at Castle Island on 14th (DM/STH), 19 at the Blyth Estuary on 13th (STH), ten to 13 at Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools and Lynemouth, and six at Dunstanburgh Castle. One to four were also at Elswick, Goswick Sands, Hauxley Reserve, the Tweed Estuary and West Ord. Breeding data were as follows (additional to May unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Low Newton scrape	1	11	SRB/TD. On 7th. Down to 8 young by 12th
Arcot Pond	1	9	STH/LJM. On 4th. The first breeding record for this site. All young still present on 27th.
Castle Island	1	9	GB. On 13th
Budle Bay	1	7	CGK/GPK. On 27th
Blyth Estuary	1	6	STH. On 13th
Cresswell Pond	1	4	MSH. On 11th.
Hoppen Kiln	1	3	MSH. On 8th. Reduced brood from May?
Bell's Pond (Druridge Bay)	1	2	GB. On 13th
Grindon Lough	1	2	TRD/JD. On 12th
Hauxley Reserve	1	1	HRS. On 30th

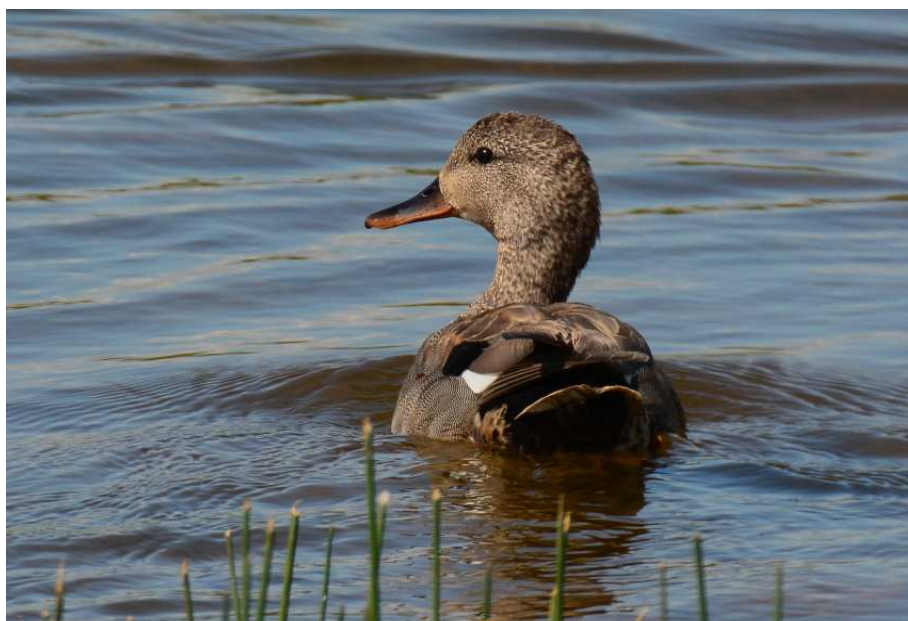
Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

Two drakes, in eclipse plumage, were at Druridge Pools on 2nd (TRD), 7th (TB) and 9th (TB/TRD). A duck was on the River Wansbeck at Low Angerton on 9th (IRD).

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

On 23rd, ten flew N at Newbiggin (STH) and six N at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). A count of 40 at Grindon Lough on 12th (TRD/JD) was notable for the time of year. Elsewhere, 11 were at Broomlee Lough on 16th (MRS), ten at St Mary's on 23rd (MSH), and seven to nine at Derwent Reservoir and Hauxley Reserve. One to two were also at Cresswell and Linton Ponds, Druridge Pools, Holy Island Lough and Longhirst Flash on occasional dates.

A Gadwall
Newton Pool
4th June
Tim Dean



Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Peak counts involved 66 at Hauxley Reserve on 30th (HRS), 32 (including some fully grown juveniles) at Woodhorn Flashes on 21st (CDH), 26 at Warkworth Lane Ponds on 22nd (TB), 21-22 at Castle Island (GB), East Chevington (LJM), Linton Ponds (including some fully grown juveniles; CDH) and Longhirst Flash (TD), and ten to 14 at Arcot, Bell's and Bothal Ponds. Six to eight were at Cresswell Pond and Druridge Pools, three at Newton Pool, and one to two at Backworth, Branton GP, Brenkley, Lynemouth and Monks' House Pool. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Castle Island	2	14 (9,5)	STH. On 28th
Bothal Pond	1	9	TRD/TF/JFa. On 24th. Down to 7 young by 30th
Druridge Pools	1	6	TRD/JD. On 25th
Big Waters	1	5	GB. Several day-old young on 26th
Swallow Pond	1	4	SPP. On 28th. The first confirmed breeding at this site.

Teal *Anas crecca*

One flew N at St Mary's on 13th (MSH). Ten were at Derwent Reservoir on 26th (IFo), three (drakes) at Druridge Pools on 21st (GB) and a pair there on 2nd and 10th (TD/TRD), single pairs at Low Newton flash on 12th (TD) and Longhirst Flash on 14th (TD), and one to two birds at Bothal Pond, Budle Bay, Castle Island, Grindon Lough and Hauxley Reserve on occasional dates.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

80 were at Castle Island on 14th (DM/STH), 60 at Big Waters on 28th (GB), 52 at Warkworth Lane on 22nd (TB), 45-49 at Derwent Reservoir (IFo) and the Tweed Estuary (MHu), 20-32 at Airy Holm Reservoir, Budle Bay, Greenlee Lough, Hauxley Reserve and Newcastle Leazes Park, and ten to 18 at Arcot, Linton and Middle Ord Ponds, Longhirst Flash and Newcastle Exhibition Park.

Breeding data were as follows (additional to May unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Castle Island	3	18 (7,6,5)	STH. On 28th
Arcot Pond	2	16	LJM/DM
Derwent Reservoir	2	12 (9,3)	IFo. Both new broods
Reeth Pond, Newburn	2	10 (6,4)	PCF. On 13th
Hedgeley GP	2	5	LJM. On 9th. May include brood from May.
Bothal Pond	1	9	TD. On 14. Down to 6 young by 28th
Bakethin Reservoir	1	7	JMA. On 17th.
Byker	1	6	DM. Small young on Ouseburn on 3rd.
Cresswell Pond	1	6	MSH. On 8th
Cocklawburn Pond	1	5	MHu. On 24th
Druridge Pools	1	5	GB. On 13th
Goswick Links	1	5	MHu. On 27th
Linton Ponds	1	5	MSH On 15th.
Middle Ord Pond	1	5	MHu. On 10th
Shield on the Wall	1	5	MRS. On 16th
Chollerford	1	3	SW. On 28th

Garganey *Anas querquedula*

A drake was at Holy Island Lough on 6th (IK).

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Six (three pairs) were at Monks' House Pool during the month (DGB/JDL/JPL), up to five (four drakes) at Druridge Pools (GB/TRD), and one to two at Bothal Pond, Castle Island, Gosforth Park NR, Hauxley Reserve and Low Newton scrape. More unusual was a drake at the Blyth Estuary on 14th; thought to be only the second record for the site (STH/DM).

***Red-crested Pochard** *Netta rufina*

A drake was at Hauxley Reserve on 29th-30th (HRS).

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Peak counts were 11 at Killingworth Lake on 13th (LJM), six (five drakes) at Bothal Pond on 25th-26th (TB), six at Swallow Pond on 16th (SPP), and five at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN). One to two also visited Arcot, Cresswell and Linton Ponds, and Capheaton Lake. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Bothal Pond	1	4	TB/TF/JFa <i>et al.</i> First noted on 24th and still present on 28th

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Three flew N at Newbiggin (STH) and Seaton Sluice on 23rd (SSWT). Large counts involved 80 at Castle Island on 28th (STH), 41 at Hauxley Reserve on 30th (HRS), and 29 at Bothal Pond on 30th (TF/JFa), and 27 at Swallow Pond (DM). Counts of 12-15 came from Arcot and Linton Ponds, Gosforth Park NR and Newcastle Leazes Park, and one to five were also at Airy Holm Reservoir, Brenkley, Cocklawburn and Middle Ord Ponds, Howdon, Jesmond Dene, Longhirst Flash, Lynemouth, Monks' House and West Stobswood Pools, and Newcastle Exhibition Park. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Hauxley Reserve	1	8	HRS. Fresh young on 30th
Capheaton Lake	1	7	STE. New brood on 30th

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

A total of 19 flew N and 22 S (mostly drakes) at Newbiggin on 8th and 23rd (STH). The only large count was of 122 (117 drakes) at North Blyth on 13th (STH), while 11-12 were at Berwick North Shore, Budle Bay (including eight juveniles) and the Tweed Estuary (JMA/MHu), and five at Whitley Bay. Breeding data were as follows (additional to May unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods/crèches	No. of young	Observer/notes
Holy Island	1	30+	ADM. Many adult females with recently fledged young on 13th.
Blyth Estuary	1	1	LJM. Female with a single tiny chick on 2nd.

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

A pair that flew N at Tynemouth on 23rd (SPP) and a female/immature bird associating with Mediterranean Gulls off Newbiggin on 24th (TRD) were unseasonable records.

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

A total of 680 flew N and 48 S at Seaton Sluice between 22nd-24th, including 604 N and 48 S on 23rd (SSWT) when 262-292 flew N at Newbiggin (STH) and St Mary's (JBU/MSH) and 205 N at Snab Point (ADM). About 110 flew N at Holy Island on 11th (IK). On 13th, 50 moved N at Newbiggin (GB) and 19-20 at Holy Island (ADM) and St Mary's (MSH), 46 flew N at Berwick on 21st (MHu), and 12 S at Whitley Bay on 20th (MHu). A group of 65 was off Budle Point on 28th (CGK/GPK), 34 were at Cocklawburn on 12th (MHu) and six at Spittal Bay.

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

One flew N at Stag Rocks on 24th (GPK).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

A drake flew N at Newbiggin and Seaton Sluice on 23rd (STH/SSWT). An immature drake was at East Chevington on 19th and 26th (TRD/KWY). The broods of 13 and four young noted at a confidential site in May were reduced to eight and three respectively during June (TRD/JD).

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Four flew N at Seaton Sluice (SSWT) and three N at Tynemouth (SPP) on 23rd. Single pairs were noted at Budle Bay throughout the month (GPK), Cresswell Pond on 6th and 10th (TD/CGK/PS), and Holy Island on 5th (ADM). A drake was at the Farne Islands on 5th (TRD).

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

A flock of moulting birds at St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) all month peaked at 166 on 20th (ADM), 26 were at Berwick North Shore on 11th (MHu), 25 at West Ord on 28th (MHu), and five to eight at Spittal Bay and the Tweed Estuary (MHu). Three to four were at Beanley, Castron, Cocklawburn and Usway Burn, with singles at Doddington, and more unusually at the Tyne Estuary (DRW/KWY). Breeding data were as follows (additional to May unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Blyth Estuary	1	6	STH. On 13th
Derwent Reservoir	1	5	IFo. New brood on 5th
Pauperhaugh, Rothbury	1	5	IRD. On 11th.

Quail *Coturnix coturnix*

Two were at Lucker and one at Adderstone throughout the month (JHa). Singles were also at Prestwick Carr on 19th (PCF) and Grindon Lough on 25th (PRF).

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

Up to eight were present in the Harthope Valley on 6th and breeding was confirmed in Rothbury when a female with four chicks were photographed on a rockery outside the same observer's kitchen window on 24th (TRD). One to three were at Alwinton, Bolton, Carey Burn Bridge, Druridge Lane, Elford (Bamburgh), Spindlestone and Yearle,



A Red-legged Partridge family - a Rothbury garden tick for Tim Dean on 24th June

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

The highest count was a group of ca. 20 with several young in the Simonside Hills on 23rd (TD). The only other record was of four in the Harthope Valley on 6th (TRD)

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

Two at a lek site near Sinderhope (Allendale) on 18th was the only report (AA).

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

An encouragingly good number of records again received this month, as usual from mainly low-lying eastern locations. A pair with 11 juveniles was at Prestwick Carr on 27th (PCF) and two pairs were at Seaton Point (Boulmer) on 13th (GB). Three calling birds were at Brenkley (Blagdon) on 4th. Elsewhere, pairs or single birds were seen at Bamburgh Castle Wood, Bewick Drift (Lynemouth), Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Cresswell, Doddington, Druridge Lane, East Chevington, Great Whittington, Harthope Burn, Linden Hall (Longhorsley), Linton Lane NWT, Long Nanny, Skirl Naked (Cheviots), West Ord (Berwick) and Whitelea Horse Paddock (Cramlington).

A Grey Partridge
Allenheads
by Colin Bradshaw



Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

A female with three juveniles was present in a Craster garden during the month and a female with two juveniles was at Lordenshaw (Rothbury) on 6th (JMA). A bird calling in Jesmond Dene on 28th was noted as "very unusual" as this species is normally only present here in mid-winter (MJCo).

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

Singles flew N past St Mary's on 24th and 26th (MSH), N past Druridge on 26th (KWY) and S past Seaton Sluice Watch Tower on 24th (SSWT)

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

A three-hour sea watch at Newbiggin in the late evening of 23rd produced a total of 47 flying N (STH) with 24 N past St Mary's during a similar two-hour stretch on the same day (MSH). Nesting birds were present all month at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) with a maximum of 14 there on 19th (IJ). Five were at Inner Farne on 5th (TRD) and four were at Snab Point (Cresswell) on 8th (TB). One to three birds were also recorded scattered along the coast.

Sooty Shearwater *Puffinus griseus*

The first of the year was a single bird flying N at Hartley Bay (Seaton Sluice) on 15th (SPP).

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

Passage was in full swing throughout the month. Peak counts were 110 N past Tynemouth in one hour on 18th (SPP), 85 N, including one flock of 70 birds, past Newbiggin between 1155–1325 h on 8th (STH), 56 N in seven hours at Seaton Sluice on 23rd (SSWT), 50 past St Mary's in 20 minutes around midday on 8th (JBU), 37 N past Annstead Point (Seahouses) in 90 minutes on 8th (GPK) and 12 N past Snab Point (Cresswell) in 30 minutes on 23rd (TB). One to six birds were also at various coastal locations.

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

Movements past Seaton Sluice included 160 N in one hour on 14th and 140 N in one hour on 23rd (SSWT). 89 N were recorded during a three-hour sea watch at Newbiggin on the morning of 23rd, with 24 N there between 1155–1325 h on 8th (STH). 27 flew N and six S at St Mary's between 0830–0900h on 14th (MSH). Up to 100 were off Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) throughout the month (IJ), 40 were at Inner Farne on 5th (TRD), 30 offshore at Budle Point on 28th (CGK/GPK) and 20 at Newton on 4th (TRD). One to ten birds were also at various coastal locations.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

The Meadow Haven (Berwick) roost held 20 birds on 21st (MHu) and at Derwent Reservoir the monthly maximum was 15 on the 28th (IFo). WeBS counts produced 11 at Berwick North Shore on 11th and eight in the River Tweed Estuary on 15th (MHu). Nine were at Castle Island on 28th (STH), eight at Hauxley NWT on 30th (HRS) and a maximum of six at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) all month (IJ). Six were also at East Chevington on 3rd.

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Approx 100 were at Inner Farne on 5th (TRD) and the Meadow Haven (Berwick) roost held 14 on 21st (MHu). Six were at Berwick North Shore during a WeBS count on 11th and a pair were nesting at Needles Eye (Berwick) on 20th (MHu).

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Two were in tree tops with Grey Herons near Castle Island (River Wansbeck) on 13th (GB) and one to two birds were regularly recorded throughout the month there and at Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, East Chevington and Warkworth Gut. Two colour-ringed birds were sighted, one with a yellow band (left leg) and orange band (right leg) at Cresswell Pond on 10th (TD) and one with a red 'F' (left leg) and yellow 'T' (right leg) at Druridge Pools on 19th (TRD). The Druridge bird was ringed as a fledgling in 2014 in Lincolnshire.

The 'Lincolnshire' Little Egret

Druridge Pools

by Chris Barlow



Great White Egret *Ardea alba*

A single bird was at Newton Pool (Low Newton) during the early afternoon on 1st (GPK).

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

14 was the maximum count at Howdon on 17th (CB) and eight were at Hauxley NWT on 30th (HRS). WeBS counts during the month produced seven at the River Tweed Estuary on 15th, three at Berwick North Shore on 11th (MHu) and three at Castle Island on 14th (DM/STH). Six were at Holy Island on 20th (ADM) and the peak count at Castle Island was five on 13th (GB). Gosforth Park NR held four throughout the month (NHSN) with the same number at Arcot Pond on 25th (STH) and Derwent Reservoir on 15th (IFo). One to three birds were at Alwinton (Upper Coquetdale), Amble Weir, Carey Burn, Jesmond Dene, Linton Ponds, Lynemouth, Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay), Warkworth Bridge and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.



An eel meets its match at Druridge Pools.

A Grey Heron photographed with dinner by Tim Dean on 24th June

White Stork *Ciconia ciconia*

Correction: The record of this species sighted at Chevington South Pool in April was from Andy McLevy (ADM_c), not Andy Mould (ADM).

Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

Many cards submitted for what were at least two individuals - an adult in breeding plumage and an immature/second calendar year bird - both un-ringed, in the Cresswell Pond-Druridge Pools-East Chevington area throughout the month (TB/MSH/SRB *et al.*). Much of their time was apparently spent asleep.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

The peak count at Gosforth Park NR was 11 – five adults and six juveniles – on 25th (KWY), ten were at Hauxley NWT on 30th (HRS) and eight at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) on 12th (TF/JFa). Five at Big Waters on 26th included an adult-sized juvenile that had not bred there (GB). One to four were at Arcot Pond, Branton GP, Caistron, Capheaton Lake, Cocklawburn Pond, Dinnington, Druridge Pools, Linton Ponds, Newton Pool, Reeth Pond (Newburn CP), West Stobswood Pool and Woodhorn Flashes.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps Cristatus*

East Chevington proved a very productive location peaking at 13 on 13th - nine adults and four young (GB). At this locality one short-lived youngster was watched being captured and carried away by a Grey Heron on 11th (STH). The maximum count at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) was four on 5th (TF/JFa) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs held three on that date (MSH). Three were at Killingworth, with a nest on the small lake, on 26th (LJM) and pairs/twos were also at Airy Holm Reservoir, Branton GP, Caistron and Widdrington Moor Lake.

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

A pair were nesting at a site in the south east of the county and a further single bird was observed at a site in mid-eastern Northumberland.

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

On the 7th a bird flew over the North Pool (East Chevington) from the N and moved off SW (TRD) and it, or another bird, flew over Big Waters from the E and continued flying SW (GB). Other singles were at Co on 12th (JBu), Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 13th (IJ), Sinderhope (Allendale) on 18th and at Shield on the Wall on 20th (AA).

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

The majority of sightings came from East Chevington this month with a pair seen regularly (TRD/TB). Single birds were noted at Cresswell Pond on several dates (ADM/TB), Ellington and Holywell Pond on 6th (TB/SPP).

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

A bird was seen flying over Cragside (Rothbury) from the observer's garden on 4th (JD).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Two birds were at Bellasis Bridge (Blagdon) on 15th (STH). Single birds were seen at Ellington throughout the month (TB), Morpeth on 3rd (TB), Harthope Valley on 6th (TRD), Aydon (Corbridge) on 9th (RB/MB), Arcot Pond on 15th (STH), Greenlee Lough on 16th (MRS) and at Jesmond Dene on 21st (MJCo).

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Six birds were visible from Bellasis Bridge (Blagdon) on 10th (STH). Four birds were at Harthope Burn on 4th (JMA). Two were at Alnwick Moor, Arcot Pond, Hadwins Close, Morpeth, Walltown, Widdrington Village, Wooler Common and Woolsington Woods. At Harwood Forest 2 young were blown out of the nest by gales at the start of the month: one was found dead but the other fledged successfully after being reared on the ground. Its diet featured mainly moles (STE). Singles were noted at 22 sites.



A Buzzard which survived being blown from a Harwood Forest nest
by Simon Elliott

Osprey *Pandion haliaetuss*

Two or possibly three birds, including one with a blue colour ring 39 which was ringed as a nestling at Kielder in 2011, were at Derwent Reservoir on 26th and single birds were also noted there on several dates (IFo). At Acton Burn (Slaley Forest) on a bird was flushed out the forest at 10.20pm possibly disturbed from its roost by observers looking for Nightjars *Caprimulgus europaeus* on 26th (EC).

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Gosforth Park NR had four birds throughout the Month (NHSN/KWY) and single birds were at Holy Island Lough on 3rd (TRD/JD), Cresswell Pond on 14th (TB) and at North Pool (East Chevington) on 26th (TB).

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

The maximum counts this month were seven at Gosforth Park NR throughout the month (NHSN), six at Arcot Pond on 14th (DM), five at Castle Island on 14th (DM) and at Hauxley NWT on 30th (HRS). Four birds were at Brenkley (Blagdon) on 14th (DM) and three birds were seen at Leazes Park (Newcastle), Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 9th (DM) and at Reeth Pond (Newburn CP) on 13th (PCF).

Coot *Fulica atra*

70 birds at Bothal Pond on 28th (TD) was the highest count followed by 54 at Swallow Pond on 20th (SPP) and 52 at Woodhorn Flash on 21st (CDH). 13 were at Monks' House Pool on 3rd (MSH), 11 were at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN) and were at Arcot Pond on 27th (DM). One to nine were at seven sites.

Crane *Grus grus*

Two adults first seen flying in off the sea at Cresswell were re-located at Warkworth Lane (Ellington) before flying over Ellington on 2nd (TB).

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

The six sitting birds at the end of May at Cresswell Pond were reduced to five at the beginning of June and had hatched four young by the 2nd; sadly, all the nests had been predated by the 4th with sightings suggesting either a Fox (seen on 4th) or an Otter (seen on 6th) being the culprit (ADM/CTRD *et al.*). Thereafter, birds remained at the pond throughout the month but peaked at six on 20th (TB). Ten birds seen at Castle Island on 13th may well have included some of the Cresswell Pond birds (GB), whilst one to four were seen here on other dates here and seven on 28th (STH). A confidential site in the east also held nine adults and two young on 30th (AA).

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Coastal summering birds included 64 at Hauxley NWT on 30th (NWT), 54 roosting in the R. Blyth Estuary area on 13th (STH), 42 at Berwick north shore on 11th (MHu), 30 on Low Newton flash on 12th (TD) and nine to 15 at Cresswell Pond, the R. Tweed Estuary and Whitley Bay. Single pairs with at least one young were also noted at Arcot Pond (but probably bred nearby - LJM), Bothal Pond (TF/JFa/TD), Derwent Reservoir (IFo), Hauxley NWT (HRS), Hedgeley GP (LJM) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs (LJM), with a further likely breeding pair at Airy Holm Reservoir present throughout the month (IFo). One to two were also seen at six additional sites.

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

Singles were at Annstead Point on 8th (GPK) and Low Newton flash (summer plumage) on 12th (TD), whilst 18 returning adults were in Budle Bay on 24th (GPK).

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

Post-breeding groups started to gather with 93 at Cresswell Pond on 11th and 97 at Castle Island on 28th (STH) the highest. Further small flocks included 50 at Hauxley NWT on 30th (HRS) and 45 at Derwent Reservoir on 26th (IFo) and elsewhere, 18-33 were seen at Arcot Pond, Bothal Pond and Gosforth Park NR (adjacent pool). Three pairs with young were found at Backworth on 10th (CGK) and an adult plus two half-grown young were at Brenkley on 4th (GB); otherwise one to six were recorded at Howdon, Prestwick Carr and on the R. Tweed Estuary.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

Reports from 'confidential sites' included up to eight adults and three new chicks at one location and one to two adults at two further sites. Single birds were also noted at Alwinton on 29th (TD), Arcot Pond on 25th/29th (STH), Backworth Pond on 5th (SPP), Bothal Pond on 28th (TF/JFa/TD) and Druridge Pools on 7th (TB).

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Good numbers of passage birds continued into June, with 180 in Budle Bay on 3rd being the peak (GPK). The R. Blyth Estuary held 52 on 1st (LJM) with five remaining on 14th (DM/STH). Low Newton scrape attracted 22 on 4th and 43 on 8th (TRD), 32 were on the R. Tweed Estuary on 1st (MHu) and 20 were at Holy Island on 3rd (TRD/JD). The wardens at Long Nanny reported nine breeding pairs on 7th (per SRB) and two pairs were in the fenced-off beach area at Chevington Burn on 10th (TD). Inland Derwent Reservoir also held two to three pairs and two well grown juveniles were noted on 19th (IFo). Three remained at Bothal Pond throughout the month (TF/JFa) and one to three were noted at nine further sites.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Three were counted on the Berwick North Shore WeBS count on 11th (MHu) and two were at Ellington on 30th (TB); otherwise, singles were logged at the Tweed Estuary (1st), Budle Bay (3rd-16th), near Coquet Island (4th) and on the R. Blyth Estuary (13th).

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Signs of movement were apparent during the month with 110 N noted between 22nd-23rd at Seaton Sluice (SSWT), 50+ N in one hour at St Mary's on 23rd (JBu) and 150+ present in Budle Bay on 26th (CGK/GPK). The 23rd also saw 16 N at Newbiggin in three hours and 15 flew N at the Long Nanny on 19th. Double-digit counts also included 19 at Howdon on 29th and 17 at the R. Blyth Estuary on 13th. Two to eight were also seen at a further seven locations.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Good numbers were present at Druridge Pools where numbers peaked at ca.40 on 2nd (LJM) and 45 on 13th (JBu) before falling to 12 on 15th/19th, five on 21st and four on 25th (MSH/TRD *et al.*). This group may well have accounted for reports at Cresswell Pond, where 30 appeared on 16th (TB), 20 on 26th (JBu) and 12 on 24th (TB). A separate group of 24 was also seen at Castle Island on 7th (TF/JFa) and 13th (GB), the latter date coinciding with the peak at Druridge Pools. The WeBS count at Castle Island numbered 42 on 14th (DM/STH). Additional sightings included 12 at Bothal Pond on 26th (TB) and eight at Arcot Pond on 29th (STH), with one to six seen at these two sites on further occasions and also at Low Newton scrape and Warkworth Lane.



Two birds from the Black-tailed Godwit flock at Druridge Pools
2nd June by Tim Dean

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

The regular St Cuthbert's Island roost on Holy Island held 200 throughout the month (IK). Passage birds included seven N at Seaton Sluice and two at both St Mary's Island and Newbiggin, all on 23rd (SSWT/MSH/JBu/STH). A lone bird was at Warkworth Gut on 20th (NFO).

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

A typically lean month, with just three records: two on Inner Farne on 5th and singles at Stag Rocks on 21st and at Newbiggin on 24th (all TRD).

Knot *Calidris canutus*

The sole record is of one inland: an adult in non-breeding plumage at Derwent Reservoir on 18th to 19th (IFo).

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

One was at Stobswood Pools on 30th (AA).

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

One in breeding plumage was in Budle Bay on 3rd (GPK).

Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii*

One in breeding plumage was at Derwent Reservoir on 25th (IFo). Often elusive or distant owing to the extraordinarily low water level, it was seen intermittently to 30th and beyond.

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

A migrant flock of 58 was at Sheldrake Hole (Holy Island) on 5th (IK). The only others reported were at Long Nanny: two on 10th and ten on 19th (both MSH).

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

In Budle Bay 30 were noted on 3rd (GPK). Other coastal reports indicated small numbers on few dates: up to five at Low Newton, up to three at Castle Island, two at Cresswell Pond, two at Druridge Pools and one at Hauxley NWT. Inland, up to eight were noted at Grindon Lough and up to three at Derwent Reservoir.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

One was at Low Newton scrape on 8th (TRD), two were at Grindon Lough on 12th (JBu/PRM/TRD/JD) and one was at Derwent Reservoir on 19th to 22nd (IFo); all in breeding plumage.

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*

A female in breeding plumage was watched at Grindon Lough on 12th (JBu/PRM/TRD/JD) and was still present on 21st (SPP).

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Most records reflect those in potential breeding areas, including four territories in Harthope Valley on 9th (LJM) with one recently hatched young noted. Up to four individuals were recorded in Upper Coquetdale and a juvenile was seen at Beanley on 30th. Up to four were noted in the Gosforth Park NR area and one or two at Branton GP, Caistron, Cupola Bridge, Doddington, Plankey Mill and Rothbury. Perhaps the first signs of return passage were singles at Bothal Pond and Castle Island on 28th.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

One on return passage was at West Hartford on 28th (STH).

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

An adult just moulting out of breeding plumage was at Cresswell Pond on 15th (TB).

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

One report involved 13 plus a brood of two on 30th. Up to 12 and seven were present at Grindon Lough and Derwent Reservoir respectively, whilst one to three were noted in the first half of the month at Backworth, R Blyth estuary, Castle Island, Cresswell, Druridge Pools and Elswick Wharf.

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Four were roding in Slaley Forest on 30th (AJH), two doing so in Harwood Forest on 4th (STE) and singles were noted in Harthope valley and Simonside Hills. One at Plankey Mill on 26th interacted with a Noctule bat; they appeared to almost collide at one point then chased each other around for a few seconds (SW).

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Six were at Backworth on 7th (CGK). Up to three were regularly noted at Druridge Pools, including one 'drumming' on 15th and three were at Prestwick Carr on 20th. 'Drumming' was also witnessed on 8th in the Fontburn area and Harthope Valley. Two were at Derwent Reservoir on 13th and singles at Arcot Pond and Hauxley NWT in the last week.

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

Two flew N at Seaton Sluice on 23rd (SSWT). Earlier, singles moved N at Annstead Point on 8th (GPK) and at Warkworth Gut on 9th (JBu/DMcG).

Long-tailed Skua *Stercorarius longicaudus*

One, undoubtedly the same, was tracked N on 23rd past St Mary's (MSH), Seaton Sluice and Newbiggin (STH). Observers at Seaton Sluice narrowed down the identification to a second calendar year pale phase individual (MHe/TRC).

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

All occurred on 23rd moving N and quite possibly involved the same two: two at Seaton Sluice Watch Tower, two at Snab Point (ADMc) and singles at Tynemouth, St Mary's, Newbiggin and Low Newton.

Auk *sp*

A significant passage of Auks, mainly Guillemots but also Razorbills, was recorded at St Mary's Island on 23rd when 600+ per hour moved N during two hours at mid-morning with lesser movements there comprising 29S and 75N in one hour mid-morning on 13th and eight S and 48N during a morning half-hour on 14th (all MSH).

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

Single-figure numbers moved mainly N past St Mary's Island during short sea-watching periods on 13th-14th (MSH) but larger numbers were counted on 23th-24th with 56 N in two hours at St Mary's Island (MSH) and 70 and 90 N in two one-hour watches at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). Concentrations at breeding colonies on 4th-5th were ca.4,000 on Inner Farne and ca.1,000 on Coquet Island (TRD) with ca.500 seen resting on the sea at Hauxley on 15th (TRD). Three roosted with other Auks at Berwick, Needles Eye on 20th (MHu).

Razorbill *Alca torda*

At Seaton Sluice, 140 moved N in one hour on 23rd (SSWT) and elsewhere, two to six were recorded at six widespread localities between Berwick and Whitley Bay, including Inner Farne and Coquet Island.

Guillemot *Uria aalge*

During the Auk movement on 23rd, 600 moved N past Seaton Sluice in one hour (SSWT). Inner Farne held ca.2,000 on 5th (TRD) and maximum counts of ca.100 were recorded at Berwick, Spittal Bay and Whitley Bay (MHu/IJ). Up to 20 were at ten other widespread sites between St Mary's Island and the River Tweed Estuary (TRD/MSH/MHu).

Little Tern *Sternula albifrons*

The Long Nanny wardens reported on 7th that only five nests remained in the colony following strong winds which caused desertion (TRD) but 25 birds were recorded there on 16th (TB). At other localities, two fished at Holy Island, two were at Low Newton and singles at Holy Island and Newbiggin on various dates throughout the month (STH/ADM/KWY).

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

Birds passing Seaton Sluice numbered 45N and 95S in one hour on 24th (SSWT) and on Inner Farne, ca.100 were counted on 5th (TRD). The species was well-reported from 15 other localities, from a single to maxima of 27 in the River Blyth Estuary (STH) and 18 in the Tweed Estuary (MHu) on dates throughout (JMA/TRD/JD/IJ/HRS).

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

On 24th, 15 passed S in one hour at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). Breeding success was reported at Gosforth Park NR where 10+ pairs nested and chicks were noted from 12th but chick survival was 'poor' at the site (NHSN); at Arcot Pond a single pair had eggs on 10th, possibly the first breeding record here, but no chicks were reported (GB/STH/TRD). A possible breeding attempt was noted on the staithes in the Blyth Estuary where seven birds were present on 13th (STH). Concentrations elsewhere included 50 on Coquet Island on 4th (TRD) and 25 at East Chevington on 25th (TRD/JD) with 12 at Big Waters on 12th (SPP) and seven-eight at Hauxley NWT and Whittle Dene Reservoirs (MSH/HRS). One to five were at Bamburgh, Berwick, Bothal Pond, Cramlington, Druridge Pools, Inner Farne, Leazes Park and Whitley Bay.

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*

Three flew N in Hartley Bay on 7th (SPP) and five were seen on Coquet Island on 4th (TRD). Two frequented Inner Farne on 5th (TRD) and singles visited Cresswell Pond on 10th (TD) and East Chevington on 26th (KWY).



The Inner Farne Roseate Terns by Tim Dean on 5th June

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

In Spittal Bay (Berwick) 70 per hour flew N on 22nd (MHu) and at the breeding colony on the Long Nanny an estimated 2,000 birds were present on 4th with ca.1,000 seen on Inner Farne on 5th and ca.100 on Coquet Island on 4th (all TRD). Hauxley NWT held 60 on 30th (HRS) and 31 first-summers were amongst the many adults on the beach at the Long Nanny on 16th (MSH). One to four were seen elsewhere at Amble Weir, East Chevington and Newton.

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

Passage was noted at Newbiggin on 8th when 246 flew N in 90 minutes and a sea-watch at this site on 23rd recorded 56N in three hours (STH); at the River Tweed Estuary, 40 per hour moved N on 22nd (MHu). The Newcastle City Centre breeding sites held 378 nests on the Newcastle side of the Tyne Bridge with 159 on the Quayside buildings and many of these nests held small young. In Dean St., two nests were found, a new site for the species (all DM). 400 birds were counted on Inner Farne on 5th (TRD). Gatherings elsewhere included 76 in the gull roost on the River Tweed Estuary on 26th (MHu), 36 at Spittal Bay, Berwick on 14th (MHu), a maximum of 20 at Whitley Bay (IJ) and one to two at four other localities.



A Kittiwake on the Farne Islands on 5th June by Tim Dean

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Fourteen pairs nested at the Gosforth Park NR and on the adjacent pool and a maximum 24 chicks were seen some of which were blown off the platform in a storm and some predated by otters when off the platform (NHSN). The largest gatherings were 102 at Hauxley (HRS), 63 at Castle Island (DM) and 52 in the Tweed Estuary (MHu) with up to ten at eight other localities.

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

Numbers at the favoured East Chevington North Pool increased slightly from last month with a maximum of 18, all first-summers, noted on 13th (JBu). Smaller numbers, one-17, were recorded there regularly throughout the month by many observers; a single adult was present on 7th. Cresswell Pond also attracted small numbers throughout with a maximum of three on several days. Elsewhere, one to three were at Castle Island, Druridge Pools and Spittal Bay (Berwick).

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

Newbiggin held three immatures on 24th (TRD) and singles were seen regularly at Cresswell Pond throughout the month, mainly first-summers, but including an adult on 25th (MSH/CGK/PS/ADMc). Single first-summers were also recorded at Morpeth (TF/JFa) and St Mary's Island (SPP).

Common Gull *Larus canus*

Very few reported, comprising only two at West Ord and singles in the River Tweed Estuary (MHu) with a single at Linton Pond (CDH)

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

Maximum counts were 40 at Budle Point on 26th (CGK/GPK), 23, mainly immatures, at Derwent Reservoir (IFo), 15 at Exhibition Park (GB/DM) and 14 at Elswick Wharf (DM). Up to six were at seven widespread sites elsewhere.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

Breeding records comprised 18 occupied nests with 22 young at Blyth Riverside Industrial Estate on 16th (LJM) and three pairs, either at a nest or with young, on the North Blyth staithes (STH). Three-figure gatherings in gull roosts from mid-month were 290 in the River Tweed Estuary, 238 at Berwick, 230 at Goswick Sands (all MHu) and 160 at Budle Point (CGK/GPK). A WeBS survey at Berwick North Shore included 33 on 11th (MHu) and elsewhere, one to 25 were at Arcot Pond, Castle Island, Derwent Reservoir, Elswick Wharf, Exhibition Park, Jesmond Dene, Leazes Park and West Hartford (IFo/DM/MJCo),

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucooides*

A 1st-summer bird was recorded at Walbottle on 13th May (SR), possibly the same individual which frequented the QEII CP Lake during May.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

At Budle Point, 17 were present on 26th (CGK/GPK) with six in the Tweed Estuary and two at Berwick North Shore at mid-month (MHu) with singles at Castle Island and Elswick Wharf (DM).

Rock Dove/Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

A gathering of 56 on the Old Staithes (Blyth Estuary) on 13th (STH).

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

High counts of 13 at Derwent Reservoir on 20th (IFo) and 12 at Ellington on 22nd with seven there on 15th & 25th (TB). Seven were spread throughout Jesmond Dene on 28th (MJCo), four at Bellasis Bridge (Blagdon) on 9th and Cresswell Pond on 11th with one to three at this and six other locations during the month.



A Stock Dove in a Whitley Bay Garden by Jack Bucknall

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

Jesmond Dene held eight on 7th (MJCo) with a juvenile at Kenton, the first young from a resident pair present for three years (MRS).

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Kenton was again the cradle with a resident pair producing their first juvenile in many years since they appeared (MRS).

Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*

One was flushed at Swallow Pond on 16th flying off NW (SPP).

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

Four individuals were found at Harthope Valley on 11th (TRD) with two at Slaley Forest and Longhorsley Moor on 4th, East Chevington South Pool on 5th, Halton Lea Gate on 10th, Druridge pools on 14th, Grindon Lough on 16th, Simonside Hills and Lambley on 23rd. Singles were at many of the aforementioned and ten further locations.



A Cuckoo

Druridge Bay

Jack Bucknall

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Only one multiple sighting of two at Chevington South Pool on 3rd (ADMc) with singles noted regularly during the month in the Cresswell Pond and Druridge Pools area. Singles were also at Widdrington Station on 3rd, Lynemouth on 4th, Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 12th, Simonside Hills, Woodhorn Flashes, Newton Links on 23rd and Plankey Mill on 26th.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

A family party was noted throughout the month at Shiremoor (CGK) with singles all month at Bamburgh (CGK/GPK/DMi), at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd and 4th (IFo) and returned to a once-regular site at Dissington Lane on 17th for the first time since the bad winters of 2010/11 (EC).

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Three at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 18th and at Plankey Mill on 26th (SW) were the highest counts with two calling at Fulbeck on three nights (TD) and a pair using an artificial nest box at Waren Mill during the month (GPK/DMi). Two were at Alnham on 11th (SW) and Rothbury on 18th (JD) with singles at Castron, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Fourstones, Hallington and Scots Gap.

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

On 3rd singles were at Cocklawburn and Currock Hill (Mhu/TWi).

Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*

Three heard and two seen at Acton Burn (Harwood Forest) on 26th and 30th (EC/AJH) with an active male in cold weather at Harwood Forest all month from 4th (STE).

Swift *Apus apus*

At Cocklawburn on morning of 24th, 200 per hour flew north (MHu), a high count of 200+ at Swallow Pond on 13th (SPP), 100 at East Chevington on 14th (NFO), 50 at Bellasis Bridge on 15th (STH) and 40 between Stannington and Morpeth on 11th, at Nedderton on 12th and at Castle Island on 14th. Three to 20 were at Arcot Pond, Gosforth Park, Hauxley and Longhorsley.

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

An elusive group of three were at Reeth Pond (Newburn C.P.) on 13th (PCF), two singles at Jesmond Dene on 28th (MJCo) with singles seen on three further dates (DHWB). More than one was at Gosforth Park N.R. and adjacent pool with singles on R. Blyth north of Belsay, at Mitford and Rothbury.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Two at Gosforth Park N.R. during the month with a male there on 25th (NHSN/KWY) and one sporadically at Rothbury (TRD/JD). Singles were at Havannah NR and Harwood Forest on 4th.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

A pair fed young in the nest at Swallow Pond on 3rd (SPP) and Harwood Forest on 4th (STE) with a family group seen and heard at Jesmond Dene on 3rd (DHWB) with two there on 7th and at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 10th, Bedlington on 12th and Lambley on 23rd. Singles were at nine other widespread localities.

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Three birds were seen at Felton Lane on 1st (TB) and at Bamburgh Castle Wood on 5th (ADM). Two were noted at Ellington on 1st (TB), Holy Island on 15th (ADM) and at the Long Nanny on 16th (TB). Singles were seen at 22 sites.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Single birds were noted at the Border Ridge on 3rd (IRD), Rothbury on 5th (JD) and in Allendale on 18th (AA).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

An adult was regularly hunting the mudflats in Budle Bay all month (GPK). Other single birds were noted at Grindon Lough on 16th and at Lambley on 23rd (MRS).

Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus*

A male was heard singing by several people and a recording made at Gosforth Park NR on 4th but by the time identity had been confirmed the bird had departed unseen (NHSN).

Magpie *Pica pica*

A pre-roost gathering of ten at Prestwick Carr on 26th (PCF) and four at Jesmond Dene on 1st (MJCo).

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

A peak of six at Gosforth Park N.R. during the month (NHSN) with two there on 25th (KWY) and at Jesmond Dene on 1st (MJCo), Ellington on 25th (TB) and Capheaton on 30th (STE). Singles were at seven further locations including birds raiding nests at Big Waters and Slaley Forest.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

A high count of 182 at Howdon on 25th (CB), 42 at Dinnington on 14th (PCF) and 12 at Jesmond Dene on 1st (MJCo).

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

All reports from one observer with 200 at Wooperton on 15th, 150 at Mirlaw House on 17th with 100 there on 18th, 100 at Grindon Lough on 30th and 50 at Widdrington Village on 4th, Ewesley on 6th and Knowesgate on 17th (JMA).

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

Young were fledged from nests close to human activity with two at Straight Lonnen and four at the Lough (Holy Island) (IK) with three from a nest at Southfield Green (Cramlington). The R. Blyth Estuary held 36 on 13th (STH) and five were at Jesmond Dene on 21st (MJCo).

Raven *Corvus corax*

Three at Broadstruther (Cheviots) on 10th (JD) and Carey Burn on 15th (JMA), two over Shilmoor (Upper Coquetdale) on 29th (TD) and singles there on 12th, at Thirwall Common on 1st and Caistron on 13th.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

A family party of four on 19th foraging at Valley Park (Cramlington) (DM), two at Reeth Pond (Newburn C.P) on 13th (PCF) and Jesmond Dene on 28th (MJCo) with singles at Manor Walks and Valley Park (Cramlington) and singing at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) which was noted as unusual for the locality (GB).

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Two family parties totalling seven were at Prestwick Carr on 7th (PCF) with two at Jesmond Dene on the same date (MJCo) and attending a nest box with audible young at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 8th (GB). Eight pairs fledged around 57 young from the nest box scheme at Kirkley Hall (IK).

Great Tit *Parus major*

The nest box scheme at Kirkley Hall saw 12 pairs fledge around 63 young (IK). Six were at Prestwick Carr on 27th and one at Jesmond Dene on 1st.

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

A pair with a juvenile fed at Prestwick Carr on 11th (PCF) and two were at Jesmond Dene on 14th (MJCo).

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

A family party of eight was at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 28th (TB) and two adults fed at least two young visible in the nest at Longhorsley Moor on 4th (AB/LB). One or more were in scrub outside offices at Newcastle Quayside East on 29th (DRW) and at South Snods (Allensford) on 8th (IFo).

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

A adult with two juveniles at Rothbury on 7th (JD) with singles at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 13th and 27th (NFO) and at Spindlestone on 28th (CGK/PGK).

Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus*

One at East Chevington on 1st with male and female seen carrying food there on 5-6 occasions in 30 minutes on 14th (ADMc) and a single at Cresswell Pond on the same date (TB).

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Just two reports of singles at Tughall and Holy Island both on 11th (JMA).

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

30 was the peak at Gosforth Park and adjacent pool during the month (NHSN), 20-30 at Castle Island on 14th (DM/STH) and 20 at Langlee on 4th (JMA).

A Sand Martin roosts

Alan Jack



Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

More than 50 were at Castle Island on 14th, 15-20 at Arcot Pond on the same date and ten at Widdrington Village on 4th with two to four at Bolton, Exhibition Park and Town Moor (Newcastle) (DM/STH/JMA). Late breeding was noted at Stamfordham when a pair hatched their first clutch on 29th (EC) and the 2014 natural nest in a boulder clay bank at Holy Island was again used, however the young died after the nest became waterlogged following rain (IK).



A Swallow by Jack Bucknall

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

Highest count of 50+ at Castle Island on 14th, 30+ at Beacon Lane on 6th and at Arcot Pond on 14th, 20+ at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 9th (DM/STH/LJM) and 20 at Widdrington Village on 4th (JMA) with ten to 16 at Bolton, Cresswell, Gosforth Park and adjacent pool and Town Moor (Newcastle).

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

A 'tribe' of 18 was at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 27th (TB). Family parties of six to eight were reported from East Hartford Wood, Jesmond Dene and Lower Ouseburn (Byker); seven birds were at Morpeth and three at Budle Bay and Harthope Valley.



A Long-tailed Tit in a Gosforth garden
by Simon Elliott

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

A singing male was noted at Allen Banks on 3rd and 5th (AJH/RB/MB).

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

A total of seven were reported from six localities in Jesmond Dene on 7th (MJCo). Four were heard at Aydon (Corbridge) on 9th and at Newburn CP on 13th and three newly arrived migrants were on Holy Island on 13th. A family party was seen at Cramlington (Valley Park) on 21st and one to two were noted at a further four localities.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

In a rather poor year for the species the highest count was seven at Prestwick Carr on 20th (PCF). Six were heard singing at Longhorsley Moor on 21st (AB/LB), three were noted at Howdon on 17th and singles at a further six localities. In addition a late migrant was on Holy Island on 5th.

A bird showing characteristics of the **Northern race** *P.t.acredula* was at Holy Island (Excavations) on 5th (ADM).

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Singles were noted at four sites in Jesmond Dene on 1st (MJCo). Three were at Howdon on 17th, two at Allen Banks and Prestwick Carr and singles at a further five localities.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

Three were noted at Longhorsley Moor on 4th and 27th (AB/LB). Singles were reported from Bamburgh Castle Wood, Big Waters, Derwent Reservoir, East Ord, Fontburn, Linden Hall, Lucker and Newburn CP.

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

Singles were reported from Dinnington, East Chevington, East Duddo, Fulbeck (Morpeth), Kirkley, Linton Ponds, Maiden's Hall, Middle Stobswood, Red Row, Whalton and Wooler.

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

Counts of up to seven at Prestwick Carr included four carrying food on 15th (PCF/IK). Four were at Castle Island on 14th (DM/STH), three at Aydon (Corbridge) on 9th (RB/MB) and two males sang on Holy Island all month without apparently attracting females (IK). Two were also reported from Bamburgh Castle Wood on 5th and Harthope Valley on 4th. Singles were noted at Allensford, Chollerford, Cramlington (Valley Park), Holywell Dene and Howden.



A Whitethroat at Hadston Carrs by Chris Barlow

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

In the Cramlington study area a total of 20 birds were singing in likely territories by the month end including six at Arcot Pond and six at West Hartford (STH/LJM *et al.*). Five were at Gosforth Park NR throughout the month and singles were reported from Broadstruther (Cheviots), Dinnington, East Chevington, Ellington, Harwood Forest, Linton Ponds, Lynemouth and Prestwick Carr.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

On Holy Island there were counts of up to eight, including two to three probable migrants at the Snook on 5th, 7th, 13th and 20th and one at Chare Ends on 13th; up to four at the Lough included a bird carrying food on 20th (ADM). Elsewhere six were noted at Prestwick Carr on 20th, three at Bamburgh Castle Wood on 5th and at Gosforth Park NR on 25th, two at Hadston Carrs and singles at Aydon (Corbridge), Linden Hall and QEII CP.

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

The species was well reported this month, perhaps indicative of an increasing population. Seven + were reported from the traditional stronghold at Gosforth Park NR during the month, closely followed by up to five at East Chevington. Three singing males were at Big Waters on 8th and two at Holy Island Lough throughout the month. Elsewhere up to two were noted at Cresswell Pond and singles at Linton Ponds, Newbiggin, Newton Pool, QEII CP and Woodhorn Flashes.



A Reed Warbler at Cresswell by Tim Dean on 15th June

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

A pair fledged four young from a nest box at Kirkley Hall (IK). Another pair were feeding three fledged juveniles at Arcot Hall GC on 14th (DM) and an adult was seen carrying food at Morpeth on 9th. Elsewhere singles were reported from Jesmond Dene, Newburn CP and Yearle.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Pairs were noted carrying food to nest sites at Slaley Forest on 4th (IFo) and Hawsen Burn (Harthope Valley) on 9th (LJM). Singles were also reported from Allen Banks, East Hartford Wood and Jesmond Dene.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Nine at Prestwick Carr on 27th was the highest count (PCF). Three to four were also reported from Holy Island on 13th and 20th and Jesmond Dene on 21st.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

The largest gathering was 150 at Holy Island on 11th (JMA), increasing from 60, mainly juveniles, on 5th (IK). Flocks of 80 were found at Longframlington (juveniles) on 24th and at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) throughout the month, while 30 were at Grindon Lough on 30th.



A Starling gleams
Seahouses harbour
9th June
Steve Barrett

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

Three at Jesmond Dene on 28th included a juvenile (MJCo). Two were at Beanley on 30th and singles were reported from Alwinton, Harthope Burn and Rothbury.

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Five were at Jesmond Dene on 1st (MJCo). A single was collecting nest material for a second nest in a Kenton garden on 4th (MRS).

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

An intriguing report of at least one (perhaps two) came from near Langleeford Farm (Harthope Valley) on 6th (PD).

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Singles were at four Jesmond Dene sites on 28th (MJCo). Further singles were noted at Berwick, Carey Burn, Fulbeck (Morpeth) and Longhirst Hall.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

A family party of seven (five juveniles) was at Longframlington on 24th (AB/LB). Five were noted at East Cramlington LNR on 29th, four were at Gosforth on 24th and three at Cranecleugh (Kielder) and Cramlington (Valley Park). Two were reported from Lordenshaw, singles were noted at three sites in Jesmond Dene and further singles were at three other localities.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

One to three late passage birds were on Holy Island from 5th-7th (ADM/IK). In inland breeding areas up to three were noted in the Harthope Valley, two in Allen Banks, Eshott, Lucker, Spindlestone and Upper Coquetdale and singles at Capheaton, Harbottle, Linden Hall and Sleafy Forest.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Seven were at Holy Island on 13th and three at Jesmond Dene on 1st.

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Six were noted at Allen Banks on 3rd (AJH).

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Three were noted in Holystone Woods during the month (IBDa/KDa) and up to two in the Harthope Valley. A male escorted a recently fledged juvenile at Whitechapel on 23rd, a pair were visiting a probable nest site at Longframlington on 24th and a pair were at Hareshaw Linn (Bellingham) on 23rd. Singles were noted at Allen Banks, Fontburn, Prestwick Carr and Simonburn.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

A pair was feeding five young in a nest at Harwood Forest on 23rd (STE). Seven at Shillmoor (Upper Coquetdale) on 29th included four defended territories (TRD), whilst further counts from Upper Coquetdale included six on 12th, three at Usway Burn on 5th and two at Alwinton on 27th. Three were in the Harthope Valley on 8th and a late migrant was on Holy Island on 5th.

May 2015 Ed note. Apologies for the Whinchat and Stonechat photograph IDs last month

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

Peak counts were as follows;

Site	Peak count	Date	Observer	Site	Peak count	Date	Observer
Coastal:							
Dunstan Steads-Dunstanburgh Castle	3 pairs	4th	STH	Bamburgh	Pair feeding young in nest	8th	BRS
Cocklawburn	5 (3 juvs)	24th	MHu	Druridge Pools	1	9th	TRD
Low Newton	5	29th	KWY	Holy Island	1	13th	ADM
Bamburgh Castle Wood	3 (2 juvs)	5th	ADM				
Blyth (Gloucester Lodge dunes)	3 (2 juvs)	29th	LJM				
East Chevington	3 (1 juv)	14th	NFO	Inland:			
Hadston Carrs	3 (1 juv)	5th	ADM	Hawsen Burn (Harthope Valley)	1	11th	TRD
Snab Point (Cresswell)	3	14th	TB				
Warkworth Gut	3	20th	NFO				

Wheatear *Oenanthe Oenanthe*

Coastal birds were noted at Cocklawburn on 3rd, Holy Island on 5th and 7th (two) and Howick Bay on 12th. The only inland reports were of up to two in Upper Coquetdale and the Harthope Valley and on 22nd a single at Derwent Reservoir.



A male Wheatear in the Upper Coquet valley
by Tim Dean on 12th June

Duncock *Prunella modularis*

A single report only, of one in Jesmond Dene on 16th (MJCo).

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Singles were noted at Jesmond Dene on 1st and collecting nesting material for a second nest in Kenton on 4th (MJCo/MRS).

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

Five were noted on several occasions during the month at Cresswell Pond (TRD/JD/KWY) and at Great Whittington on 3rd (AJH). Three were at Druridge Pools on 2nd (TRD) and a pair was feeding one young at East Cramlington Pond NWT on 3rd (LJM). One to two were again recorded at Druridge Pools and at Spindlestone, whilst one at Castle Island on 13th was a good site record (GB)

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

A pair, including a female carrying food, was seen at Widdrington on 21st (GB). Elsewhere, three were seen at Great Whittington on 3rd (AJH) and Low Newton scrape on 4th (TRD). One to two were regularly reported from Cresswell Pond and nearby Bell's Farm pond and further north at Druridge Pools (TB/MSH/IRD *et al.*), whilst singles were also present at Bothal Pond on 14th, flying over High Hauxley on 28th and at Low Newton scrape on 8th.



A Yellow Wagtail

Druridge Pools

Chris Barlow

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Breeding reports included two pairs at Allen Banks on 5th (RB/MB), a female carrying food at Linden Hall on 17th (NFO) and a brood of three at Spindlestone on 27th (CGK/GPK). Elsewhere, three singles were noted in different sections of Jesmond Dene on 1st (MJCo), two were seen at Derwent Reservoir, Harthope Valley and Upper Coquetdale, and single birds were logged at the following additional sites: Alwinton, Arcot Pond, Chollerford, Gosforth Park NR, Hareshaw Linn (Bellingham) and Rothbury.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla yarrellii*

A family group of eight was at Prestwick Carr on 23rd (PCF), three were present all month at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) (IJ) and two were seen at Allen Banks on 5th (RB/MB).

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

Three were singing/displaying in Slaley Forest on 5th and another was singing here on 15th (IFo); two were singing at Holystone on 13th (RB/MB) and another was singing/displaying at Dilston (Corbridge) on 16th (IFo). One to two were also seen at the Harthope valley, Langleeford Hope and Longhorsley Moor.



A Tree Pipit
West Northumberland
Chris Barlow

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Eight were counted on Holy Island on 20th and two were seen carrying food at the Heugh on 5th (ADM). Up to six were noted at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) all month, possibly involving two family groups (IJ).



A Rock Pipit by Alan Jack

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Six were counted in Jesmond Dene on 1st (MJCo).

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula papyrus*

Two pairs were noted at Howdon on 17th (CB), three were in Gosforth Park NR on 25th (KWY), a pair was at Chugdon Wood/Ellington on 13th/24th (TB) and one was seen at Spindlestone on 3rd (TRD).

Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*

Two were on Paddy Freeman's Playing Field at Jesmond Dene on 7th (MJCo) and one was singing in Lower Holywell Dene on 21st (CDH).

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

Four were on Longhorsley Moor on 21st (AB/LB) and two at Lower Holywell Dene and Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay).



A Cock Linnet on gorse by Alan Jack

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis cabaret*

A count of 12 came from Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 28th (TB), a single passed S over the R. Blyth Estuary on 13th (STH) and further singles were logged at Linden Hall on 27th (NFO) and flying W at Budle Bay also on 27th (CGK/GPK).

Common (Mealy) Redpoll *Carduelis flammea*

Four at Alwinton (Upper Coquetdale) on 27th were unseasonal (RB/MB).

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

Some dispersal was noted this month, with a total of 17 flying W at Budle Bay on 27th the highest count (CGK/GPK). Elsewhere, 11 moved W at Widdrington on 21st (GB), 7+ moved W at Bellshill Farm (Belford) on 16th (GB), a single flew over the observer's garden at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 7th (TD) and one+ flew SW over Cramlington on 15th (STH). Back in the forest, 14 were counted in Slaley Forest on 4th (IFo) and one was at Harbottle on 16th (JD).

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

A family party was noted in a Kenton garden on 12th (MRS) and one to two were reported from Aydon, Jesmond Dene and Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay).

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

Seven flew W over Budle Bay on 27th (CGK/GPK) and two to three were noted in the Harthope valley and at Linden Hall.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citronella*

Six on Longhorsley Moor on 4th included three singing males (AB/LB) and three were singing in a 500m radius at High Horton (Blyth) on 26th (LJM). Further singing birds included two at Dilston (Corbridge) on 16th (IFo) and one at Linton Pond on 21st (CDH), whilst two birds were also logged at Aydon on 9th (RB/MB).



Two Buntings by Alan Jack. Above: a Yellowhammer and below: a female Reed Bunting

**Reed Bunting** *Emberiza schoeniclus*

At Gosforth Park 13 were seen during the month (NHSN) and seven were counted at Prestwick Carr on 27th (PCF). Two singing birds were noted at Derwent Reservoir on 4th (IFo) and a pair was feeding young at Howdon on 25th (CB). One to two were also seen at Alwinton and Longhorsley Moor.

ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN

Bar-headed Goose *Anser indicus*

There were seven found at Derwent Reservoir on 20th (IFo) which stayed until the end of the month.

Exotica

duck (sp.)

An odd looking duck at Big Waters on 12th was thought possibly to be a Gadwall x unknown hybrid (GB).

Mallard x Pintail hybrid

An apparent Mallard x Pintail hybrid was at Broomlee Lough on 16th (MRS).

goose (sp.)

One was at Hauxley Reserve on 30th (HRS).

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Bamburgh Ringing Station, Berwick Wildlife Group, Hauxley Ringing Station, Natural History Society of Northumbria, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

Apologies for any accidental omissions

BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION

This bulletin was compiled by Graeme Bowman (Mute Swan to Ruddy Duck), Lindsay McDougall (Red Grouse to Black-necked Grebe), Trevor Blake (Honey-buzzard to Crane), Steve Holliday (Avocet to Godwit) Ian Forsyth (Turnstone to Skua), Eddie Crabtree (Puffin to Great Black-backed Gull), Tim Dean (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), Steve Holiday (Dunnock to Corn Bunting), (WeBS Coastal Counts) and Steve Holliday (WeBS Inland Counts).

Thanks to David Sanders of NNBC for providing data.

Proof reading was by Mike Smith.

Edited by Steve Barrett NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com

Mail distribution by Paul Stewart.

RECORD SUBMISSION

Please email ntbcorg@gmail.com for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and grid references: The use of standard location names and the include grid references as this 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.

Could club members ensure they to submit records direct to NTBC rather than just Birdtrack. There may be an assumption by some members this happens automatically. We do not want to miss records.

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

It is preferable if you re-size your photos before sending and a suggested size is 640 x 480 pixels. Please ensure you include the following information with your submissions: name, species, date taken, locality.

Photographs will not be used elsewhere without the photographer's permission.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual membership costs £10 for a junior, £30 for an individual, and £32 for a family. For membership enquiries please contact ntbc@jobentley.plus.com

Subscriptions are due from 1st October.

NTBC AGM

The Club Annual General Meeting will be held on 8th October before the Indoor Meeting. Nominations for committee are welcome. Please send nominations with a seconder to Andrew Brunt.

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. Please submit any new content for the website to the main club email address.

NTBC SIGHTINGS PAGE

The Sightings Page contains current reports by members. Access is from the NTBC website and an email notification is available for new postings.

Members need to submit a request to be added to the website, specifying the email address they wish to post from before they can submit sightings to ntbcorg@gmail.com

SEATON SLUICE WATCH TOWER

Repairs have recently been made to the SSWT and a new lock has been fitted. This means that new keys are required for access. Keys can be collected at indoor meetings or email ntbcorg@gmail.com

Keys are available for £5 for new holders and existing key-holders can exchange keys for £4.

NEWTON BIO-BLITZ

The National Trust ranger team on the Northumberland Coast are holding a Bio-Blitz on 22nd of August in the area surrounding Newton by the Sea, giving access to coastal, woodland, dune and wetland habitats all within relative proximity of each other. We will be racing to survey a range of habitats and species in the 24-hour time-frame while involving as many groups, recorders and members of the public as possible. If any members of the Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club are interested in coming along and sharing their expertise, we would be really keen to see them there.

If you have any questions or would like more information please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Kate Bradshaw

Assistant Ranger

National Trust

Lindisfarne Castle, The Farne Islands and Northumberland Coast

01665 576874 Mobile: 07593938808

BINOCULARS FOR SALE

A pair of Leica 10x42 Ultravid Binoculars.

Black, 13 years old, in very good condition. Asking price £550.

Contact Steve Laing on 07852 914225 or steve@tyneside mortgagecentre.co.uk



A Mute Swan cygnet at Druridge Pools
Chris Barlow

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2015 No 7

MONTHLY SUMMARY – JULY 2015

11th September 2015



CONTENTS

WeBS inland

WeBS coastal June and July

CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Red-crested Pochard	Male still present at Hauxley until 2nd.
Long-tailed Duck	Summer records continued with singles at East Chevington and Derwent Reservoir
Velvet Scoter	Few passing along coast late in month.
Quail	Singles calling at Dinnington and near Budle Bay.
Great Northern Diver	Unusual summer sighting past Seaton Sluice on 2nd.
Sooty Shearwater	First passage bird for year past Seaton Sluice on 30th.
Balearic Shearwater	One past Newbiggin on 27th.
Bittern	One at Gosforth Park all month
Temminck's Stint	Adult still at Derwent Reservoir until 2nd.
Yellow-legged Gull	Adult at Derwent Reservoir from 21st to 25th.
Caspian Gull	The Polish ringed bird returned for 3rd year on 26th and seen until end of month.
Glaucous Gull	Unusual summer immature at Newton Flash on 4th.
Turtle Dove	One at Whalton on 9th.
Hobby	Singles at Cresswell Pond and Humshaugh.
Golden Oriole	Male found singing again at Gosforth Park on 16th.

COMMITTEE NEWS

Data Manager Vacancy- Are you competent at IT? We need a Data Manager for club records. Please contact NTBC.
The NTBC Accounts to 30th June 2014 are attached to this bulletin.

INDOOR MEETINGS

NTBC indoor meetings are held at Northern Rugby Club, McCracken Park, Great North Road, Newcastle, NE3 2DT starting at 7.00pm and generally finish between 9.00pm-9.30pm. The first meetings of the 2015-2016 season are;

8th October

AGM followed by **Stewart Sexton From the Notebooks**

A look back through Stewart's note books a good reason why birders have them

12th November

Andrew Kinghorn *Larus* White-headed Gulls in North East England

The talk will be about how to identify all of the common and potential scarce and rarer *Larus* Gulls that occur in Northumberland. The talk also covers potential future firsts including American Herring Gull Thayers and Slaty-backed Gulls

10th December

Colin Bradshaw Spoon Forks and Chopsticks

Eight intrepid north-east birders braved bizarre food awful driving and noisy brothels to chase a host of the worlds rarest birds , and watch a small patch of ground for some great sibs.



An cautious Grouse awaits the Glorious 12th at Blanchland. By Alan Jack

FIELD TRIPS**13th September 2015****Around Alnmouth**

Meet in the car park next to the first school at 0900h.

For more details contact tomandmurielcadwallender@hotmail.co.uk**18th October 2015****Holy Island Migrants**Contact Trevor Blake trevor.1958@live.co.uk**22nd November 2015****East Lothian sea birds**Contact Steve Anderson seaswan@btinternet.com**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 2012 page 236.

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.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Peak counts involved 314 at the Tweed Estuary on 16th (MHu), 256 at Tweedmouth Dock on 31st (MHu), 62-75 at Capheaton Lake (IK/AJR), New Water Haugh (MHu) and QEII CP Lake (JMA), and 45 at Killingworth Lake. Counts of seven to 11 also came from Amble, Greenlee Lough and Ladyburn Lake. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Ladyburn Lake	1	7	LJM. On 7th
Druridge Pools	1	5	TD. On 1st
Swallow Pond	1	1	LJM. On 14th

A brood of four at Broomlee Lough in June was reduced to two in July (MRS). A pair with two surviving young at Holy Island (from seven originally) moved into a farmyard and fed regularly with domestic fowl (IK).**Whooper Swan** *Cygnus cygnus*

One was at the Tweed Estuary on 16th (MHu).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Bothal Pond held 75 on 24th (TF/JFa), 62 were at Marden Quarry on 16th (KWY), 34-45 at Bothal Pond (TD) and Newton Flash (JMA), and 13 at Brenkley. One to six were also at Arcot Pond, Grindon Lough, Newcastle Leazes Park and New Water Haugh.

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Peak gatherings were 235 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 5th (JL), 94 at Killingworth Lake on 16th (LJM), 83 at Bothal Pond on 25th (TF/JFa), 52-70 at Newcastle Leazes Park and QEII CP Lake, 43 (14 juveniles) at Swallow Pond, and 22-29 at the Tweed Estuary and Widdrington Moor Lake. Eight to ten were at Bakethin Reservoir and Cresswell Pond. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Duke's Pond, Rising Sun CP	3	10	LJM. Well grown young on 14th

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

A total of 14 flew S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), and nine flew S at Whitley Bay on 20th (IJ). Budle Bay held 180 on 11th (CGK/GPK), three to four were at Amble Braid and Warkworth (JMA), and two at Bothal Pond. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Amble Braid	3	11 (7,3,1)	JMA. On 2nd
Boulmer	2	6 (4,2)	JMA. On 2nd
Cresswell Pond	1	5	JMA. On 2nd
Castle Island	1	4	STH. Large young (as June?) on 19th
Amble weir	1	1	JMA. On 2nd
Backworth	1	2	CGK

A brood of nine juveniles, first noted in June, remained at Arcot Pond until at least 25th (DM/AJR).

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

One flew N at Seaton Sluice on 16th (SSWT). 11 were at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd (IFo), eight at Grindon Lough on 2nd (MRS), one to five at Cresswell Pond on several dates (TB/TRD/TF/JFa), three at Budle Bay, and one to two at Airy Holm Reservoir, Budle Bay, Druridge Pools and Low Newton scrape on various dates.

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

11 (plus a brood of seven young) were at Bothal Pond on 25th (TF/JFa), and two to three were at Gosforth Park NR and Marden Quarry. More unusual was one sitting on rocks at St Mary's Island on 7th (ASJ). Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Ladyburn Lake	3	12	LJM. On 7th
Bothal Pond	2	15 (8,7)	TRD. On 13th. May include brood (7) from June.
Holywell Pond	1	7	SPP. On 3rd.

A brood of four young (first noted in June) remained at Swallow Pond until at least 27th (SPP).

Teal *Anas crecca*

A monthly total of 101 N and 11 S at Seaton Sluice was unusually high for July, and included 54 N on 2nd (SSWT), and one flew N at Hauxley on 29th (SW). Derwent Reservoir held 11 on 18th (IFo), five to eight were at Berwick North Shore, Bothal and Cocklawburn Ponds, Budle Bay and Druridge Pools, and two at Arcot Pond.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Peak counts were 123 at Big Waters on 16th (SPP), 102 at Derwent Reservoir on 12th (IFo), 76-82 at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN) and Swallow Pond (SPP), 58 at Killingworth Lake (LJM), 20-35 at Airy Holm Reservoir, Bothal Pond, Ladyburn Lake, Newcastle Leazes Park and Tynemouth boating lake, and 11-12 at Chollerford and Warden. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Ladyburn Lake	5	24	LJM. On 7th
Swallow Pond	3	14	LJM. On 14th
Gosforth Park NR	1	9	NHSN. On 12th
Arcot Pond	1	8	LJM. New brood on 14th
Newcastle Leazes Park	1	6	DM. Fresh brood on 1st
Chollerford	1	5	SW. On 26th
Grindon Lough	1	4	MRS. On 20th
Killingworth Lake	1	3	LJM. New brood on 16th
Marden Quarry	1	3	KWY. On 26th
Humford Mill	1	1	LJM. Well-grown young on 5th
Wansbeck Business Park, Ashington	1	1	LJM. On 11th

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

The only reports were of three at Bothal Pond (TD) and two to three at Druridge Pools (TD/IFo).

***Red-crested Pochard** *Netta rufina*

A drake was at Hauxley Reserve (viewed from dunes) on 2nd (JBu).

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Eight were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 11th (LJM), and one to two at Cresswell and Swallow Ponds, Gosforth Park NR and Ladyburn Lake. A brood (three to four young), first noted in June, remained into July (TB/TD/TRD et al.).

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Singles flew N at Newbiggin on 16th (STH) and Seaton Sluice on 17th (SSWT), and two moved S at Whitley Bay on 20th (IJ). Peak concentrations were 44 on 10th (IFo), 30 at Bothal Pond on 13th (TF/JFa), 22-24 at Killingworth Lake (LJM), Newcastle Leazes Park (DM) and Swallow Pond (SPP), and ten to 14 at Airy Holm and Bakethin Reservoirs. Two were at Derwent Reservoir. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Howdon	--	18	CB. With four adults, on 12th. Five survived to 31st
Capheaton Lake	2	13 (9,4)	TRD. On 16th. Includes brood from June?
Bakethin Reservoir	1	10	SW. On 12th
<i>Shasun</i> <i>Pharma</i> , Cramlington	1	1	JA per LJM. On 21st

Scaup *Aythya marila*

Four (two drakes) were on the sea off St Mary's on 15th before flying N (SPP), and a drake was at East Chevington north pool on 3rd (ADMc/ME/GS).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

320 were at North Blyth on 31st (STH), 107 off Newbiggin Church Point on 9th (STH), 45 at Cambois on 19th (STH), and 18-28 at Berwick North Shore and Spittal Point. One to three were also at Amble weir, the Tweed Estuary and Whitley Bay. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods/crèches	No. of young	Observer/notes
Cullernose Point	--	9	JMA. Juveniles on 2nd
Newton Point	--	2	JMA. Juveniles on 2nd

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

A female/juvenile bird was at East Chevington north pool on 6th (IFo/ADMc) and 12th (TB). The long-staying adult drake reappeared at Derwent Reservoir on 10th and remained all month, having last been noted on 19th May (IFo).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

The monthly total of 3,800 N and 456 S (in 74 hours) was well above the July average, and included 511 N and 101 S on 2nd (SSWT). Coastal passage elsewhere included totals of 354 N at Whitley Bay between 11th-28th (IJ), 264 N at Newbiggin on 16th and 28th (STH/TF/JFa), and 260 N at Berwick on 17th (MHu). About 400 were off East Chevington on 6th (TRD), 200 off Druridge on 13th (TRD), 100 at Whitley Bay on 16th (IJ), and 18-46 at Cocklawburn, North Blyth and Spittal Bay.

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

Three moved N and one S at Tynemouth on 26th (DRW), and two flew N at Seaton Sluice on 25th (SSWT).

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Seven flew N and four S at Seaton Sluice between 2nd-20th (SSWT), and five moved N at Hauxley on 29th (SW). Two were at Budle Bay between 5th-20th (GPK).

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

Six flew N at Newbiggin on 29th (STH/IFo), five N at Seaton Sluice on 29th-30th (SSWT), and four flew S at Whitley Bay on 20th (IJ). Large counts in the north of the county involved 246 at Berwick North Shore on 17th (MHu), 160 at Meadow Haven, Berwick on 29th (MHu), 142 (juveniles/females) at Holy Island on 12th (IK), 102 at Cocklawburn on 23rd (MHu), and 27 at the Tweed Estuary. Ten to 12 were at/over Derwent Reservoir and West Ord, and two to four at Budle Bay and Bakethin Reservoir.

Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Blyth Estuary	1+	27	LJM. Crèches of 17 and 10 on 6th. Includes brood from June?
Amble Harbour	--	13	STH. Juveniles on 26th

Quail *Coturnix coturnix*

Single singing/calling birds were heard at two locations – Dinnington on 3rd (JBU/PCF) and at Budle Bay during the early evening on 31st (GPK).

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

A pair hatched 12 young in the unexpected location of an enclosed garden in Red House Farm housing estate (Whitley Bay) on 16th (LJM). Five were present at Williamstone (Slaggyford) on 18th (AJH) and two pairs were in the Breamish Valley on 10th (TD). A single bird was in an Old Hartley garden (Holywell Dene) on 29th (RJP).

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Six, all juveniles, were at Horton (Blyth) on 10th (LJM), five were at Prestwick Carr (PCF) and three at Ulgham Grange (TB) on 31st. A very late brood of a pair with at least two chicks were at Airy Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield) on 19th (IFo) and one to two birds were present at Bothal Pond, Cocklawburn Dunes, Derwent Reservoir and Warkworth Lane (Ellington).

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

A female with four young ran across the A192 near East Hartford on 17th (LJM).

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

Total passage recorded during the month at Seaton Sluice Watch Tower was seven N and five S in 74 hours of watching (SSWT). A single was seen at East Chevington on 6th (TRD).

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

A very unseasonal record of one flying N past Seaton Sluice on 2nd (SSWT).

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

Seaton Sluice Watch Tower recorded a peak of 51 N on 30th during an otherwise unproductive month (SSWT). Elsewhere, Newbiggin had a total of nine N in nearly two hours on the afternoon of 30th (STH), Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) held up to eight birds throughout the month, including two active nests with at least one juvenile (IJ), three were in the River Tweed Estuary during a WeBS count on 16th (MHu) and a single was at Newton Point on 8th (TRD).

Correction: June's record of "A three hour sea watch at Newbiggin in the late evening of 23rd produced a total of 47 flying N (STH) with 24 N past St Mary's during a similar two hour stretch on the same day (MSH)" was in fact late morning.

Sooty Shearwater *Puffinus griseus*

Only record was of one flying N past Seaton Sluice on 30th (SSWT).

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

The monthly total of 619 (571 N and 48 S) past Seaton Sluice was well below the average for July. This total included 191 N in two hours on 16th (SSWT). Passage at Newbiggin peaked at 40+ in three and a half hours on 28th (TF/JFa) with 37 N recorded between the hours of 1440-1625 on 30th (STH) and 18 N in two hours during the afternoon of the 9th (ASH). One to 16 were sighted at various other coastal locations during the latter half of the month.

Balearic Shearwater *Puffinus mauretanicus*

First record of the year when one bird, and also a probable second, passed by Church Point (Newbiggin) on 27th (ADMc).

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

The usual large scale late-summer movements commenced in the second half of the month and included 1500 S and 850 N past Berwick Pier on 29th (MHu) and up to 400 per hour noted on several days past Seaton Sluice (SSWT). At Newbiggin, counts of 50+ per hour N on 9th (ASH) was followed by 122 N between 1440-1625 hrs. on 30th (STH). 100 were at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) all month (IJ), 40 were at Newton Point on 19th (TRD) and 22 were sitting on the sea in calm conditions at Newbiggin on 10th (STH). One to ten were at various other coastal locations. Interestingly an adult corpse was found inland, in rough pasture just north of Housesteads Roman Fort on 30th (JWP).

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

There was no sign of migratory movement at Seaton Sluice during the month however 58 N and 28 S were recorded in 8 hrs. on 8th (SSWT). The Meadow Haven (Berwick) roost held 33 birds on 31st (MHu), Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) peaked at 30 on 20th (IJ) with 30 also present at North Shields Jetty on that day (JMA). The monthly maximum at Derwent Reservoir was 27 on 31st (IFo), 23 were in Amble Harbour on 20th (LJM), 22 were recorded during a WeBS count at Berwick North Shore on 17th (MHu) and the peak count at East Chevington was 20 on 22nd (STH/IFo). 14 were at Castle Island (River Wansbeck) on 22nd and 11 were on the sewer outfall pipe at Cambois on 19th (STH). One to ten were at other locations.

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

The only record during the month at Seaton Sluice was one S on 24th (SSWT). Berwick proved to be the most popular location with 21 roosting at Meadow Haven on 31st and ten found during a WeBS count at North Shore on 17th (MHu).

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

The first returning bird was seen at Gosforth Park NR on 2nd and then sporadically thereafter (NHSN).

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

The stretch of the River Wansbeck between Castle Island and the A189 road bridge held up to seven individuals throughout the month, often observed roosting in the trees near the weir (TB/STH/LJM *et al.*). One of those present on 23rd was ringed with red on left leg and yellow on right leg (TRD). The peak count at Lindisfarne NNR was five present at Fenham Flats on 26th (JL) and Budle Bay on 31st (GPK). Likewise, five was the monthly maximum recorded at Cresswell Pond on 31st (ADMc). Arcot Pond was visited by four on 10th (LJM) and Druridge Pools peaked at four on 3rd (TB). Elsewhere one to three were at Amble, the Blyth Estuary, East Chevington, Foxton Bends (River Tweed), Hauxley NR, the Long Nanny, New Water Haugh and the Tweed Estuary.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

14 was again the maximum count during the month at Howdon (CB), Hauxley NWT peaked at 11 on 6th (IFo) and the largest count in Holywell Dene was nine at Hartley West Farm on 21st (RJP). Seven were present during a WeBS count at the River Tweed Estuary on 16th (MHu) and six were seen during a walk down the South Tyne from Eals to Kirkhaugh on 18th (AJH). Amble Braid also held six on 29th (STH/IFo) and up to five were present at Gosforth Park NR and adjacent pool throughout the month (NHSN). Fours were at Arcot Pond (all adults) on 7th (STH) and Derwent Reservoir on 20th (IFo). One to three were at many other typical locations.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Ladyburn Lake (Druridge Bay CP) held up to 11 – seven adults with two broods of four young – on 7th (LJM) and Gosforth Park and adjacent pool was estimated to hold three pairs with up to four young throughout the month (NHSN). Five were at Hauxley NWT on 6th (IFo) and Newton Pool (Low Newton) held four adults and one juvenile on 19th (TRD). Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) peaked at four on 12th (TD) and an adult with three new young were at Dinnington on 22nd (PCF). One to three birds were at many other suitable localities including Big Waters, Castron, Capheaton Lake, Colt Crag Reservoir, Cresswell Pond, Shield on the Wall and Swallow Pond. An adult with two young at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) was notable as being the first breeding record there in 12 years of observation (NFO).

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps Cristatus*

One N on 2nd was the only recorded passage (SSWT). East Chevington again proved a popular location, peaking at nine on 1st including four young (TD) whilst Derwent Reservoir also had a maximum of nine adults on 14th (IFo). Four were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 7th (LJM) and three were at Druridge Pools on 16th (TRD) and Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) on 22nd (TF/JFa), the latter subsequently disappearing by 24th (TD). One to two were at Airy Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield) and Big Waters.

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

A pair with a single young were at a site in the south east of the county.

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Two birds were at Blanchland on 11th (ASJ) and a single bird flew S over the river West of Bywell Bridge (Stocksfield) on 23rd (MP).

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

A female and five juveniles were in the air together at East Chevington on 22nd (IK), several other records came from here and a male was seen at Druridge on 13th (TRD) while a female was at Widdrington Moor Lake on 19th (JL). Juveniles were seen at Holywell Pond on 21st (SPP) and at Hauxley NR on 28th (JSB/EC).

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

A male was noted near Humshaugh on 1st (MR)

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Single birds were noted at Southfield Green (Cramlington) (DM), Holywell Dene (RJP) and at Scotland Gate (SLB/MSK) throughout the month. Single birds were also observed at Ashington, Castle Island, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Ellington, Haughton Castle, QEII CP, Tynemouth and Wallington. A female was repeatedly chasing Sand Martins *Riparia riparia* at a colony on the River Tyne at Chollerford on 26th (SW).

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Five birds were at Letah Wood (Hexham) on 4th (AJH) and a family party of five were also seen at Ray Fell (Ray Estate) on 19th (IK). Three were in the Breamish Valley on 10th (TD); two birds were seen at Scotland Gate throughout the month (SLB/MSK) and at Haughton Castle on 26th (SW) and at Amble on 31st (TB). Single birds were reported from Holywell Dene, Kirkwhelpington, Lynnsfield and Morpeth.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetuss*

All the records this month came from Derwent Reservoir with single birds seen on several dates (EC/JB/IFo/IK) and two birds reported from there on 12th (IFo)

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Up to seven birds including three juveniles were at Gosforth Park NR throughout the Month (NHSN/GPK) and two birds were in front of the hide on the East footpath at Swallow Pond on 14th (LJM) Single birds were at Arcot Pond on 2nd and 24th (STH), Cresswell Pond on 19th (IRD) and at Holywell Pond on 21st (SPP).

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Arcot Pond had the highest figures with 14 birds present on 25th and 29th (DM/LJM); eight birds including four juveniles were at Gosforth Park NR throughout the month (NHSN). Six were at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 20th & 29th (DM), and five birds were at Druridge Bay CP on 7th (LJM), Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 23rd (DM) and at Holy Island Lough throughout the month (IK).

Coot *Fulica atra*

97 birds were at Woodhorn Flashes on 2nd (STH) and 87 were at Bothal Pond on 17th (JSB/EC), 68 were at Swallow Pond on 13th (SPP) and 48 were seen at Killingworth Lake on 16th (LJM). On 8th 20 birds were at QEII CP (JMA), 13 were at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 1st (DM), seven at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 23rd (DM), four at Capheaton Lake on 19th (IK) and three at Howdon on 10th (CB) were the only others in double figures.

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

Six were at Castle Island on 1st (ADM), with two noted here on the WeBS count on 19th (STH). Small numbers remained at Cresswell Pond throughout the month and peaked at four on 2nd/15th/22nd (TB/TRD). A confidential site held two birds during the first week of the month.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Passage at Seaton Sluice totalled 225 N and 35 S during the month (SSWT). The R. Blyth estuary area held 97 on 31st (STH), 80 were at Castron on 15th (TRD) whilst further coastal groups included 74 at Berwick north shore on 17th (MHu), 44 at Hauxley NWT on 10th (IFo) and 40 at Low Newton on 2nd (JMA). Derwent Reservoir held 28 on 25th (IFo), 11-16 were noted at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) and on the R. Tweed estuary and single figure reports came from a further 14 locations. The Breamish Valley held two pairs on 10th (TD), a family party of three on 25th was the first proven breeding record at Budle Bay (CGK) and a similar sized family party was at Bothal Pond on 24th (TD).



An Oystercatcher visits Nancy Anderson's Hexham garden on 25th July

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

The second half of the month saw returning coastal birds building up in numbers, the largest of which was at St Mary's with 300+ on 12th (SPP) increasing to 450 on 24th (ASJ). Nearby sites of Seaton Sluice and Rockcliffe (Whitley bay) saw peaks of 313 on 25th and 110 on 24th respectively (SSWT/IJ). The Newbiggin flock peaked at 219 on 16th (STH) and Holy Island held 200 Northern race birds on 26th (IK). Inland reports included 21 at Derwent Reservoir on 24th (IFo) and five (one, two and two) across three locations on Blanchland Moor on 3rd (TD). The first returnees at Backworth were four on 19th (CGK).



A Golden Plover at Blanchland
Alan Jack

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Twos were seen at Budle Bay on 11th/25th (CGK/GPK) and flying N over St Mary's Island on 29th (SPP) – those on 25th/29th being in breeding adult plumage. On the 29th one passed N at both Seaton Sluice and Newbiggin (SSWT/TF/JFa).

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

A large post-breeding flock at Derwent Reservoir gradually increased from 330 on 11th to 1,100 on 31st (IFo). Elsewhere, 150 was noted at both the R. Tyne (Elswick Wharf-Newcastle Business Park) on 24th (DM) and Bothal Pond on 28th (TF/JFa), and 130 were present at Grindon Lough on 20th (MRS). Arcot Pond held a peak of 98 on 9th (LJM), 47 were at St Mary's on 7th (ASJ) and 30-32 were at Druridge Pools, Gosforth Park NR and Prestwick Carr. Breeding records included a pair with three small young at Druridge Pools on 1st (TD) and an adult with chicks at Colt Crag Reservoir on 5th (JL). Four were counted at Howdon on 6th (CB).

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

Adults with chicks were noted at four confidential sites, including a count of eight adults and three young at one location. One to two were seen at Bothal Pond on three dates (TD/TF/JFa) and single birds were recorded at Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Hallington Reservoir, Low Newton scrape and West Hartford.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Post-breeding coastal gatherings included 23 at Newbiggin on 16th (STH), 22 at Chevington Burn on 22nd (STH/IFo) and 16 on the beach at Hauxley on 25th (PCF). Up to six adults were present all month at Derwent Reservoir and two 'newish' chicks appeared on 31st (IFo). Five were on Low Newton scrape on 8th (TRD) and four were seen at West Hartford on 2nd (STH), whilst the Chevington Burn fenced area held two young on 1st (TD). One to two were recorded at five further sites.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Passage at Seaton Sluice totalled 39 S and 15 N, with a peak of 20 S on 27th (SSWT) whilst at nearby St Mary's a flock of 18 moved S on 26th (SPP). In the north, a flock of 14 flew in high off the sea and landed at Berwick Little Beach on 12th (MHu) and a daily presence throughout the month in Budle Bay saw a peak of 10+ on 28th (CGK/GPK). Five flew N at Newbiggin on 30th (STH) and one to four were logged at around a further 11 sites.

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Budle Bay held the lions share with 280 noted on 11th (CGK/GPK); 130 were seen on the R. Tweed estuary WeBS count on 16th (MHu), 87 were in the R. Blyth estuary high-tide roost on 10th (IFo) and 68+ were in the high-tide roost just south of Hauxley NWT on 6th (IFo). Long Nanny held 50 on 2nd (JMA) and 38 were in the high-tide roost at Howdon on 31st (CB). A total of 32 were counted at Gosforth Park & adjacent pool (no date) (NHSN), nine to 17 were seen at Berwick north shore, East Chevington and Holywell Dene, and one to six at a further seven sites.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Over 40 reports received this month, perhaps involving some of the same birds moving around the various ponds & pools. Birds were present at the following sites on many dates however the peaks were as follows: 37 at Druridge Pools on 1st (TD), 30 at Bothal Pond on 6th (TB), 27 at Arcot Pond on 14th (LJM), 22 on the R. Blyth estuary on 12th (AC), 21 at Cresswell Pond on 19th (IRD), 17 at Low Newton on 7th (TD), 11 at Castle Island on 22nd (STH/IFo) and ten in Budle Bay on 11th (GPK). Elsewhere, Woodhorn Flashes held seven on 11th (LJM), two were at the Long Nanny on 2nd (JMA) and singles were at North Seaton Colliery on 7th (AJR) and Derwent Reservoir on 31st (IFo).



A Black-tailed Godwit at Bothal Pond
by Tim Dean on 6th July

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Passage at Seaton Sluice totalled ten adults N for the month, with the first two seen on 8th (SSWT). The first returning adults at Holy Island were ten on 12th (IK) and four birds were seen in Budle Bay the following day albeit preceded by a single on 9th (CGK/GPK). Two summer-plumaged adults were on Low Newton scrape on 8th (TRD), two more adults flew N at Hartley on 12th (SPP) and one flew S at Whitley Bay on 21st (IJ).



Three species take flight at Newton Flash on 8th July
L to R , A Bar-tailed and a Black-tailed Godwit with a Redshank

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Just three reports: three at Whitley Bay on 24th (IJ), five at Newbiggin on 29th (IFo) and an area total of 51 at high tide in R Blyth estuary on 31st (STH).

Knot *Calidris canutus*

Most were in breeding plumage. At Seaton Sluice 15 flew south on 17th (SSWT) and the largest concentration was of 68 in Budle Bay, also on 17th (GPK). The most at St Mary's was seven on 7th, five were at Coquet Island on 20th, two at Fenham Flats on 26th and singles at Cresswell Pond on 10th, R Blyth estuary on 22nd and at Tynemouth on 23rd. One in breeding plumage was inland at Derwent Reservoir on 26th/27th (IFo).

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

Low Newton scrape attracted one during 2nd to 4th (JMA *et al*) and three during 7th to 12th (TD *et al*). Singles were found at R Tweed estuary on 10th, Castle Island on 22nd/23rd, Bothal Pond on 29th and at West Hartford on 31st.



A Ruff
Newton Flash
Tim Dean
8th July

Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii*

The adult from late June at Derwent Reservoir was still present on 2nd (IFo).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Eight were at St Mary's on 2nd (ASJ) and the same location held the most late in the month, 70-80 during 24th to 29th (ASJ/SPP). Elsewhere, 21 were at Chevington Burn mouth on 22nd, 15 at Hauxley on 29th, nine at Newbiggin on 16th, nine at Low Newton on 19th and one at Whitley Bay on 24th. Away from the coast, one was on R Tyne at Elswick on 28th (SW).

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

The area total at high tide in R Blyth estuary was 39 on 31st (STH) and 21 were at Low Newton scrape on 19th (TRD). Seven to 13 were noted at Castle Island, Cresswell Pond, Newbiggin and smaller numbers occurred at another five locations at or near the coast. Inland, up to six appeared regularly at Derwent Reservoir and also nine on 21st; five were at Grindon Lough on 23rd.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

The first to return were one in Whitley Bay on 12th (IJ) and two at Tynemouth on 13th (MK); singles appeared at Seaton Sluice on 27th and at Newbiggin on 29th.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

In breeding areas seven were at Derwent Reservoir on 4th (IFo), three in the Breamish Valley on 10th and a possible pair at Whiteadder Water on 5th. Other records reflect passage, mostly in the second half, notably 11 at Castle Island on 23rd (TF/JFa). One to three were noted during 15th to 24th at Arcot Pond, Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Hauxley NWT, Low Newton, St Mary's and R Tweed estuary with singles at a further five typical spots.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Arcot Pond held one on 2nd, one on 22nd, three during 24th to 27th (STH/LJM/JBu *et al*) and one on 30th. Two were at Castle Island on 23rd and 26th then three on 28th (TRD/TF/JFa). Two were at Druridge Pools on 3rd (TB) with one there on 16th and one at Cresswell Pond on 19th.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

A moulting adult was in Budle Bay 24th to 31st (CGK/GPK).

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Two adults were at Derwent Reservoir on 1st (IFo) with one there on 3rd and two were at Arcot Pond on 19th (JBu). Singles appeared at Druridge Pools on 3rd, Budle Bay on 11th and 24th, on four dates at Castle Island during 22nd to 30th and at St Mary's on 27th.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Three singles were reported: at Low Newton on 7th (TD), Bothal Pond on 13th (TF/JFa/TB) and Cresswell Pond on 23rd (TF/JFa).

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

At Seaton Sluice 75 flew S between 17th and 24th and seven flew S at Whitley Bay on 20th. The area total at high tide in R Blyth estuary reached 367 on 31st (STH), up from 86 on 9th and the peak count at Budle Bay was 210 on 18th (CGK/GPK); 82 were in R Tweed estuary on 28th (MHu). Smaller numbers appeared at five other typical near coastal localities, whilst inland the most at Derwent Reservoir was seven on 1st.

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

None was reported this month.

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Most were noted at Druridge Pools with five on 10th and one to two on four other days. Three were at Bothal Pond on 12th, two on Blanchland Moor on 3rd, one at Hauxley NWT on 15th and one at Cresswell Pond on 22nd.

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

At Seaton Sluice Watch Tower 24 flew N and four S in 74 hours effort, described as below the July average. Two flew N at Tynemouth on each of 26th and 27th (DRW/IJ) and two were at St Mary's on 15th (SPP). Singles were off Whitley Bay on 14th and 25th, Newbiggin on 16th and 30th, Coquet Island on 21st, St Mary's on 27th and Hauxley on 29th.

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

At Seaton Sluice Watch Tower 14 flew N during 26th to 30th, including eight on 29th. The first of the month was one N at Tynemouth on 9th and other singles were off Tynemouth on 26th, St Mary's on 27th and Newbiggin on 28th. Another one at St Mary's on 29th chased two Manx Shearwaters (SPP).

Guillemot *Uria aalge*

At Seaton Sluice, 160 moved N in three hours on 15th (SSWT). A maximum monthly count of 200 came from Whitley Bay, Rockcliffe on 24th July (IJ) and elsewhere, counts of 40 and 20 came from Newton Point on 8th and 19th (TRD) with up to four in the Berwick area on various dates (MHu).

Razorbill *Alca torda*

The auk passage at Seaton Sluice on 15th included 25 N (SSWT).

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

A maximum movement of 81N and 50S in two hours was recorded at Seaton Sluice on 14th (SSWT) but records elsewhere were few comprising seven in Hartley Bay (SPP) and one or two at Berwick (Spittal Bay), Tynemouth and Whitley Bay.

Little Tern *Sternula albifrons*

Five flew N during a three-hour sea watch at Newbiggin on 28th (TF/JFa), the only other sightings being two at Cresswell Pond on 11th (ADMc) and singles at Low Newton and Seaton Sluice.

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

The first juveniles of the year were seen in a passage of 700S in two hours on 13th at Seaton Sluice where heavy movement also took place on several other days (SSWT). Juveniles were also present at Budle Point on 13th in a gathering of 160 (CGK/GPK) and a count of 140 came from Tynemouth on 24th, the maximum for the month (MK) with ca.100 throughout the month at Whitley Bay, Rockcliffe (IJ). The Berwick area held 20-74 at four sites from mid-month (MHu) and further south in the Blyth Estuary up to 25 were present with 14 at Newbiggin, Beacon Point (STH). Small gatherings of up to eight were noted at six other localities (JMA/TRD) and a blue colour ringed bird EAH at Newbiggin on 24th was marked as a juvenile at the Ythan Estuary, NE Scotland in August 2012 (STH).

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Noted in moderate numbers throughout the month at Seaton Sluice with daily maxima of 40-60 N and S (SSWT). Maximum concentrations of 75 were recorded at Beacon Point on 16th (STH), 53 at the Spanish Battery, Tynemouth on 25th (SPP) and 45 at Tynemouth on 26th (MK). Elsewhere, a monthly maximum of 16, including two chicks, were at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN), 15 at East Chevington 6th, 14 at Cresswell Pond and eight at Newbiggin (TRD). Up to eight were present at Arcot Pond from 2nd-25th with a single juvenile being the first recorded breeding there (DM/LJM/AJR/STH). Many reports came from another 12 localities of one to five including a report of nesting at Bothal Pond (TB/TRD/IFo/STH/IJ).

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*

A monthly total of five adults were noted moving N at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). At least 20 were recorded from a boat trip to Coquet Island on 21st (TF/JFa) and elsewhere one or two, including juveniles, were reported from Cresswell Pond, Hadston Carrs, Newbiggin, St Mary's Island and Tynemouth.

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

From 27th-29th, 346 moved N past Seaton Sluice but only small numbers were seen prior to this period (SSWT). Ten were seen at Low Newton on 19th (TRD), eight at North Shields on 30th (JMA) and five at Newbiggin, Beacon Point on 16th (STH) with one to three at Amble, Tynemouth and Whitley Bay.

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

At the Seaton Sluice watch point the largest numbers were seen during the first week with a maximum of 1160S in two hours on 2nd (SSWT) and 480 passed N at Berwick Pier on 29th (MHu). On 2nd, 750 were at Cullernose Point, some still at the nest sites with small young (JMA) and 106 juveniles were on the cliffs at Tynemouth on 22nd (SPP); around 100 were present all month at Whitley Bay, Rockcliffe (IJ) and further north counts of 52 and 46 came from the River Tweed Estuary and Berwick, Little Beach respectively (MHu).

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Gatherings of 200-250 were present at Berwick (Little Beach), Low Newton and the River Tweed Estuary (TD/MHu) with smaller flocks of 40-90 at Arcot Pond, Berwick (North Shore), Blanchland Moor, Druridge Bay and the River Tyne (Elswick Wharf to Business Park) (JMA/DM/TD/MHu). Up to 40 were reported from eight other localities.

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

Seven adults and two immatures passed N at Seaton Sluice from 27th-29th (SSWT). East Chevington North Pool was again the favoured locality with a maximum of 23 there on 11th (NFO *et al*) but thereafter the numbers declined rapidly with only one remaining on 22nd; these were mainly immatures but five adults were also present on 1st (TD). Seven immatures were at Cresswell Pond on 6th (TRD) with smaller numbers there on later dates and elsewhere, one or two were at Budle Bay, Low Newton, Newbiggin, St Mary's Island and Tynemouth.

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

The usual summer gathering at Newbiggin reached an impressive 56, including one juvenile, on 30th (STH) with lesser numbers there of 10-31 on many dates 1st-23rd (ADMc/STH *et al*); elsewhere, 21, mainly adults, were at Longhirst Flash on 23rd (ADMc) and on 16th, 19 adults and two immatures were on Cresswell Pond from where double-figure counts also came on a number of other dates (ASH *et al*). One to four were regularly seen at various sites around the Cresswell-Druridge Pools area and also at East Chevington, St Mary's Island, Seaton Sluice, Tynemouth and Whitley Bay.



A Mediterranean Gull at St. Mary's by Alan Jack

Common Gull *Larus canus*

A single record only of 12 at Berwick, Little Beach on 29th MHu).

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

Breeding records (LJM) were five nests holding eggs or young at Blyth, Wimbourne Quay on 12th and two broods at Blyth Riverside Industrial Estate on 16th. On the River Tyne (Elswick Wharf-Business Park), 32 were counted on 24th (DM) and Derwent Reservoir held a monthly maximum of 14 on 21st (IFo). Ten were in Exhibition Park (DM), six at Ottercops (JMA) with one to four at Berwick (North Shore), Leazes Park and the River Tweed Estuary.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

Breeding pairs in the Blyth area (LJM/STH) were at Riverside Industrial Park with 35 juveniles, Wimbourne Quay, 14 juveniles, North staithes, three broods, Bates staithes, one pair and South Harbour, three nests with four young. Gatherings of 382 were recorded in the River Tweed Estuary and 72 at Berwick, North Shore (MHu) with 30-150 at North Shields, the River Tyne (Elswick Wharf to Business Park), Spital Point (Newbiggin), Tynemouth boating lake and Whitley Bay (JMA/DM/IJ).

***Yellow-legged Gull** *Larus michahellis*

An adult at Derwent Reservoir, first seen on 21st, was present until 25th (IFo).



The returning
Caspian Gull
Amble Harbour
Jack Bucknall

***Caspian Gull** *Larus cachinnans*

The Polish ringed adult PKCS, first recorded last year, returned to Amble Harbour and was first seen on 26th (STH) staying there until at least the 31st (CGK/AC/IFO/TB).

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

A rare summer sighting was a 1st-summer bird on the Low Newton scrapes on 4th (GPK/JBu/MMcM *et al*).

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

Few records, comprising only around six at Whitley Bay throughout the month (IJ), with WeBS counts of four and five from Berwick, North Shore and the River Tweed Estuary (MHu)

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Eight were at Backworth on 19th (CGK), five at Williamston (Slaggyford) on 18th (AJH), four at West Hartford on 5th (LJM) with one to three in an Old Hartley garden and at Berwick, Ellington, Swallow Pond and Tynemouth on four dates.



Two resident doves. Above a Stock Dove in a Tynemouth garden by Colin Bradshaw and below a Collared Dove also in a garden, nearby in Whitley Bay by Jack Bucknall

**Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto*

On 25th three were at Beaconhill (Cramlington) and two at Dinnington (PCF).

Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*

One was found east of Whalton on 9th (ADMc).

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

All reports of singles with a juvenile at St Mary's for four days from 24th (ASJ, AC et al), The Whiggs (Great Whittington) on 6th (ALT), an adult at Whittle Dene on 11th (ASJ) and at East Chevington on 22nd (STH/IFo).

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Two pairs fed young within ½ mile of each other at Spindlestone (CGK/GPK/DMi) with singles at Holywell Dene on 2nd (RJP), Cresswell Pond on 3rd (TB), over the A1 near Morpeth on 7th (NFO), at Burnside (Amble) on 14th (JMA) and St Mary's on 30th & 31st (JBu/AC). A bird killed hitting a power line post at Holy Island had been ringed in 2012 at a mainland site 25 miles away (IK).

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

A family party of four were on territory at Backworth all month (CGK) and a pair on territory at Waren Mill Caravan Park (near Bamburgh) (GPK/DMi) with singles at Great Whittington on 13th & 15th (ALT/EC) and at Derwent Reservoir on 18th & 19th (IFo).

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

A vocal group were at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 25th (TD) and a male called at 22.00 hrs. at East Chevington on 10th (STH/IFo).

Long-eared Owl *Aiso otus*

One was at St Mary's Island on 31st (AC).

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

A surprise for the observer at Swallow Pond with one on 22nd (TRD) and one was hunting at St Mary's from 25th until month end (AC/ASJ).

Swift *Apus apus*

Large gatherings of 800+ feeding over fields at Old Hartley on 14th (ASJ/SPP), 400 at Ellington on 2nd (TB), 100+ at Holywell on 22nd, 70 at Whitley Bay on 28th (ASJ) and 60+ at Arcot Pond on 22nd (LJM). 97 were noted moving north at Seaton Sluice on 2nd (SSWT) with 27 south at Longhirst GC on 27th (TD) and 20 west at Brinkburn Priory on 29th (SW). Two-46 were at nine further locations with nests noted inland at Lynnsfield and Kielder Castle.

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

More than two were at Gosforth Park NR and adjacent pool during the month (NHSN) with singles at Ladyburn Lake (Druridge Bay CP) on 7th, Holywell Dene regularly from 14th, Warden on 19th, Budle Bay on 20th, Low Angerton on 25th, Chollerford & Redesmouth on 26th and on point near Seaton Sluice Watch Tower on 30th.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

During the month two were at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN) and a single at Kielder Castle on 31st (SW).

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Family groups of two adults with three juveniles in a Tynemouth garden on 4th (CB) with one to three adults and juveniles in an Old Hartley garden and in nearby Holywell Dene regularly (RJP). Singles were at eight widespread localities.

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Seven birds of family parties of three and four were in the Breamish Valley on 10th (TD), six were seen along the S Tyne between Eals and Kirkhaugh on 18th (AJH). Five birds including three juveniles were at St May's on 16th (ASJ) and two were seen along Holywell Dene on 20th & 22nd (RJP). Singles were seen at Ellington throughout the month and at Bothal Pond, Hebron, Hexham, Langley, Linton and Widdrington Station.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

A juvenile was seen at Cresswell Pond on 26th, 28th and 30th (ADMc)

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

On 12th a bird flew N at Cresswell Pond (ADMc/RD) and on 27th a bird was seen near Humshaugh (MR).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Two birds were at an inland site on 10th (TD). A single bird was seen in Budle Bay throughout the month (CGK/GPK) and other birds were at Holywell Dene on 1st (RJP), Addycombe (Rothbury) on 10th (TRD), Howdon and Widdrington Moor Lake on 19th (JL/DRW), Maidens Hall Lake on 21st (JSB/EC), Tynemouth on 26th (MK/DRW) and at Howdon on 31st (CB).

Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus*

A male was again recorded singing at Gosforth Park NR on 16th likely the same bird that was recorded in June meaning it had been holding territory for six weeks without being seen despite being searched for (NHSN).

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Six the peak at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN), more than five seen regularly at Scotland Gate (SLB/MSK) with two at Wallington on 1st (JD) and Valley Park (Cramlington) on 25th & 31st (DM). Singles were at Damdykes (Cramlington) and Dinnington.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

A large count of 188 at Howdon on 5th (CB) and two at Sandy Bay on 8th (JMA).

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

A field of recently cut grass for silage attracted 78 at Derwent Reservoir on 5th (IFo) with 75 at Howick Scar on 2nd (JMA).

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

Just one count of 20 at North Shields on 30th (JMA).

Raven *Corvus corax*

Two at Breamish Valley on 10th (TD) and Kyoie Hills on 18th (GPK).

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

A post breeding flock at Waren Mill Caravan Park (near Bamburgh) numbered five or more on 12th (CGK/GPK) and one was at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 25th (DM).

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Waren Mill Caravan Park (near Bamburgh) hosted part of a post breeding flock of 40 on 12th (CGK/GPK).

At Low Carrith nest boxes ten pairs laid 55 eggs, 26 young hatched and 18 young fledged. and at Tarsset one pair laid 11 eggs, 6 young hatched and 6 young fledged (both JR).

Great Tit *Parus major*

Ten were at Prestwick Carr on 18th (PCF).

At Low Carrith nest boxes two pairs laid 15 eggs, 13 young hatched and 4 young fledged and at Tarsset Nest boxes 18 pairs laid 104 eggs, 85 young hatched and 63 young fledged (both JR).

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

One to two visited an Old Hartley garden during the month (RJP).

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

On 10th two were at Ladyburn Lake (Druridge Bay CP), singles at Airy Holm Reservoir (near Shotleyfield) on 1st & 3rd (IFo), on four dates in an Old Hartley garden, at Hagg Bank (Wylam) on 8th and Prestwick Carr on 11th.

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

Three were at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 29th (NFO), two at Wallington hide on 3rd (JMA) with singles on a further three dates at Linden Hall and 4th & 7th at Thrum Mill (Rothbury). Recovery from the recent cold winters saw the first for around four years at Chollerford on 26th (SW).

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

On 2nd single singing birds were found at Cresswell, Howick and Newton Links (JMA).

hirundine sp.

Towards the end of the month the roost in reeds at Gosforth Park NR and adjacent pool rose to 300+ (NHSN).

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

More than 50 pairs occupied nests at Sandy Bay (Newbiggin) on 7th (AJR), 60 roosted at Cresswell Pond on 19th (IRD), 50 were at Long Nanny on 2nd (JMA), 40+ at Arcot Pond on 22nd (LJM) and Chollerford on 26th where there were 15 nests from which a bird with a Spanish ring was caught (SW). At St Mary's on 2nd 12 young were observed in four to five nests with seven pairs fledging 18 young there (SPP/ASJ). A brood of four was ready to fledge from a bank side at Church Point (Newbiggin) on 30th (IK) and one to 22 were at Breamish Valley, Cullernose Point and Howdon.

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

More than 150 fed over fields at St Mary's on 24th (ASJ), 37 at Lynnshield on 29th (SW) and eight at Arcot Pond on 25th (DM). The public hide at Holywell Pond had a nest containing two chicks on 29th (SPP).

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

At Sandy Bay (Newbiggin) at least 25 occupied nest were found on 7th, 50 fed over fields at St Mary's on 24th (ASJ), 10-30 at Holywell Dene during the month (RJP), 20 at Arcot Pond on 25th (DM) with eight to ten at Beaconhill (Cramlington), Town Moor (Newcastle) and Spital Point.



A Swallow collects nesting material
Blanchland
Alan Jack

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

Some sizeable post breeding gatherings were reported, the most notable of which was at least 32 at Waren Mill on 12th (CGK/GPK), this only part of a larger feeding flock. Elsewhere, 21 were foraging at Derwent Reservoir on 9th (IFo), 16 were at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 2nd and 12 at Scotch Gill Woods (also Morpeth) on 5th. In addition six to seven were noted at Cramlington (Beacon Lane) and Holywell Dene.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Nine singing birds were heard from Humford Mill-Humford Bridge (River Blyth) on 5th and three males were still singing strongly at Big Waters on 7th. One to two were reported from a further 17 localities.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Remaining relatively scarce this year with reports of three at Howden and two at Chollerford the only records received.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Four at Gosforth Park NR included a juvenile. Three were at Warden on 19th and the species was regular at Scotland Gate throughout the month. Two were singing at Derwent Reservoir on 1st and at Leazes Park on 20th and twos were also noted at Prestwick Carr and Wylam. Singles were reported from a further seven localities.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

Singles, mainly in song were reported from Airy Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield) on 1st, Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) and Low Newton on 2nd, Derwent Reservoir on 5th and Linton on 10th.

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

Singles were reported from Beacon Hill (Longhorsley), Dinnington (adjacent Banks Pond), East Chevington and Gainslaw.

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

Six juveniles from two broods were noted at Arcot Pond on 14th (LJM), when three were also at Holywell Dene. A pair were feeding young at Howden by 19th and singles were at Dunstan, Howick Scar and North Seaton. On Holy Island a male was singing and flight displaying on 12th, but was apparently without a mate.

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

Twos were heard 'reeling' at Budle Bay, Druridge Pools and Gosforth Park NR during the month, with singles also noted at Arcot Pond, Dinnington, Prestwick Carr and St Mary's Wetland.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Eight at St Mary's Island on 22nd comprised four singing and an adult with three fledged young (ASJ). Six were at Prestwick Carr on 26th, while at Arcot Pond four were singing on 25th and a pair were feeding young in the nest on 27th. Singles were reported from Cramlington (Valley Park) and Swallow Pond.



A Sedge Warbler (eyeing a couple of snacks) at Druridge Pools
Tim Dene on 6th July

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Breeding was confirmed at Gosforth Park where at least three adults and two juveniles were seen, at St Mary's Wetland where there was an adult with two fledged young and at Cresswell Pond where a pair were carrying food. Elsewhere, three were singing at Ladyburn Lake on 7th, and two at Woodhorn Flashes on 2nd; two were also at QEII CP on 15th and a single at Newton Pool.

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Juveniles were noted at Arcot Pond, Fulbeck (Morpeth) and Jesmond Dene. Single birds were also reported from Derwent Reservoir, Holywell Dene and Wallington Hall.

At Tarsset a pair laid six eggs, six young hatched and six young fledged (JR).

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

One at Derwent Reservoir was the only report.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

A 4km walk from Humford Mill-Humford Bridge (River Blyth) produced a total of 24 singing males (LJM). Two were at Killingworth Village and singles at High Pit and in an Old Hartley garden.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

A flock of 600+ had gathered at St Mary's Island by 24th (ASJ) and at the other end of the county 360 were reported from Berwick (Little Beach) on 29th. Elsewhere flocks of 50-100 were noted at Cullernose Point, Low Newton flash, Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) and Sandy Bay Caravan Park.

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

Adults and young were noted in Jesmond Dene. Two were at Warden and singles at Chollerford and Holywell Dene.

Dipper breeding data was as follows (JR);

12 nests were monitored in upper Coquetdale. 12 pairs laid 89 eggs, 54 young hatched and 44 young fledged. This includes 8 pair with second clutches.

Three boxes on the North Tyne and two boxes on the Rede. Five pairs laid 33 eggs, 24 young hatched and 24 young fledged.



A Blackbird in a Rothbury garden
2nd July by Janet Dean.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

One to three were reported from Clousden Hill (Forest Hall), an Old Hartley garden and Hagg Bank (Wylam).

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

A party of 11 was at Derwent Reservoir on 5th (IFo) and on nearby Blanchland Moor ten on 3rd comprised two family parties with three immatures each. Groups of five were at Slaggyford on 18th and Swallowship Wood (Hexham) on 13th, two juveniles were at Gosforth Park NR and two were also at Cambois.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

Successful breeding was noted with three pairs feeding young at Blanchland on 11th (ASJ), two family parties of four and five were at Bamburgh, three including two juveniles were at Bakethin Reservoir on 12th and a pair with one or more recently fledged young was in the Breamish Valley on 10th. Two to three pairs were noted at Linden Hall, three birds were at Falstone on 3rd, two at Acomb on 18th and singles at Berwick, Derwent Reservoir, Humshaugh and Rothbury.

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

AT Low Carritheth nest boxes seven pairs laid 39 eggs, 36 young hatched and 15 young fledged, mainly due to predation (JR).

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Six were at Slaggyford on 18th (AJH) and up to three at Derwent Reservoir during the month included a male entering a nest hole on 3rd (JSB/IFo).

At Tarsset nest boxes two pairs laid 11 eggs, 11 young hatched and 11 young fledged. (JR).

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

Two adults were feeding three recently fledged young at the Wanneys on 19th (IK) and five were in the Breamish Valley on 10th (TD). A female was found at East Chevington on 5th.

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

Successful breeding was noted with three fledged broods between Druridge Pools-Chevington on 22nd (STH/IFo), five including two juveniles at Cocklawburn on 2nd, a family party of five at Budle Bay on 13th, a pair with two juveniles at Berwick (Little Beach) on 17th and a male and juvenile at Gloucester Lodge Farm (Blyth) on 6th. Elsewhere, five were noted at Boulmer on 25th, two were well inland at Blanchland Moor on 3rd and a single was at Low Newton on 8th.

Wheatear *Oenanthe Oenanthe*

Single juveniles were noted at Blanchland Moor on 3rd, Cocklawburn Dunes on 23rd and at Mootlaw Quarry (Ryal) on 15th. Another single was at Hemscott Hill on 3rd.

Duncock *Prunella modularis*

A group of six seen at Northburn, Cramlington on 30th included two young birds(LJM). Fledged young were also seen in a Marden Estate garden during the month and a pair noted in an Old Hartley garden.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Garden feeders at Tynemouth, Kenton and Marden and attracted groups of ten to 30 during the month(CB/MRS/ASJ). 25 noted at Cullercoats on 30th (JMA). Six were at Arcot Grange, Cramlington(DM).

Tree Sparrow *Passer Montanus*

Three to five were at Cresswell on three dates (TRD). Four attended feeders at an Old Hartley garden during the month and one to two at three further sites.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

Cresswell Pond held birds on several dates with a maximum of ten noted on 22nd, including several juveniles(NFO). The species was also observed on many dates during the month at St. Mary's, with five juveniles noted the maximum on 28th(ASJ). One to three were at 13 further sites throughout the month.



A young Yellow Wagtail at Druridge Pools on 9th July by Peter Tapsell

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Three were at Seaton Sluice estuary on 8th(RJP). Two pairs were in Jesmond Dene during July and two seen at Derwent Reservoir on 9th. Singles noted at Warden, Castle Island, Morpeth and Wallington.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

A large count of 26 was made at Prestwick Carr on 31st(PCF). A roost of 13 were at Gosforth Park during the month. Four were at Ladyburn Lake on 7th.

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

Only two sightings this month with five birds at Rayburn Lake on 20th, a probable family party and a single at Beacon Hill on 7th(AJR/TD).

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Eight nesting pairs were feeding young at Gloucester Lodge, Blyth on 06th(LJM). One to two at four further sites.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Two active nests again observed at Rockcliffe, Whitley Bay with eight birds noted in the month. The only other report was of one at Newton Point on 7th.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

The sole record this month was of one to four at garden feeders at Old Hartley(RJP).

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

A maximum of six at an Old Hartley garden in July, with six also at a Fulbeck, Morpeth garden on 1st, including two juveniles and West Ord, Berwick during the month and four were at Prestwick Carr, Howden and Berwick. One to four were at at two further sites. Three were at an Old Hartley garden and two at High Pit, Cramlington



A Bullfinch at Howdon wetland by Colin Bradshaw

Linnet *Carduelis canabina*

Some large gatherings noted towards the month's end with 180-220 at Cresswell Pond(STH/IFO/AJR). On 30th around 150 observed at Greenhaugh (AJH). 120 were at St Mary's, 65 were at Backworth, 30 at Corbridge and three to 26 at five further sites.



A Greenfinch at Howdon Wetland by Colin Bradshaw

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis caberet*

A post breeding flock seen at the Wanneys on 19th of 30 birds and 20 at Derwent Reservoir on 14th (IK/IFO). Elsewhere, three were at Rothbury on 4th.

June bulletin - The Mealy Redpolls reported in June at Alwinton were Lesser Redpolls.

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

Ten were at Thrunton Woods on 12th, with eight seen at Derwent Reservoir on 24th. Five were noted at Rothbury and three at Linden Hall in the month.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

At St. Mary's, around 100, including many juveniles present throughout July (ASJ). Two to 20 were at four further sites.

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

One to three birds seen at five widespread sites.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citronella*

A 25 km cycle ride in the Matten/Blackheddon area revealed 16 singing males on 30th and eight were also singing at Holywell on 22nd (ASJ).

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Two pairs feeding young at Howden on 13th and 3 in an Old Hartley garden up to mid-month (CB/RJP).

ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN

Escapes

Bar-headed Goose *Anser indicus*

The seven birds found at Derwent Reservoir in June were found again on 11th and four were also seen on 4th there and at Airy Holm Reservoir nearby on 30th (IFo).

Muscovy Duck *Cairina moschata*

Five were present at Bothal Pond on 24th and 25th (TD / TF/JFa) presumably birds from local farm.

Hybrids

Carriion Crow x Hooded Crow *Corvus Corone x Corvus cornix*

Possible hybrid showing black flecking at Tynemouth on 13th (KWY).

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

J.M.Almond, S.L.Barratt, S.R.Barrett, D.H.W.Blair, T.Blake, J.S.Booth, C.Bradshaw, J.Bucknall (JBu), E.Crabtree, A.Curry, T.Daley, K.Dawson, T.R.& J.Dean, I.R.Douglas, R.Dunn, J.Farooqi (JFa), M. Eccles, T.Farooqi, P.C.Fletcher, I.Forsyth (IFo), A.S.Hart, M.Hepple (Mhp), A.J.Hewitt, S.T.Holliday, M.Hutcheson (MHu), A.S.Jack, I.J.Johnson, M.Kerby, I.Kerr, C.G.Knox, G.P.Knox, J.Littlewood, L.J.Mcdougall, D.McKeown, A.D.McLevy, N.F.Osborne, R.J.Pannell, S.P.Parnaby, M.Potts,

J.W.Proudlock, A.J.Richards, M.Richardson, G. Sample, S.Rippon, M.R.Smith, A.L.Todd, D.R.Watson, S.Westerberg, T.Wiffen, (TWi), K.W.York.

Berwick Wildlife Group, Natural History Society of Northumbria, Northern Experience Wildlife Tours, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

Apologies for any accidental omissions

BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION

This bulletin was compiled by Graeme Bowman (Mute Swan to Ruddy Duck), Steve Laing (Red Grouse to Black-necked Grebe), Trevor Blake (Honey-buzzard to Crane), Steve Holliday (Avocet to Godwit) Ian Forsyth (Turnstone to Skua), Eddie Crabtree (Puffin to Great Black-backed Gull), Tim Dean (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), Alan Jack (Dunnock to Corn Bunting), Kathy Evans (WeBS Coastal Counts) and Steve Holliday (WeBS Inland Counts).

Bamburgh Ringing Station, Berwick Wildlife Group, Hauxley Ringing Station, Natural History Society of Northumbria, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

Apologies for any accidental omissions

Thanks to David Sanders of NNBC for providing data.

Proof reading was by Mike Smith.

Edited by Steve Barrett NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com

Mail distribution by Paul Stewart.

RECORD SUBMISSION

Please email ntbcorg@gmail.com for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and grid references: The use of standard location names and the include grid references as this 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.

Could club members ensure they to submit records direct to NTBC rather than just Birdtrack. There may be an assumption by some members this happens automatically. We do not want to miss records.

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

It is preferable if you re-size your photos before sending and a suggested size is 640 x 480 pixels. Please ensure you include the following information with your submissions: name, species, date taken, locality.

Photographs will not be used elsewhere without the photographer's permission.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual membership costs £10 for a junior, £30 for an individual, and £32 for a family. For membership enquiries please contact ntbc@jobentley.plus.com

Subscriptions are due from 1st October. Members are asked to check that standing orders have been paid.

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. Please submit any new content for the website to the main club email address.

NTBC SIGHTINGS PAGE

The Sightings Page contains current reports by members. Access is from the NTBC website and an email notification is available for new postings.

Members need to submit a request to be added to the website, specifying the email address they wish to post from before they can submit sightings to ntbcorg@gmail.com

SEATON SLUICE WATCH TOWER

Repairs have recently been made to the SSWT and a new lock has been fitted. This means that new keys are required for access. Keys can be collected at indoor meetings or email ntbcorg@gmail.com

Keys are available for £5 for new holders and existing key-holders can exchange keys for £4.

COASTAL WeBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND

June 2015		JAR MHu	J.Roper M. Hutcheson	AC KAE	A. Craggs K. A. Evans	LJM TM	L. J. McDougall T. Brewis	DMT PF	D.M.Turner P. Fletcher	TAC MLC	T. A. Cadwallender M. L. Cadwallender					
Site	TOTAL	Berwick North Shore (including Little Beach)	Tweed Estuary	Tweed: A1 By-Pass to Horncliffe	Spital - Cocklawburn	Lindisfarne NNR (including Buddle Bay)	(Buddle Bay)	Buddle Pt - Seahouses	Seahouses - Beadhell	Howick - Boulmer	Aln Estuary	Blyth Estuary	Tyne North Pier - Fish Quay	East Howdon, (north bank only)	Redheugh - Scotswood Bridge, (north bank)	Scotswood - Newburn Bridge, (north bank)
Counter		MHu	MHu	TB	MHu	AC	AC	KAE	MLC	JAR	TAC	LJM	DMT	DMT	PF	PF
Date		11	15	10	12	14	14	14	13	15	17	16	23	29	21	21
Cormorant	110	11	8	2		18		2	21	2	6	8	18	13	1	
Shag	8	6						2								
Grey Heron	34	3	7	1		5		2		2	8	1		4		1
Mute Swan	289		268	10		4	4				4	3				
Whooper Swan	1					1										
Canada Goose	24		7			2	2				15					
Shelduck	261		1	2		166	75		1	34	36	13			4	4
Wigeon	2										2					
Teal	8					8										
Mallard	145		49	44	1	4		1		5	24	7			4	6
Shoveler	4					4										
Tufted Duck	4				1	3										
Eider	580	12	12		32	146	14	208	119	43	8					
Common Scoter	34				34											
Red-breasted Merganser	63					62	1	1								
Goosander	57	26	4	12	8					3	1		3			
Moorhen	9					3					6					
Coot	5					3					2					
Oystercatcher	427	42	11	1	39	86		26	65	61	73	12	11			
Ringed Plover	44	2			2	36			4							
Lapwing	81		6			6					63					6
Sanderling	17								17							
Dunlin	29					29										
Snipe	3										3					
Bar-tailed Godwit	2									1	1					
Whimbrel	7	3				4										
Curlew	235	8	8		5	158			1	28	18	8	1			
Redshank	12					5			1		6					
Turnstone	14					7			6	1						
Little Gull	0															
Black-headed Gull	843		52	15	10	193			25	35	69	295		127	13	9
Common Gull	19		1		1	14				1			1	1		
Lesser Black-backed Gull	116		2	3		19			5			21			63	3
Herring Gull	1,268	33	290	57	92	270			73	82	8	108	164	5	75	11
Great Black-backed Gull	71	2	6	1	1	2			27	11			18			3
Kittiwake	183		12						163				7	1		
Sandwich Tern	159	6	6	12		34	3			28	66	2	5			
Common Tern	17										3	11		3		
Arctic Tern	14					10			4							
Little Tern	4					2			1	1						
ADDITIONAL SPECIES																
Little Egret	5					2					3					
Gannet	51							45	2		4					
	0															
TOTALS - WILDFOWL	1,638	58	356	71	76	429	96	216	141	89	112	32	21	17	9	11
- WADERS	871	55	25	1	46	331	0	26	94	91	164	20	12	0	0	6
- GULLS & TERNS	2,694	41	369	88	104	544	3	0	298	158	146	437	195	137	151	26

COASTAL WeBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND

JULY		2015				T. Brewis		MLC		M. L. Cadwallender/W. Dickson		LJM		L. J. McDougall		PF		P. F. Fletcher	
						AC		TAC		T. A. Cadwallender		SP		S. Parnaby					
						MHu		MGA		M. G. Anderson		DMT		D. M. Turner					
Site	TOTAL	Berwick North Shore (including Little Beach)	Tweed Estuary	Tweed: A1 By Pass to Horncliffe	Spittal - Cocklawburn	Lindisfarne NNR (including Budle Bay)	(Budle Bay)	Seahouses - Beadnell	Aln Estuary	Cresswell - Newbiggin	Blyth Estuary	St Mary's Island	Tyne North Pier - Fish Quay	Redheugh - Scotswood Bridge (north bank)	Scotswood - Newburn Bridge (north bank)				
Counter		MHu	MHu	TB	MHu	AC	AC	MLC	TAC	MGA	LJM	SP	DMT	PF	PF				
Date		17	16	17	21	19	19	29	22	25	21	18	31	19	19				
Little Grebe	2					2													
Great Crested Grebe	2					2													
Cormorant	157	22	10	1	25	15	1	22	4		18	22	16	1	1				
Shag	17	10			4	2		1											
Grey Heron	34	1	7	2	2	12	4		5		2	3							
Mute Swan	320		314			2			2		2								
Whooper Swan	1		1																
Greylag Goose	1								1										
Canada Goose	48		22						26										
Light-bellied Brent Goose	3					3													
Shelduck	188					158	110		16					14					
Teal	19	8				11													
Mallard	47		6	10		9			12			2		3	5				
Showeler	4					4													
Tufted Duck	4					4													
Eider	455		1		53	186	40	133	17	27	3	35							
Common Scoter	86				46							40							
Red-breasted Merganser	86					83	2	3											
Goosander	358	246	27	60	1	2					22								
Moorhen	13			1		3			5			4							
Coot	6					4						2							
Oystercatcher	479	74	16		12	125	45	131	22	49	11	25	14						
Ringed Plover	49				7	21		9		1		10	1						
Golden Plover	413					5				42		366							
Grey Plover	4					4													
Lapwing	638			62	82	40			145			215		66	28				
Knot	153					142				5		6							
Sanderling	142					12				55		75							
Dunlin	359					321	6	5		20	8	5							
Ruff	1		1																
Black-tailed Godwit	5					4					1								
Bar-tailed Godwit	11					9		1				1							
Whimbrel	31					6		1	6			18							
Curlew	811		130		6	505	4		54	31	45	32	1	7					
Redshank	731	17	18			435	70	42	86	27	83	12	9	2					
Greenshank	3								3										
Green Sandpiper	1								1										
Common Sandpiper	14		2						12										
Turnstone	105					5		54		32		10	4						
Little Gull	1												1						
Black-headed Gull	1,544	76	224	18	24	221		116	53		343		210	177	82				
Common Gull	72					64			8										
Lesser Black-backed Gull	74	2	4					3			33		1	29	2				
Herring Gull	1,334	72	382	2	46	17		44	14		260		426	64	7				
Great Black-backed Gull	234	4	5		1	193		7					18	5	1				
Kittiwake	329	6	18					298	1				6						
Mediterranean Gull	2											1	1						
Sandwich Tern	278	7	74		44	88		6	26		22		11						
Common Tern	84								18		3		63						
Arctic Tern	3							3											
Little Tern	3					1		2											
ADDITIONAL SPECIES																			
Little Egret	13		1			6	1		6										
TOTALS - WILDFOWL	1,851	287	388	74	131	502	157	159	88	27	47	108	16	18	6				
- WADERS	3,950	91	167	62	107	1,634	125	243	329	262	148	775	29	75	28				
- GULLS & TERNS	3,958	167	707	20	115	584	0	479	120	0	661	1	737	275	92				

INLAND WeBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND

Year: 2015
Month: July

Version: Interim

LJM Lindsay McDougall
JGS Jimmy Steele
TRD Tim Dean
GB Graeme Bowman

MRS Mike Smith
SPP Simon Parnaby
IF Ian Fisher
DM Dee McKeown

JL James Littlewood
IDR Iain Robson
KD Keith Davison
STH Steve Holliday

KE Kathy Evans
IFO Ian Forsyth
CH Clive Hampton
TD Tim Daley

Site	TOTAL	Airy Holm Reservoir	Arctot Pond	Big Waters	Bothal Pond	Branton GP	Broomlee Lough	Causton	Castle Island	Druidge Pools	East Chevington	Greenlee Lough	Grindon Lough	Hauley NR	Hedgeley GP	Killingworth Lake	Leazes Park	Linton Pond	Longhirst Flash	Monks' House Pool	Shield on the Wall	Swallow Pond	West Stobwood	Widdington Moor	Woodhorn Flashes	
Counter		IFO	LJM	GB	TD	KD	MRS	TRD	STH	IDR	JL	MRS	MRS	IF	KD	LJM	DM	CH	TD	KE	MRS	SPP	JL	JL	JGS	
Date		19	19	19	12	16	20	19	19		19	20	20	29	16	16	20	NC	NC	20	18	19	19			
Ice Cover (%)																										
Little Grebe	41			5	4	5		5	2					8	6					2	4					
Great Crested Grebe	17	1		2	2	2					7												3			
Cormorant	40								17		22			1												
Grey Heron	35		1	1	1	1		5	12		4			5									5			
Little Egret	6								5		1															
Mute Swan	167		1	2	2	11	2	28	48		2	7		1	5	45					3	2	8			
Greylag Goose	296	22			19	106		68			1		7	6	46	4					9		8			
Canada Goose	484			10	1	55		96			5	11	20	14	39	94	52				47	1	39			
Shelduck	16		11			2			2					1												
Wigeon	8												8													
Gadwall	37		6	8	1				3		1			6								12				
Teal	14												10	2							2					
Mallard	581	9	10	115	6	70	2	74	22		34	25	15	33	30	58	26				52					
Shoveler	5				3																2					
Pochard	9			2	4																3					
Tufted Duck	280	10		1	19	47	1	23	69		23	2		11	12	23	21			1	10	2	5			
Water Rail	2			1																	1					
Moorhen	64	1	10	4	5	9		5	5					8	1	2	6				8					
Coot	255			17	79	21					9			1		48	9				50		21			
Oystercatcher	178		2		2	19		80	1				2	57	12								3			
Avocet	2								2																	
Little Ringed Plover	2				2																					
Lapwing	978	3	12		44	218			25		70		130	183	246						40		7			
Ruff	2													2												
Dunlin	1													1												
Snipe	3				3																					
Bar-tailed Godwit	1													1												
Black-tailed Godwit	4								4																	
Curlew	189			52				1	1					91									44			
Greenshank	2								1					1												
Redshank	18							1	2					15												
Common Sandpiper	10		2			2		1	2					3												
Turnstone	4													4												
Black-headed Gull	386		11	17	7	4			80		15	2		16		78	26				120		10			
Little Gull	1										1															
Common Gull	3			1		1					1															
Lesser Black-backed Gull	24			1	1				2		2		2			5	1				10					
Herring Gull	134			2							18					16	5				71		22			
Great Black-backed Gull	10										9			1												
Sandwich Tern	6										5			1												
Common Tern	60		2	7	2						7			36		2	2				2					
Arctic Tern	21													21												
Kingfisher	0																									
ADDITIONAL SPECIES																										
Domestic Duck	1															1										
TOTAL - WILDFOWL	2,357	43	39	168	146	329	5	304	185	0	109	45	60	97	139	274	114	0	0	0	3	203	5	89	0	
TOTAL - WADERS	1,394	3	16	52	51	239	0	83	38	0	70	0	132	358	258	0	0	0	0	0	0	40	0	54	0	
TOTAL - GULLS & TERNS	645	0	13	28	10	5	0	0	82	0	58	2	2	75	0	101	34	0	0	0	0	203	0	32	0	

NOTE - no counts possible at Longhirst Flash from July 2015 onwards due to the site being drained and re-landscaped

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2014			
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT	2014	2013	2012
INCOME			
Members subscriptions (232)	6,567.00	7,481.00	5,515.00
Includes 5 Honorary & 9 Life members			
Birds in Northumbria - current year	684.55	592.42	1,656.20
Birds in Northumbria - other years			120.55
Other (atlas)	6.00	65.00	677.88
Birds of Holy Island			
Refund of Income tax (Gift Aid)	1,355.72	1,542.25	1,190.11
Bank Interest (Northern Rock)			
Field trips			
Atlas fund raising	14,950.00	490.00	460.00
Data	1,060.00		
Net Transfer from Development Fund Account	1,320.00		
Misc	25.00	60.00	
	25,968.27	10,230.67	9,619.74
EXPENDITURE			
Opening stock for sale	2,779.80	2,422.80	3,375.50
Birds in Northumbria - current year	7,129.23	5,280.30	4,290.36
Less Closing Stock	- 3,378.60	- 2,779.80	- 2,422.80
Total Cost of Sales	6,530.43	4,923.30	5,243.06
Membership	89.80	570.00	29.93
Indoor meetings	1,015.87	729.40	943.77
Monthly Bulletins	1,555.24	1,116.95	1,720.58
Birds in Northumbria 2009 (postage)	140.00		193.37
Birds of Holy Island			
Officers expenditure	518.82	29.27	280.29
Field trips			
Record cards/storage	576.00	908.00	387.43
Insurance	113.00	113.00	110.00

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2014			
SSWT Rent and Rates	29.98	145.75	28.21
Website and IT	-	195.77	62.88
Miscellaneous	-	60.00	423.98
Atlas fundraising	-	504.20	9.98
Grant	1,692.34	350.00	135.00
Atlas Sponsor	700.00		
	12,961.48	9,645.64	9,568.48
Surplus / deficit for year	13,006.79	585.03	51.26
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30 JUNE 2014			
ACCUMULATED FUND			
Balance as at 30 June 2014	4,862.44	4,277.41	4,226.15
Surplus/ (Deficit) from I & E Account	13,006.79	585.03	51.26
	17,869.23	4,862.44	4,277.41
Represented by Assets:			
Stock	3,378.60	2,779.80	2422.8
Debtors	1,355.72	1,542.25	
Prepayments			
Lloyds TSB Treasurers Account	19,665.31	5,957.39	6614.61
Northern Rock		-	
Cash in Hand		-	
Total	24,399.63	10,279.44	9,037.41
Less Liabilities			
Accruals		-	
Creditors	6,530.40	5,417.00	4760.00
Total	6,530.40	5,417.00	4760.00
	17,869.23	4,862.44	4,277.41
Note 1: Stock valued at lesser of cost or net realisable value			

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2014			
NORTHUMBERLAND AND TYNESIDE BIRD CLUB			
DEVELOPMENT FUND ACCOUNTS			
FOR YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2014			
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT	2014	2013	2012
INCOME			
Sales - Winter Atlas	-	0	0
Sales - Other	-		
Atlas Data		3420	1140
Donations (balance from 50th)			
Bank Interest	533.90	98.41	20.96
Fund raising New Atlas	290.20	1498	643.97
	824.10	5016.41	1804.93
LESS EXPENDITURE			
Winter Atlas postage	-		
Grants		429.99	
Atlas	-		
Fund raising New Atlas		823.8	
Net Transfer to Ordinary Account	1,320.00		
	1,320.00	1253.79	0
Surplus (Deficit) for Year	- 495.90	3762.62	1804.93
Balance sheet as at 30th June 2013			
Accumulated fund			
Balance as at 30 June 2014	25,662.45	21899.83	20094.9
Surplus/deficit from I & E account	- 495.90	3762.62	1804.93
	25,166.55	25662.45	21899.83
Represented by:			

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2014			
ASSETS			
Cash - Santander/Virgin	25,166.55	25662.45	21899.83
Debtor	-	0	
Cash/Cheque in Hand	-	0	
	25,166.55	25662.45	21900

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 J.L. Corlley

Date 27.04.2015

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2015 No 8

MONTHLY SUMMARY – AUGUST 2015

10th October 2015



CONTENTS

WeBS inland
WeBS coastal
CRC Vacancy
NHSN meetings

CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Garganey
Scaup
Long-tailed Duck
Quail
Sooty Shearwater
Little Egret
Bittern
Spoonbill
Honey-buzzard
Curlew Sandpiper
Temminck's Stint
Purple Sandpiper
Pectoral Sandpiper
Common Sandpiper
Caspian Gull
Wryneck
Hobby
Red-backed Shrike
Greenish Warbler
Barred Warbler
Icterine Warbler

Only one noted - at Hauxley.
Singles at Budle Bay and East Chevington.
The summering drake remained at Derwent reservoir all month.
One calling at New Haggerston on 2nd.
Only one noted at Seaton Sluice on 23rd.
A further increase with 13 at Wansbeck estuary and nine at Beal Point.
One still at Gosforth Park but only until mid month
Two at Cresswell Pond on 5th. One was ringed of Dutch origin.
One flew N over R Wansbeck in Ashington on 25th.
One or two only at Budle Bay and Hauxley.
Three at Monk's House Pool from 24th.
Singles at Cocklawburn and Newbiggin from 6th.
Singles at Bothal Pond and Holywell Pond.
Unusual high count of 28 together at Hauxley on 24th. Notable passage.
The polish ringed bird remained at Amble Harbour until at least 16th.
Marked influx from 20th - 24th.
Several records during month.
Juvenile at The Snook on Holy Island from 23rd - 31st.
Two on 15th on Holy Island plus another there on 24th.
One on Holy Island on 24th.
Marked movement with three on Holy Island on 24th.

COMMITTEE NEWS

Data Manager Vacancy

Are you competent at IT? We still need a Data Manager for club records. Please contact NTBC.



A juvenile Cuckoo checks out Janet Dean in the Simonside Hills on 24th August

INDOOR MEETINGS

NTBC indoor meetings are held at Northern Rugby Club, McCracken Park, Great North Road, Newcastle, NE3 2DT starting at 7.00pm and generally finish between 9.00pm-9.30pm. The next meetings of the 2015-2016 season are:

12th November

Andrew Kinghorn: *Larus* White-headed Gulls in North East England

The talk will be about how to identify all of the common and potential scarce and rarer *Larus* Gulls that occur in Northumberland. The talk also covers potential future firsts including American Herring Gull, Thayer's and Slaty-backed Gulls.

10th December

Colin Bradshaw: Spoon Forks and Chopsticks

Eight intrepid north-east birders braved bizarre food, awful driving and noisy brothels to chase a host of the world's rarest birds, and watch a small patch of ground for some great sibs.

FIELD TRIPS

18th October 2015

Holy Island Migrants

Contact Trevor Blake trevor.1958@live.co.uk

22nd November 2015

East Lothian sea birds

Contact Steve Anderson seaswan@btinternet.com

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 2012 page 236.

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.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Apart from 29 at Castle Island on 16th (DM/STH), the only records were of two to three at Berwick North Shore, Hauxley Reserve, Linton Ponds, and Newcastle Exhibition and Leazes Parks.

goose (sp.)

38 unidentified geese flew S high over Holywell Dene on 28th (RJP) and one was at Hauxley Reserve on 24th (HRS).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

14 flew N at East Ord on 23rd and 64 moved S there on 23rd (MHu). Peak counts were 575 at Derwent Reservoir on 25th (IFo), 283 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 11th (SR), 224 at New Water Haugh (River Tweed) on 28th (MHu), 135-156 at Airy Holm Reservoir, Bothal Pond, Brenkley, Hauxley Reserve and the Tweed Estuary, 34-64 at Budle Bay, Castle Island, East Ord, Yarrow Slake and Woodhorn Flashes, and 18 at Arcot Pond. One bearing an orange neck collar at Derwent Reservoir on 23rd had come from Lake Windermere, Cumbria (ringed on 27/6/15; IFo).

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

One was at Derwent Reservoir on 25th-26th (IFo).

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

14 flew S at Ellington on 5th (TB). Large gatherings involved 270 at Grindon Lough on 19th (AJR), 129 at Derwent Reservoir on 13th (IFo), 118 at Bothal Pond on 4th (TF/JFa), 108 at Hauxley Reserve on 24th (HRS), 48-58 at Big Waters, Druridge Pools, New Water Haugh and Yarrow Slake, and 15-33 at Arcot and Linton Ponds, Castle Island, Ellington, and Newcastle Exhibition and Leazes Parks. One colour-ringed (red BALB) at Bowness-on-Windermere, Cumbria on 28th June 2014 was at Druridge Pools on 12th, a movement of 130km (STH/IFo). A leucistic individual was at Grindon Lough on 25th (PRM).

A young Shelduck
St. Mary's
Alan Jack



Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Eight flew S at Seaton Sluice on 22nd (SSWT). Eight were at Cresswell Pond on 12th (TD), seven at the Blyth Estuary on 9th (STH), seven at Amble Braid on 22nd (GB), and five to six at Castle Island and Cresswell Pond (DM/MJC). Two were also at Bothal Pond and Charlton Mires. Where stated most/all were juveniles.

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

A total of 51 flew N at Seaton Sluice on 31st (SSWT). Peak counts were 64 at Grindon Lough on 19th (AJR), 24 at Big Waters on 21st (GB), and 14-20 at Budle Bay (GPK) and Cresswell Pond (TRD/JD). Five to nine were at Arcot, Bothal and Holywell Ponds, three to four at Druridge Pools, Heugh Shiel (River Tweed) and Linton Ponds, and one to two at the Blyth Estuary, Capheaton Lake, Hauxley Reserve, New Water Haugh and Yarrow Slake.

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Peak counts involved 27 at Big Waters on 30th (GB), 25 at Linton Ponds on 15th (CDH), 22 at Arcot Pond on 30th (ASJ), 16-18 at Bothal Pond (TF/JFa), Castle Island (DM/STH) and Hauxley Reserve (HRS), and 12 at Woodhorn Flashes (GB). Three to five were also at Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools and Marden Quarry, and one at Whittle Dene Reservoirs. A female with five young was at Big Waters on 2nd (GB).

Teal *Anas crecca*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was a well above average 1,227 N and 318 S and included a new record site day count of 866 N and 35 S on 31st (SSWT). Numbers increased during the month resulting in peaks of 200 at Budle Bay on 25th (CGK/GPK), 133 at Arcot Pond on 27th (DM), 120 at Derwent Reservoir on 31st (IFo), 90-91 at Bothal Pond (TF/JFa) and Derwent Reservoir (IFo), and 30-65 at Big Waters, Castle Island and Grindon Lough. Counts of 11-20 came from Gosforth Park NR and Hauxley Reserve, and two to eight at Cocklawburn, Linton and Middle Ord Ponds.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Derwent Reservoir held a peak of 256 on 25th (IFo), 159 were at Big Waters on 4th (GB), 117 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 17th (SR), 98-102 at Bothal Pond (TD) and Linton Ponds (CDH), 40-65 at Arcot Pond, Marden Quarry, Newcastle Exhibition Park and Swallow Pond, and 28-37 at Castle Island, Gosforth Park NR, Hauxley Reserve, Killingworth Lake and Middle Ord Pond. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Arcot Pond	1	7	LJM. New brood on 4th
Middle Ord Pond	1	5	MHu. On 6th
Byker	1	3	DM. Half-grown young on Ouseburn on 20th
Newcastle Civic Centre	1	3	DM. Three small young on 5th
Newcastle Exhibition Park	1	1	GB/DM. Tiny young on 25th

Pintail *Anas acuta*

Singles flew N at Newbiggin on 17th (STH/PJA *et al.*) and Seaton Sluice on 22nd (SSWT). Eight at Arcot Pond on 20th was a site record count (LJM), three to four were at East Chevington on 23rd-24th (EC/JSB/IFo), and one to two at Cresswell Pond (MSH), Derwent Reservoir (IFo) and Hauxley Reserve (HRS) on occasional dates between 19th-24th.

Garganey *Anas querquedula*

One was at Hauxley Reserve on 24th (HRS).

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Two flew N at Seaton Sluice on 15th (SSWT). Seven were at Bothal Pond on 28th (TD), and one to six there between 22nd-26th (GB/TB), three to four were at Arcot and Cresswell Ponds (DM/LJM/TRD/JD), East Chevington (IFo), Grindon Lough (PRM), and one to two at Backworth and Holywell Ponds, Big Waters, Gosforth Park NR, Holy Island Lough, and Monks' House and Newton Pools.

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Peak counts were 14 at Bothal Pond on 21st (TF/JFa), and three to five at Holywell and Linton Ponds, and Ladyburn Lake (GB/IFo/CDH). One to two were also at Big Waters, East Chevington and Gosforth Park NR.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Three flew N at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). The largest counts were 35 at Bothal Pond on 3rd (TF/JFa), 35 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 13th (SR), 29 at Killingworth Lake (LJM) and Linton Ponds (CDH), and 12-19 at Airy Holm Reservoir and Marden Quarry. Five to eight were also at Big Waters, Hauxley Reserve, and Newcastle Exhibition and Leazes Parks, and two to three at Castle Island, Grindon Lough, Heighley Gate garden centre and Jesmond Dene. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Ladyburn Lake	3	12	LJM/IFo. Newish brood on 3rd and 3 broods (12 young) on 16th.

Scaup *Aythya marila*

Singles were at Budle Bay on 21st (CGK/PS) and East Chevington north pool on 27th (TB).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

187 were off North Blyth and 77 at Newbiggin on 6th (STH), 62 at Seahouses Harbour on 12th (JMA), 37 at Amble Harbour (DM/STH), 17-25 at Berwick North Shore (MHu) and Budle Bay (JMA), and four at the Tweed Estuary.

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

The long-staying drake was at Derwent Reservoir all month (IFo).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

The monthly total (58 hours) at Seaton Sluice was 491 N and 156 S, including 229 N and seven S on 14th (SSWT), 22 flew N at Lynemouth Bay on 22nd (TB), and five S at Newbiggin. Cocklawburn held 36 on 4th and 64 on 11th (MHu), 28 were off North Blyth on 6th (STH), and 15-20 off Ridge-tiles Chevington (TRD/JD).

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

A total of 14 flew N at Seaton Sluice, including seven N on 18th (SSWT), and one flew N at Newbiggin on 17th (STH/PJA). Single drakes were off Druridge on 5th (TRD/JD) and North Blyth on 6th (STH).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Two adult females and five juveniles were at the regular breeding site on 9th and a single female was present on 20th (TRD/JD), two (juveniles) were at Woodhorn Flashes on 15th (GB), and singles were at Bothal Pond on several dates between 2nd-27th (TB/TD *et al.*) and at the Blyth Estuary on 23rd (JL).

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

The only reports were of two at Druridge on 5th (TRD/JD) and, more unusually, inland at Grindon Lough on 16th (PCF).

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

High counts in the north of the county included peaks of 356 at the Tweed Estuary on 13th-14th (MHu/BWG), 282 at Spittal on 11th (MHu), 170 off Cocklawburn on 10th (BWG), 126 at New Water Haugh (River Tweed) on 28th (BWG), 110 at Budle Bay on 22nd (a site record; CGK/GPK), 84 at Holy Island on 21st (TRD), and 26 at West Ord (MHu). Elsewhere, 30 (juveniles) were at the Blyth Estuary on 9th (STH), 23 at Castron (JD), 13 at Branton GP, five to nine at Amble Harbour and Blakehopeburnhaugh, and two to three at Boulmer and Foxton Bends.

Quail *Coturnix coturnix*

Only one record received this month - a single bird calling from a wheat field at New Haggerston on 2nd (GB).

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

A family group of two adults and three juveniles were feeding on grit at the roadside at Cambois on 19th (STH), three were at Beanley on 26th (TRD/JD), two at Elsdon on 20th (JMA) and singles were seen near Ridsdale and at Wooler Common.

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

In the Cheviots, 50+ were at Newton Tors on 8th (MJC), eight at Broadstruther on 16th (MRD/JD) and seven or more at Cairn Hill on 28th (JL). Four were seen at Simonside on 24th (JD).



A Red Grouse twelve days after the Glorious Twelfth
by Janet Dene in the Simonsides on August 24th

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

A grey-hen at Burntshieldhaugh (Hexhamshire) on 8th was the only report (AJR).

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Ten were at Bamburgh Dunes on 31st (ADM) and a party of seven, three adults and four juveniles, were at Holywell Pond NR on 13th (MSH). Groups of four were at East Chevington and Ellington, with three seen at both Big Waters NR and Billylaw (Berwick). One to two were at several other eastern localities.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

A sighting of a female with seven large young at Chare Ends Dunes (Holy Island) on 15th was noted to be very unusual in that this number of young should reach flying stage due to the large number of foxes present on the island (IK).

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

Total passage recorded at Seaton Sluice Watch Tower was average for this time of year with seven N and four S in 58h of watching (SSWT). Five were near the shore at East Chevington on 30th and two in summer plumage just offshore at Birling Carrs (Warkworth) on 31st (TD). A partial summer-plumaged individual was off Cheswick on 27th (MHu/BWG).

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

120 S during one two-hour stretch was the maximum count by far at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), including a fully dark "Blue Fulmar" flying North in the company of two Manx Shearwaters on 18th. Ten were at St Mary's on 14th (TRD) and two were counted during WeBS visits to Berwick North Shore on 12th and the Tweed Estuary on 13th (MHu). Breeding success at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) included one juvenile fledged early in the month and another still on a nest on 22nd (IJ).

Sooty Shearwater *Puffinus griseus*

Only record, during a very poor month for Shearwaters in general, was of one flying N past Seaton Sluice on 23rd (SSWT).

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

The monthly total of 64 (62 N and 2 S) in 58h past Seaton Sluice was well below the average for August (SSWT).

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

Seaton Sluice Watch Tower experienced large numbers, especially during 14th-19th with up to 1340/h noted (SSWT). Elsewhere, Spittal Bay (Berwick) had 800/h S on 10th (MHu) and St Mary's had 70 flying N on 14th (TRD). One to eight were seen at various other coastal locations.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

There were signs of migratory movement at Seaton Sluice however the maximum count was 42 N and 19 S in four hours on 15th (SSWT). Elsewhere, some large counts were noted including 127 in a Blyth Harbour evening roost on 28th (STH), a peak of 81 at East Chevington on 17th (TF/JFa), 78 at Castle Island on 15th (GB), 66 in Amble Harbour on 20th (IF), 59 at Druridge Bay on 1st (PCF), a maximum of 40 at Derwent Reservoir on 27th (IFo), 29 during a WeBS count at North Shore (Berwick) on 12th (MHu), 20 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 11th (SR), 18 in the River Tweed Estuary during a WeBS count on 13th (MHu) and 15 at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 16th (TB). One to ten birds were at eight other locations.

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

At Seaton Sluice, birds started to appear regularly from the 8th with a monthly total of 126 and a maximum daily count of 43 N and 30 S on 31st. 40 were present during a WeBS count at Berwick North Shore on 12th (MHu) and 30 were at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 21st (TRD). A flock of ten juveniles was on the sea at St Mary's on 13th and six were roosting at Sandstell Point (Spittal) on 24th (MHu).

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

A single, presumably last month's returnee, was reported regularly at Gosforth Park NR during the first half of August but then not seen at all from mid-month (NHSN).

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Over 80 records received for this elegant recent coloniser. The largest counts from a single area were 13 in the River Wansbeck Estuary on 22nd (GB/LAR) and a monthly peak of 12 in Budle Bay on 28th (CGK/GPK). Other good numbers were nine at Beal Point (Lindisfarne NNR) on 21st (TRD), eight (including a colour-ringed bird 'T' and 'F') at Cresswell Pond on 5th (TF/JFa), eight roosting at The Butts (Warkworth) at 8pm on 6th (JMA), six at the River Blyth Estuary on 31st (AC), five at Foxton Bends (River Aln) on 29th (TRD/JD) and four at Needle's Eye (Berwick) on 10th (BWG) and the River Coquet Estuary on 31st (TD). Elsewhere, one to three were present all along the coastal belt including locations such as Arcot Pond, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Gosforth Park NR, Hauxley NWT, Low Newton, Monks' House Pool (Bamburgh), New Water Haugh (River Tweed), Tynemouth, Warkworth Gut and Yarrow Slake (River Tweed).

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

The Berwick area proved a popular location with 23 at Needle's Eye on 10th and 21 at Yarrow Slake on 15th (BWG). 12 were present at the Tweed Estuary during the WeBS count on 13th (MHu) and Castle Island (River Wansbeck) peaked at 11 on 22nd (GB). Whittle Dene Reservoirs held eight on 11th (SR), as did Hauxley NWT on 24th (HRS). Seven were at East Chevington on 24th (IFo) and Seaton Sluice Watch Tower had a total of six (two N and four S) between 7th-23rd (SSWT). Derwent Reservoir peaked at six on 13th (IFo) and two to three birds were at Amble Braid, Amble Weir, Gosforth Park NR, Holywell Dene, Leazes Park, Linton Ponds and St. Mary's Wetland.

Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

Two were at Cresswell Pond on 5th, one well-ringed - Green over light red over light red on left leg and metal over yellow flag over light green on right! The yellow flag indicates origin as Netherlands and was in fact ringed there at Vlissingen on 31st May 2012. This decorated individual was also found on 17th June 2015 at Findhorn Bay in Moray and then subsequently turned up at Gibraltar Point (Lincolnshire) the day after visiting Cresswell (TRD/JD).



The Cresswell Pond Spoonbills with the well-travelled Dutch bird. By Tim Dean on 5th August

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Big Waters peaked at 21 on 31st (GB) and 17 were present during a WeBS count at East Chevington on 16th (JL). Hauxley NWT also held 17 on 14th (HRS) and the peak count at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) was 11 on 30th (TF/JFa). Double-digit figures were also found at Airy Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield), Capheaton Lake, Druridge Pools and Newton Pool which all peaked at ten during the month. Whittle Dene Reservoirs had eight on 13th and six were at Linton Ponds on 15th and Gosforth Park NR on 17th. Six young were present at Holywell Pond on 21st (LJM). Elsewhere one to five birds, many with new broods, were at Branton GP, Castle Island, Derwent Reservoir, Dinnington, Grindon Lough, Holy Island Lough, Lynemouth, Swallow Pond and Woodhorn Flashes.



A Little Grebe at Druridge Pools by Tim Dean on 5th August

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps Cristatus*

Whittle Dene Reservoirs held nine on 17th (SR). Six, including up to three juveniles, were at East Chevington on 14th (TRD/JD) and Derwent Reservoir peaked at five on 13th (IFo). One to three were at Airy Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield), Branton GP, Gosforth Park NR and Widdrington Moor Lake.

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

A pair with two juveniles, reducing to one juvenile by the end of the month, were at a site in the south east of the county.

Honey-buzzard *Pernis apivorus*

A bird was observed flying N over the River Wansbeck at Ashington mobbed by Carrion Crows *Corvus corone*.

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Single birds were seen at Chollerford on 2nd (JWP), Low Waskerley on 5th (IFo), Heddon-on-the-Wall on 6th (AA), Derwent Reservoir on 8th and 23rd (IFo) and at Carterway Heads on 23rd (IFo).

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

A female and a juvenile were at East Chevington on 11th (TB) and a male and a juvenile were seen there on 29th (IF) and a female was noted on 8th (TRD/JD). Other records involving single birds were at Whitley Dene on 23rd (MD/AM), Holy Island on 24th (GB/AIB/LAR), Druridge Pools on 24th (PRM), Budle Bay on 25th (GPK) and at Gosforth Park NR on 29th (NHSN).

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

A juvenile was seen at a confidential site on 16th which may have possibly been one of the juveniles which were bred in the County this year (TRD/JD). Two other records of an unsexed bird and a ring-tail came from a coastal site on 23rd and 29th (SR/IK).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

A pair with three vocal young was at Ellington Dene on 17th (MJC), a female and three calling juveniles were at Newbiggin on 15th (GB). Three juvenile birds were on Holy Island on 23rd (MJC) and two birds were seen at Jesmond Dene (Newcastle) on 5th (MJCo) and at Gosforth Park NR on 30th (MJC). Single birds were also observed at over 25 sites.

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Six birds were in the air together at Burntshieldhaugh (Hexhamshire) on 8th (AJH) and at Backworth on 30th (SPP). Five birds were at Newton Tors (The Cheviots) on 8th (MJC), four were at Derwent Reservoir on 28th (IFo) and three were at Shiellow Woods on 13th (MJC) and at Kielder Castle on 20th (JMA). Two birds were noted at Holburn Moss on 6th (JMA), Ellington Dene on 18th (MJC) and at Grindon Lough on 24th (PRM). Single birds were reported from 14 sites.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

Derwent Reservoir had most of the sightings this month with two birds present on 29th (MN/IFo) and with single birds seen on several dates (IFo). Other single birds were seen at Seaton Sluice Watch Tower on 11th (SSWT), Woodhorn Church on 27th (IK/ASH), Kielder Water on 30th (TRD/JD) and at Holy Island on 30th and 31st (SR/AH/IK).

A young Osprey

Big Waters

Graeme

Bowman

20th August

The same bird
is right and "is
not a Harpy
Eagle" (GB)

"but it's a good
impression!"
(ed)



Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus* 20th August

Five birds including two juveniles were at Gosforth Park NR throughout the month (NHSN/GPK) and four birds were seen or heard at Big waters on 16th (GB). Two birds were at the Lough (Holy Island) on 22nd (MJC) and single birds at Big Waters on 8th and 9th (GB), North Pool (East Chevington) on 27th (TB) and at Low Newton on 30th (IJ).

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

27 birds at Big Waters on 16th (GB) was the highest count, followed by 14 at Arcot Pond on 11th (LJM), 14 at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 11th (DM) and 12 at Hauxley NWT on 24th (HRS). Eight were at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 25th (DM), seven were at Gosforth Park NR throughout the month, five were at Castle Island on 16th (DM/STH) and two were at Jesmond Dene on 30th (MJCO). A juvenile at Big Waters narrowly avoided being caught by an Otter *Lutra lutra* bounding after it across the scrape on 17th (GB).

Coot *Fulica atra*

Swallow Pond peaked with 133 birds on 31st (SPP) and Bothal Pond peaked at 108 on 16th (DM/STH) while Woodhorn Flash had 67 birds on 6th (STH). 40 were seen at Killingworth Lake on 13th (LJM) and 33 were at Linton Pond on 15th (CDH). Ten birds were at Gosforth Park NR throughout the month (NHSN).

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Passage at Seaton Sluice totalled 126 N and 442 S during the month, with a maximum of 115 S on 20th (SSWT) and 25 moved S offshore at East Chevington on 12th (STH/IFo). The high-tide roost at St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) topped 400 on 30th (IK) and the maximum high-tide roost on the R. Blyth Estuary was 181 also on 30th (STH). Budle Bay held a peak of 180 on 23rd (CGK/GPK), 126 were at Berwick North Shore on 12th (MHu), 75 were at Tynemouth on 24th (DRW), 63 at Newbiggin on 8th (STH) and 52 at Hauxley NWT on 24th (HRS). Some 16-46 were also seen at Amble harbour, Berwick Little Beach and on the R. Tweed Estuary, ten were at inland Derwent Reservoir on 1st and single-figure reports came from eight further sites, including two adults and an immature which remained at Bothal Pond until 24th.

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

Increasing numbers arrived and were much in evidence at St Mary's Island where 500+ on 5th (MSH) increased to 1,500 on 26th (ASJ). Holy Island held 800 Northern race birds on 16th (IK) and the peak at Newbiggin was 520 on 8th (STH). The monthly maximum at Derwent Reservoir was 200 on 10th (IFo); 20 were noted at Brenkley (Blagdon) on 15th, 12 was the maximum seen at Grindon Lough on 25th and a lone bird was seen at Birling Carrs (Warkworth) on 31st.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

On the Aln Estuary 22, mostly summer-plumaged birds, were noted on 31st (TRD) and three adults were in Budle Bay on 10th (CGK/GPK). Singles were also seen at two sites in the Berwick area on 12th and flying N at Seaton Sluice on 17th.

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

The large post-breeding flock at Derwent Reservoir continued to grow in numbers from last month, with 1,650 counted on 2nd and a maximum of 1,850 noted on 24th (IFo). Inland, Whittle Dene Reservoirs also held a large flock with counts of 790 on 4th and 700 on 22nd (SR). Peaks at additional locations included 600 feeding in a nearby stubble field at Airy Holm Reservoir on 25th (IFo), 520 at Grindon Lough on 25th (PRM), 405 at Bothal Pond on 30th (TD), 387 on the R. Tyne (Elswick Wharf-Newcastle Business Park) on 21st (DM), 300 at Arcot Pond on 21st and Castle Island on 22nd (GB), 100-250 at Castron, Charlton Mires, Cresswell Pond, Holywell Pond, Low Angerton and St Mary's Wetland, with 40-66 also reported at Big Waters, Cocklawburn, Gosforth Park, Hauxley NWT, Holy Island, Monks' House Pool, Otterburn Ranges (Dudlees) and on the R. Tweed Estuary.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

Two adults at one inland site on 2nd were the last of the month, perhaps suggesting poor breeding success. An adult and a juvenile (uncertain if locally bred or on passage) were seen at Brenkley on 19th-20th (GB) and two juveniles were at Grindon Lough on 24th (PRM).

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Larger numbers were on the move this month with 160 at Budle Bay on 23rd (CGK/GPK) the highest. Berwick Little Beach held 105 on 29th (BWG), whilst further south 50+ were at Snab Point on 23rd (JL), 44 at St Mary's on 21st (ASJ) and 26-32 were at the R. Blyth Estuary, Cocklawburn, Holy Island and Lynemouth. Elsewhere, 13-15 were noted at Berwick Little Beach, Low Newton and Newbiggin and single-figure reports came from seven further sites, including three adults and two young at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Passage at Seaton Sluice totalled 47 S and 5 N, with 37 S occurring between 19th-23rd (SSWT). Budle Bay held birds all month with a peak of 12+ noted on 6th (CGK/GPK). A total of 11 birds were present across several sites at Holy Island on 22nd with six recorded during 24th-25th (MJC) and lower numbers on several other dates in the month. Eight moved S over Low Newton on 5th (MJC) as did seven at Tynemouth on 22nd (DRW) and four at Bamburgh on 17th (BRS). The R. Blyth Estuary held up to four recorded on five dates throughout the month; one to two were noted at Cresswell Pond and East Chevington, and single birds were logged at 13 different sites including some of the afore-mentioned.

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

The high-tide area total at the R. Blyth Estuary numbered 160 on 30th (STH) and the WeBS count on the R. Tweed Estuary totalled 146 on 13th (MHu). Post-breeding flocks at Cresswell Pond peaked at 101 and 100 on 1st and 24th respectively

(MN/GB) and just to the north 60 were counted at Hauxley NWT on 24th (HRS). In the southeast, 42 were nearby to Holywell Dene on 8th (RJP), a peak of 38 (no date) was noted at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN), 32 flew over Big Waters on 30th (GB) and 31 were seen at Newbiggin on 8th (STH). Further counts in the Berwick area included 29 on the North Shore on 12th (MHu) and 14 at Needle's Eye on 10th (BWG). St Mary's Wetland attracted 13 on 23rd (IJ) and single-digit reports came from seven further locales.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

An exceptional 77 reports were submitted this month with birds present at some sites almost throughout the month i.e. Arcot Pond, R. Blyth Estuary, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools and Low Newton. Peak counts were as follows: 42 at the R. Blyth Estuary on 1st (GB), 40 at Low Newton on 11th (TD), 30 at Cresswell Pond on 31st (TF/JFa), 25 at Arcot Pond on 5th (STH), 16 at Monks' House Pool on 11th (MSH), 12 at Castle Island on 15th (GB), ten in Budle Bay on 11th (CGK/GPK) and nine moved S at Seaton Sluice on 7th (SSWT). A further seven moved S at Tynemouth on 3rd (SPP). Groups of nine were also noted at Bothal Pond, Boulmer (flying S on 31st), Budle Bay and Druridge Pools, and one to five also appeared at Charlton Mires, East Chevington, Hauxley and Holywell Pond.



Black-tailed Godwit with a Ruff at Holywell Pond by Mike Potts on 29th August

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

The high-tide roost at St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) numbered 200 on 17th and 600 on 30th (IK) whilst nearby Budle Bay held a peak of ten on 22nd (CGK/GPK). Seven were at Boulmer on 8th (NFO) and three moved N at Seaton Sluice between 14th-19th (SSWT), with all other reports involved single birds at Berwick North Shore, the R. Blyth Estuary, Cocklawburn, Hauxley, Newbiggin and St Mary's.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Area totals at high tide in R Blyth Estuary increased from 73 on 6th to 102 on 30th (STH); 41 were at Snab Point on 23rd (JL), 35 at Tynemouth on 24th (DRW), 33 at Newbiggin on 6th (STH), 26 at both Seaton Sluice and St Mary's on 22nd and 21 at Newbiggin on 1st. Single-figure counts were made at eight coastal locations from Berwick to Whitley Bay during 4th to 21st.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

Totals of 86 N and 257 S were reported from Seaton Slice Watch Tower during 18th to 31st. Again the largest concentration was in Budle Bay, 140 on 29th (CGK/GPK). Low Newton, Newbiggin, St Mary's and Warkworth had up to 11 to 27 at times and small numbers occurred at a further nine coastal places.

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

There was a widespread influx during the month including a flock of 35 which arrived at Monks' House Pool on 25th (TRD) and other peaks were of 18 at Charlton Mires on 23rd (AH), 15 at Backworth on 25th (CGK), 14 at Druridge Pools on 6th (MN *et al.*), 12 at Bothal Pond on 24th (TD), 12 at Earsdon on 26th, including a colour-marked female trapped in Scotland five days earlier (AC) and 11 in Budle Bay on 26th (GPK). Several other places attracted six to nine: Arcot Pond, Blagdon, Castle Island, Cocklawburn, Cresswell Pond, Holywell Pond, Low Newton and Seaton Sluice with small numbers at another ten coastal localities. A few were inland, notably four at Grindon Lough on 25th, three at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 7th and two at Derwent Reservoir on 23rd.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

One was in Budle Bay on 30th with two there next day (GPK). One was at Hauxley NWT on 20th (PCF).

Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii*

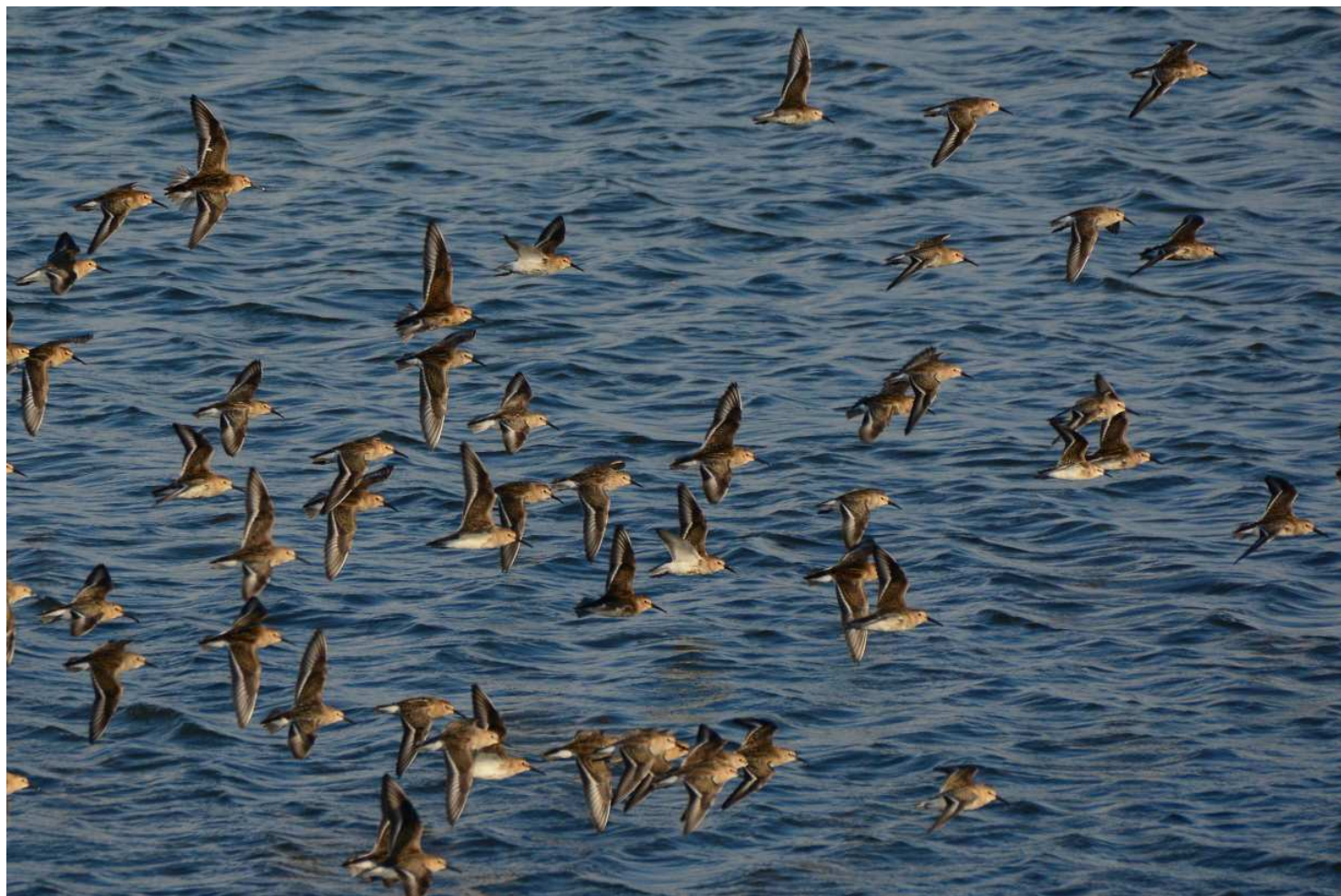
Three were at Monks' House Pool on 24th/25th (GB/AIB/LAR/TRD *et al.*) and two were still present on 31st (MJC).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

The peak at St Mary's reached 198 on 28th (ASJ), whilst the most at Newbiggin was 75 on 8th (STH); Low Newton had 30 on 5th, Berwick 28 on 19th, Budle Bay 27 on 21st and Whitley Bay 25 on 7th. Singles appeared at Boulmer, Cocklawburn and Hauxley.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

At Tynemouth 90 flew S in one hour from 07:00 (DRW) and 64 flew N at Seaton Sluice on 20th/21st. The peak count in Budle Bay was 450 on 29th (GPK), 350 were in R Coquet Estuary on 9th (CGK) and about 200 were at Boulmer on 29th (TRD/JD). R Blyth Estuary and Holy Island hosted 70-83 at times and 20-50 were noted at Castle Island, Cresswell Pond, Low Newton, Monks' House Pool and Warkworth Gut; small numbers were seen at another 16 locations at or near the coast. Inland, singles appeared at Derwent Reservoir on 5th and 8th and at Grindon Lough on 24th.



Dunlin fly at Boulmer on 29th August by Tim Dean. He challenges readers to "spot the Little Stint".

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

Four were at Tynemouth on 3rd (SPP) then singles at Newbiggin on 6th and at Cocklawburn on 21st.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

One was in Budle bay on 25th and again on 30th (GPK), one was at Bothal Pond on 26th to 31st (TF/JFa/TD), one was at Boulmer on 29th (TRD/JD) and one at Low Newton on 31st (IJ).

Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos*

An adult with a serious leg injury was found at Bothal Pond on 5th (TF/JFa) and was noted there on several days to 17th (TD). A juvenile was at Holywell Pond on 22nd/23rd (SPP/AA).

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

There was a clear influx in the last week or so, including a remarkable gathering of 28 on the Ponteland Pool at Hauxley NWT on 24th (TRD). Also around this time other peaks were noted: 18 in Budle Bay on 23rd (GPK), 17 at Holywell Pond on 25th (ASJ), 15 at Charlton Mires on 23rd (AH), 14 at St Mary's on 24th (MN), ten at Castle Island on 24th (IFo) and ten at Monks' House Pool on 24th (GPK) with seven at Bothal Pond on 23rd. Six flew S at Seaton Sluice during 22nd to 25th and four or fewer were noted at a further 21 places mainly near the coast.



Common Sandpipers with Turnstones at Hauxley NR on 24th August.
The Common Sandpipers were part of a flock of 28 birds

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Five were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 11th (SR), there was a peak of four at Charlton Mires on 15th (AH), four at Gosforth Park NR on 29th (NHSN), three at Blagdon on 15th and 19th (GB) and two at Bothal Pond on 22nd (GB). Singles appeared at least once at Arcot Pond, Backworth, Budle Bay, Castle Island, Cocklawburn, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Hauxley, Holywell Pond, Monks' House Pool and St Mary's.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

Two were at Bothal Pond during 19th to 22nd (TF/JFa), two at Holywell Pond on 25th (MSH) and two at Lindisfarne NNR, South Low on 29th (IK). The adult from late July remained in Budle Bay all month (CGK/GPK) and other singles were found at Branton GP on 23rd (TRD), at Holy Island on 24th (MJC), at Earsdon 28th to 30th and at Gosforth Park NR on 30th (MJC).



An elegant Spotted Redshank
Holywell Pond
25th August
Jack Bucknall

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Along the coast the peak count in Budle Bay was of nine on 28th (CGK/GPK), six were at Foxton Bends on R Aln on 11th (TRD), five at Hauxley NWT on 18th (EC/JSB) and four at Beal Point on 21st (TRD). Two or three were noted at Charlton Mires, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Holywell Pond, Holy Island and R Wansbeck Estuary, with singles at a further 11 localities. Inland, four were at Grindon Lough on 24th (PRM), two at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 4th (SR) and two at Derwent Reservoir on 21st (IFo).



Three Greenshanks at Hauxley NR on 11th August by Tim Dean

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Three flew over Hauxley NWT, calling, at 17:05 on 23rd (NFO) and two were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 16th (JL). Singles appeared at Bothal Pond on 4th and 21st, at Monks' House Pool on 9th to 11th, Holy Island on 9th and 24th, Blagdon on 12th/13th, Hauxley NWT on 17th and 20th and in Budle Bay on 28th. One was inland at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 21st (AA).

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

At Seaton Sluice 129 flew S on 20th/21st (SSWT). The area total at high tide in R Blyth Estuary increased from 304 on 6th to 464 on 30th (STH) and 120 were in R Tweed Estuary on 13th (MHu). The most at St Mary's was 89 on 22nd, 54 were at Berwick on 19th and the peak at Elswick Wharf was 49 on 7th; 33 were at Tynemouth on 24th, 28 at Newbiggin on 8th, 22 at Hauxley on 24th and low numbers at five other places.

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Again, none was reported this month.

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Low numbers only: maximum of nine on 16th at Bothal Pond, up to seven at Monks' House Pool, up to five at Cresswell Pond and Low Newton, five at Arcot Pond on 22nd and four at Holywell Pond on 22nd. One or two were noted at five other coastal spots and one was at Grindon Lough on 24th/25th.



A Snipe

Tim Dean

Newton Pool

11th August

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

Singles flew N at Seaton Sluice Watch Tower on 19th and at Newbiggin on 22nd (IK).

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

At Seaton Sluice Watch Tower 18 flew N and 13 S in 58 hours' effort, described as well below average. Four flew N at Snab Point on 31st (JL), two lingered in Druridge Bay on 11th (TB) and two were off Holy Island on 21st (TRD). One flew N at Newbiggin on 18th and one was off Hauxley on 23rd.

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

Five flew N at Seaton Sluice during 19th to 31st and one flew N at St Mary's on 14th (MSH).

Guillemot *Uria aalge*

Five were recorded passing Seaton Sluice from 20th (SSWT). At Berwick Spittal Bay, 22 were present on 11th (MHu) and ten were seen at Druridge on 5th (TRD/JD).

Razorbill *Alca torda*

Only five were recorded passing Seaton Sluice from 20th (SSWT).

Little Tern *Sternula albifrons*

An encouraging 15-16 pairs successfully produced young at the Lindisfarne colony (IK) but no records came in regarding the success or otherwise of the Long Nanny colony following the extensive desertion of nests in June. Single birds were sighted at Lynemouth Bay on 9th (TB) and at Budle Point on 21st (CGK/GPK).

Black Tern *Chilidonias niger*

Five, one N and four S, passed Seaton Sluice between 20th-23rd (SSWT).

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

Passage was well recorded at Seaton Sluice throughout the month with a maximum of 540N and 267 S in four hours on 14th (SSWT). Numerous reports from elsewhere included 170 in the gull roost on the River Tweed Estuary on 2nd (MHu), a peak count of 120 at Tynemouth Battery Rocks on 8th (DRW) and 108 at Saltpan Rocks (Cocklawburn) on 4th (MHu). Gatherings of 20-70 were noted at Berwick North Shore, the Blyth Estuary, Low Newton and St Mary's Island (STH/MHu/MSH/KWY/LJM/TRD/JD) with one to eight at 14 other localities along the coast between the River Tweed Estuary and Tynemouth.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

At Seaton Sluice, the autumn passage was apparent with 693 noted moving S during 15 hours from 20th-23rd (SSWT). The largest concentration was 400 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 8th (STH) and other significant gatherings of 80-140 were recorded at St Mary's Island and Tynemouth from 5th-20th (MSH/ASJ/DRW/KWY). Ten to 45 were at the Blyth Estuary, Cresswell Snab Point, East Chevington, Newbiggin and Whittle Dene Reservoirs (TRD/JD/STH/SR) with up to ten at five coastal sites and at Big Waters, Cramlington, River Tyne at Elswick (GB/DM/TRD/JD/STH/IJ); one seen over Chapel House on 1st was only the third record in 40 years (IK).

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*

Nine adults passed the Seaton Sluice watch point from 19th-24th and a single was on the rocks there on 6th (SSWT). Elsewhere, a maximum of at least ten were at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 8th (NFO/STH/GB) with a peak count of eight at Budle Point on 23rd where the species was present all month from 10th (CGK/GPK). One to four, including juveniles, were also at Lynemouth Bay, St Mary's and Tynemouth (AA/TB/ASJ/DRW/SPP).

A Roseate Tern

St. Mary's

Alan Jack



Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

The peak count of 40+ came from St Mary's Island on 5th (MSH) and 12 were in the low-tide roost at Cocklawburn on 11th (MHu). Elsewhere, one to three were noted at Blyth Harbour, East Chevington, Hartley Bay, Low Newton and Tynemouth (JMA/TRD/JD/KWY).

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

Very large numbers were noted at Seaton Sluice, especially from 18th-23rd, including 7,000N on 19th of which 3,000 passed at first light; movements were mainly S from 20th with over 2,000 per hour, mainly in the early morning (SSWT). Strong passage N was noted also at Newbiggin on 22nd (IK). An estimated 2,750 were present around the Tynemouth pier on 22nd where large numbers congregated during the last two weeks (DRW) and at least 1,000 were there on 10th (SPP). Nearby St Mary's Island had flocks of 900 and 2,300 on the sea on 22nd and 30th (GB/AC), 300 were at Newbiggin on 19th (STH) and 256 were in the River Tweed Estuary at Calot Shad on 2nd (MHu).

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

The only sign of movement at Seaton Sluice was 290 S on 21st (SSWT). By far the largest gathering was 4,000 at Budle Point on 22nd (CGK) and ca.500 were at Berwick, West Ord on 9th (MHu/BWG) and on a ploughed field at Holywell Pond on 13th (MSH). Counts of 250 came from a WeBS survey in the Tweed Estuary on 13th (MHu), 200 at Budle Point on 8th, 137 on the Tyne from Elswick Wharf-Newcastle Business Park, 128 at Castle Island, 117 on the Town Moor and 100 from Derwent Reservoir and Northfield Farm. Smaller flocks ranging in size up to 60 were at around 12 other localities. A Norwegian-ringed bird, White J9CE, was again at St Mary's Island, frequently seen there in recent years (TRD)

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

Four were recorded passing Seaton Sluice from 21st-23rd including a juvenile (SSWT). The summering birds at East Chevington North Pool numbered from one to four, mainly immatures, on a number of dates up to 17th after which none were recorded there (TB/TF/JFa/TRD/NFO). Other localities where one or two birds were seen were Newbiggin, St Mary's Island and Tynemouth where the last adult and juvenile were recorded on 20th (SPP).

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

The summer gathering at Newbiggin numbered 50 on 6th (MN) with 29-49, mainly adults, present there on four other dates throughout the month (STH/MN) and at Ellington, up to 15 were noted on several dates (TB) with nearby Lynemouth Bay holding 14 on 26th (JL). One or two were elsewhere at the Blyth Estuary, Budle Bay/Point, Cresswell Pond, Holy Island, Holywell Pond, Seaton Sluice, St Mary's Island and Swallow Pond (GB/TRD/JD/MSH/JL/ CGK/GPK/SPP/SSWT).

Common Gull *Larus canus*

The return from northern breeding grounds in late summer was evidenced by counts of 1,000 and 1,500 at Budle Point on 8th and 22nd, with juveniles first present in the earlier count (CGK), and smaller numbers elsewhere were 130 at Berwick, West Ord on 9th (BWG/MHu) and 125 at Pegswood Moor on 13th (TD). Small flocks up to 40 in the Berwick area were noted at Little Beach and the Tweed Estuary (MHu) and one or two were present at a few localities on the urban fringes of Newcastle (DM/MJCo).

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

The monthly total for this 'usually under-recorded species in autumn' at Seaton Sluice was 52 N and 46 S (SSWT). Elsewhere, 144 were on the Tyne from Elswick Wharf-Newcastle Business Park on 7th (DM) and the Budle Point gull roost held 40 and 60 on 8th and 22nd respectively (CGK). Ten were at Derwent Reservoir on 6th (IFo) and elsewhere one to six were recorded at Arcot Pond, Berwick North Shore and West Ord, Exhibition Park and Leazes Park; a family group of adult and two juveniles, ringed on Coquet Island this year, frequented Hauxley NWT late in the month (IFo/TRD) and two birds, joining Black-headed Gulls, were recorded taking flying insects over the Chapel House Estate on 23rd (IK).



A Coquet Island ringed juv. Lesser Black-backed Gull. Tim Dean, Hauxley NR on 5th August

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

Budle Point held a maximum of 2,000 on 22nd (CGK) and in the River Tweed Estuary 1,026 were present during a WeBS survey on 13th (MHu). A total of 276 were in the gull roost at Berwick, West Ord on 6th (MHu) and other three-figure gatherings were ca.150 on the Tyne from Elswick Wharf-Newcastle Business Park on 7th (DM) and at Holywell Pond on 13th (MSH) with 100 at Amble Weir on 6th (JMA). Castle Island held ten on 16th and elsewhere single-figure numbers were at five localities in the inner-city parks and Jesmond Dene (MJCo/DM). An adult with two large young was at the River Blyth West staithes breeding site on 19th (STH).

***Caspian Gull** *Larus cachinnans*

The summering Polish-ringed adult, PKCS, was again seen at Amble Harbour on 5th and 16th (TRD/JD/TB/DM/STH).



The Caspian Gull At Amble Harbour
Left: by Tim Dean on 5th and right: by Jonathan Farooqi on 2nd August

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

The first sign of the autumn passage at Seaton Sluice was 96 moving S on 24th (SSWT). At Amble Braid on 6th, 100 were present (JMA) and the maximum gathering at Budle Point was 75 on 22nd (CGK) with, elsewhere, up to ten at Berwick North Shore and the River Tweed Estuary. At inland sites, a single was at Grindon Lough (PRM) and a 2nd-summer bird, ringed Yellow T017 as a chick in Aberdeenshire in July 2013, was at Derwent Reservoir on 5th, this bird having been noted in previous years at Newburn and St Mary's (IFo).

Rock Dove / Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

A large count of 200 around rail bridge at Stakeford on 1st (GB), 63 at the usual roost on EA Building at Newcastle Business Park on 21st (DM) and present in Jesmond Dene on 5th (MJCo).

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Ten at Cresswell Pond on 12th (STH/IFo) with one to five on four other dates, eight at Backworth on 25th (CGK), seven at Big Waters on 4th and 23rd (GB), six at Ellington on 29th (TB) and one to four at these and six other locations.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

Ten were at Jesmond Dene on 30th (MJCo) and present at St Mary's Island on 23rd (IJ).

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

A spillage of grain on road at North Blyth attracted 66 on 30th (STH) with nine there on 21st and five at Beaconhill (Cramlington) on 9th (PCF).

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

All reports of juveniles at Chevington Burn on 12th (STH/IFo), the Snook (Holy Island) on 23rd, Simonside on 24th (JD) and on the roof of the Drift Café (Cresswell) on 28th (TB).

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Two were at Warren Mill all month (CGK/GPK/DMi) with singles at East Chevington on 8th (NFO) and Holywell Dene on 24th (RJP).

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Two were at Shiremoor all month (CGK) and at Derwent Reservoir on 28th with singles there on five other dates (IFo), Great Whittington on 3rd (AA) and a juvenile at Backworth on 22nd mobbed by a juvenile Great Spotted Woodpecker (SPP).

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

All reports were of singles at High Church (Morpeth) on 6th, Bamburgh Village on 16th (CGK), East Chevington on 20th (IF), Embleton on 29th (IJ) and the first in five years in garden at Ridsdale Village on 30th (MD). Females were noted calling at Ellington on 28th (TB) and Ord House CP (Berwick) on 30th (MHu).

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

The well watched individual at St Mary's Island was present until 17th (AC *et al.*) with possibly the same bird at Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 23rd (KWY). A juvenile called at Wark (N.Tyne) on 19th (PRM).



The popular North Tyneside Long-eared Owl by Jack Bucknall

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

On the 1st one was at St Mary's Island and Border Forest (Kielder) (AC/MD).

Swift *Apus apus*

Good numbers as birds gathered for departure with around 50 over Berwick Town Centre on 9th and Ellington on 27th (BWG/MHu/TB), 40 at Old Hartley on 20th (ASJ), 36 at East Ord (Berwick) on 6th and 30+ at Rudchester (near Heddon) on 2nd. 10-25 were at Amble, Alnwick, Bamburgh, Belford, Big Waters NWT, Cramlington, Gosforth, Longhirst, Morpeth and Pegswood. One to ten reported from many of the preceding sites and fourteen other widespread localities till the month end with nine still at Hadston Carrs on 31st (JR/NA).

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Well reported with three at Gosforth Park NR including two juveniles (NHSN), two at Whiteadder Water (Berwick) on 7th (BWG), Ellington Dene on 18th and Castle Island (R.Wansbeck) on 22nd (GB). Singles were regularly at Big Waters NWT, Hauxley NWT, Jesmond Dene, Rothbury, and for four days at St Mary's from 19th with individuals at 13 other widespread locations.

Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*

One found at the Snook (Holy Island) on 23rd (MJC) was joined by two others at Excavations and Chare End on the 24th (TF/JFa) on which date singles were also present at Budle Point (GPK) and Newbiggin (MN/DD/TRD).

A Wryneck on Holy Island
24th August
Jonathan Farooqi



Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Two juveniles seen at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN) with a single all month and occasionally in a garden at Rothbury (TRD/JD), calling at Big Waters NWT on 17th, at Banks Pond (Dinnington) on 26th (GB) and a first in the observer's garden at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 31st (TD).

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Regularly at Ellington Dene with three on 17th and 21st (MJC), two in an Old Hartley garden (RJP), Chugden Wood (Ellington) on 23rd (TB) with singles at East Ord (Berwick), Cambois, Barns and Valley Parks (Cramlington), Low Carritheth (Hesleyside), Jesmond Dene, Exhibition Park (Newcastle) and Snabdaugh.

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Three birds were in the Cheviots at Newton Tors on 8th (MJC) and two were seen at Ellington on 5th (TB) and at Otterburn on 20th (JMA). Singles were seen at 16 other sites during the month.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Two juvenile females were on Holy Island on 22nd (MJC) and two birds were sat side by side on posts at Druridge Bay dunes on 24th (AA). Single birds were also seen on Holy Island on seven dates including an immature male which was found freshly dead on 3rd (NRG). It had been ringed in a nest near Middleton (Teesdale) on 2nd July this year. Other singles were at Derwent Reservoir on 13th (IFo), Monks' House Pool on 22nd (CGK/GPK) and at Elsdon on 30th (JD).

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

On 5th at East Chevington an adult flew low SW over the north pool (TF/JFa). A juvenile flew S then NW at Holywell Pond on 8th (SPP) and another juvenile was at Derwent reservoir on 10th (IFo). An adult flew E over the Snook (Holy Island) on 23rd (MJC) and a juvenile was seen at Stamfordham on 27th (EC).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

During the month three birds were noted with one flying N and two flying S between 7th and 15th (SSWT). Single birds were observed at Low Newton on 5th (MJC), Derwent Reservoir on several dates (IFo/MN), Holy Island on 21st (TRD), Grindon Lough on 24th (PRM), Budle Bay on 25th (TRD) and finally in the Cheviots on 28th (JL).

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*

A juvenile found at the Snook (Holy Island) on 23rd remained until at least the 31st (MJC *et al.*).

The Holy Island
Red-backed Shrike
photographed on 23rd
August by Mike Carr

**Magpie** *Pica pica*

Just two reports both on 23rd of five at Jesmond Dene and present at St Mary's Island (MJCo/IJ).

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

A high count of six at Gosforth Park NR during the month (NHSN), regularly at Ellington Dene with a peak of four on 18th (MJC), two at Jesmond Dene on 5th and Valley Park (Cramlington) on 31st with singles at four further locations.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

Gatherings of 100 noted at Whitley Chapel and Minsteracres on 1st, Howick Scar and Warkworth on 6th and Knowesgate on 20th (JMA). 75 were at Whitley Mill on 1st, Prestwick Carr on 2nd and Mirlaw House on 20th with seven at Paddy Freeman's Lake (Jesmond Dene) on 9th.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

100 noted at Minsteracres on 1st, Howick Scar, Warkworth on 6th and Knowesgate on 20th with 50 at Whitley Chapel (JMA) and Prestwick Carr (PCF).

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

Eight at Jesmond Dene on 23rd was the only report (MJCo).

Raven *Corvus corax*

More than 14 at the border path (The Cheviot) on 26th (JL), four at Simonside on 24th (JD), three at Coquet Head on 17th (IRD) with one to two at five further upland localities and Saltpans Rocks (Cocklawburn) flying toward the Cheviot.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Family parties of six at the observer's garden Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 27th (TD) and Valley Park (Cramlington) on 10th (DM) with 4+ at Ellington Dene on 18th (MJC) and a single still singing at Big Waters on 13th (GB).

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Seven at Prestwick Carr on 22nd (PCF), three at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on the same date (IJ) and a single at Jesmond Dene on 9th.

Great Tit *Parus major*

At Jesmond Dene four on 23rd (MJCo) and one to two at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay)

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

During the month one to three visited an Old Hartley garden (RJP), two were at Prestwick Carr on 30th and a single at Jesmond Dene on 9th.

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

Four at Prestwick Carr on 22nd and 30th (PCF), two at Holywell Dene on 7th (RJP) with singles there, at Longhorsley, Newbiggin and Shotleyfield.

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

All reports were of singles at Linden Hall on three dates during the month, Rothbury on 1st, Blakehopeburnhaugh on 4th, Morpeth on 11th and Acomb on 29th.

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Just two reports of four at the Snook (Holy Island) on 22nd (MJC) and a fresh juvenile on the golf course at Newbiggin on 1st (GB).

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

On the evening of 4th, 150 gathered to roost at Big Waters NR with counts of 50 and 40 there on 18th and 31st (GB) and 125 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 4th (SR). 20 moved S at East Chevington on the morning of 29th (IF) with strong passage S noted at St Mary's Island on 16th (MSH). 15 were at Beadnell Bay on 12th and three at St Mary's Island on 23rd dwindled to a single by the 30th.

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

An evening roost of 1,000+ noted at Gosforth Park NR toward the month end (NHSN), 218 at Craster and 100 at Holy Island on 22nd (JMA/MJC), 64 S at Druridge Pools on 24th (PRM), 62 at Ancroft on 19th (MHu) and 60 at Hauxley on 29th (IF). 300/h moved S early morning at Budle Point on 10th (CGK), strong passage S noted at St Mary's Island on 16th (MSH) and 36-50 moved S at Berwick, Cambois and East Chevington on 27th to 30th. Two to 40 were at 16 other widespread localities with late young in a nest at Deadwater Fell (Kielder) on 2nd.

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

On 26th 80+ were at Town Moor (Newcastle) (DM), 60 feeding together at Old Hartley on 20th (ASJ), 25 at Ashington on 22nd (TB) and 20 at St Mary's Island on 30th. 15 was the peak at Holywell Dene during the month, 12 at Gosforth Garden Village on 16th with 12 migrants SW over there on 30th and two at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 29th.

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

24 at Waren Mill on 24th was the largest gathering (GPK), followed by 15 at Ellington on 22nd (TB) and 11 at Ellington Dene on 21st, the latter reduced to ten by a male Sparrowhawk (MJC). Nine were at Big Waters, five to six at East Chevington and Holywell Dene and a family party was at Newcastle Quayside. One to two were also reported from Druridge Bay CP and Jesmond Dene.

Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides*

Two were at Holy Island (Snook / Green Shiel) on 15th (MJC). Another was at Holy Island (Chare Ends) on 24th (GB), with it or another at the Excavations (TF/JFa) on the same day.



Two migrants

Left: a Willow Warbler on 23rd by Mike Carr and right: a Greenish Warbler by Jonathan Farooqi on 24th both from Holy Island in August

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

One was in a Sycamore at Chare Ends (Holy Island) on 24th (TF/JFa).

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

The peak count was eight at Bamburgh dunes on 31st (MJC/ADM). Seven were at Gosforth Park NR on 30th and six at Ellington on 11th. Three to six were noted on Holy Island from 22nd-24th, four were at Druridge Pools on 24th and three at Marden Quarry on 23rd. Singles were reported from a further five localities.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Light passage at Holy Island produced 12 on 15th, followed by a more substantial fall towards the end of the month, when 17 were noted on 22nd, 23 on 23rd and 39 on 24th (MJC/TF/JFa). Elsewhere numbers were more modest, with eight at Prestwick Carr on 22nd, eight+ at Druridge Pools on 24th, six at Budle Point on 24th and six at Arcot Pond on 30th; five were at Ellington on 11th, four+ at Bamburgh on 17th and three passage birds were in a suburban garden at Chapel House on 20th. Singles were noted at a further nine localities.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Noted at Ellington from 6th-16th, with a peak of three on 11th (TB). Singles were also reported from Marden Quarry on 23rd, Holy Island from 23rd-24th, Exhibition Park on 25th and Low Newton on 31st.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

A 'fall' on Holy Island produced a count of 20 on 24th (TF/JFa), when two were also at Budle Point and one at Bamburgh. Singles were noted at East Ord on 6th and Exhibition Park on 25th, the latter a passage bird.

A Garden Warbler
the Snook, Holy Island
24th August
Jonathan Farooqi



Barred Warbler *Sylvia nisoria*

One was found in the Snook House Plantation (Holy Island) on 24th (MJC).

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

Singles were at New Mills (Berwick) on 7th and at Budle Point on 23rd.

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

The peak count was five at Druridge Pools on 24th (PRM). Counts of three came from Craster on 7th, Berwick (Needle's Eye) on 10th, Cocklawburn Dunes on 21st, and Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 23rd. Two were noted at Ellington on 11th and at St Mary's Wetland on 23rd with one to two at Holy Island from 23rd-24th and singles in a Woosington garden from 20th-24th, at Beal Point on 21st and at Cramlington (Barns Park) on 24th.

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

The final total for 2015 from the Cramlington Study Area was 21 territories, which included six from both Arcot Pond and West Hartford (STH *et al.*). A single was noted at Prestwick Carr from 14th-16th (PCF).

Icterine Warbler *Hippolais icterina*

All records were from Holy Island. The first was found at the Snook House Plantation on 20th (TF/JFa). Another at the Snook (central pines) on 23rd moved to Snook House on 24th where it remained to 31st (MJC); this bird was joined on 24th by two others (three for the day) when singles were located at the Half Moon Slack (MJC) and between Chare Ends and Excavations (TF/JFa).



Part of the Icterine Warbler Holy Island influx
This bird was photographed by Mike Carr on 31st August at the Snook

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

A total of seven on Holy Island on 22nd included three at the Lough; three were again at the Lough on 23rd with another at the Snook (MJC). One to two were also noted at Arcot Pond, Backworth, Cresswell Pond and Valley Park (Cramlington) on various dates to 26th. Adults with juveniles were noted at Cocklawburn on 7th and Needle's Eye (Berwick) on 10th.



A Sedge Warbler on Holy Island
Mike Carr on 22nd August

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Gosforth Park NR held more than three during the month. Two to three at Big Waters on 9th included a food-begging juvenile. Two were noted at Cresswell Pond on 22nd and Druridge Pools on 27th. At Holy Island two were present on 24th and singles were at the Snook on 23rd and 31st. A single was still singing at East Chevington on 17th and another was at St Mary's Island on 23rd.

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

One to two were noted at Butteryhaugh, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Derwent Reservoir, Ellington, Hexham, Holywell Dene, Jesmond Dene, Low Carritheth (Hesleyside), Rothbury and Tasset Castle. Perhaps more unusual was a calling bird at Prestwick Carr on 30th, this only the second record here for this regular observer (PCF).

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Singles were reported from Big Waters, Exhibition Park and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

One was at Jesmond Dene on 5th.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

1,700 were gathered in grain fields at Scremerston on 31st (MHu). Birds coming to roosts included 1,200 at East Chevington (TB) and 500 at Druridge Pools on 30th and 1,000 at Big Waters on 31st, the latter rising from 125 on 12th. Further large gatherings were 530 at Berwick GC on 19th, 500 at Bothal Pond on 27th and 410 on Holy Island on 22nd. Elsewhere were 280 at Ancroft, 200 at Blyth and 30 at Holburn Grange.

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

Apart from two in Jesmond Dene on 9th, all records were of singles, at Beanley, Blakehopeburnhaugh, Bywell Bridge, Fulbeck (Morpeth), Holywell Dene and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Prestwick Carr held 14 on 30th (PCF), while three to four were noted at Jesmond Dene and Whitley Bay.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

Single early arrivals were on Holy Island on 15th and 23rd (MJC)

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

One to two were noted at Holywell Dene and an Old Harley garden.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

24 at Toft House (Otterburn Ranges) on 23rd was the largest gathering (JR). Further sizeable flocks were 19 at Ancroft Mill on 2nd (GB) and 15 at Wooler Common on 16th (TRD/JD). Elsewhere three to six were noted at Ellington, Exhibition Park, Jesmond Dene and Newbiggin.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

One to two were reported from Holy Island on 15th, 21st and 23rd and there was a peak count from here of eight on 24th (TF/JFa). Passage birds were noted at Town Moor/Exhibition Park, with two on 7th, six on 25th and one on 28th (GB). A family party of four was at Alwinton on 6th, three were at Berwick on 7th and singles were noted at a further nine localities to the month end.



A Spotted Flycatcher at Holy island
Mike Carr on 23rd August

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Four at Jesmond Dene on 30th was the only report.

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

An influx at Holy Island on 23rd-24th produced up to 20 across the island (TF/JFa). Elsewhere on 24th, two were at St Mary's Island and singles at Druridge Pools and Tynemouth. Earlier in the month further singles were at Holburn Grange and at E Holburn on 7th and Holy Island and St Mary's Island on 15th.



A Pied Flycatcher at Holy island
by Mike Carr on 23rd August

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

At Big Waters four passage birds were noted on 8th and two on 13th (GB). On Holy Island there were counts of one to two on 15th, 20th and 23rd and two+ on 24th. Singles were also at Tynemouth on 23rd and 24th.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

In breeding areas two family parties (six birds) were noted at Alwinton on 6th (JD) and six (including three to four juveniles) were still at Alwinton on 30th (NFO); four were also noted at Broadstrother (Cheviots) on 16th. Passage birds included a peak count of ten at Holy Island on 24th (TF/JFa), two to three at Brenkley from 21st-23rd, two+ at Bamburgh-Budle Bay on 23rd and two at Cresswell Pond on 15th, St Mary's Island on 25th and at Druridge Pools and East Chevington on 30th. Singles were also reported from Backworth, Big Waters, Cocklawburn, Lynemouth Bay and Snab Point (Cresswell).

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

Two family parties at Druridge Pools on 24th comprised a pair with four juveniles and another pair with two juveniles (PRM). At East Chevington, a male with two juveniles in fields near the South Pool was noted on 12th and a pair with three recently fledged young was reported on 30th. Further breeding was confirmed with a male and two juveniles at Newbiggin on 1st and two fresh juveniles at Cresswell Pond on 12th. Three were at Dunstanburgh on 29th and one to two were also reported from coastal sites at Amble, Berwick Little Beach, Boulmer, Ellington, Low Newton and Tynemouth. Inland a pair was feeding young in the nest at Deadwater Fell on 2nd (MD) and a single was at Alwinton on 30th.

Wheatear *Oenanthe Oenanthe*

Five were found along the haulage road at Druridge Pools on 30th (TB). Further passage birds included three at Brenkley on 21st, St Mary's Island on 24th and Budle Bay on 29th, with singles at Dunstanburgh on 29th and Holy Island on 30th. Inland two were at Windyhaugh on 8th and Derwent Reservoir on 27th and singles were noted at Cairn Hill (Cheviot), Grindon Lough, Town Moor and Upper Coquetdale on various dates from 22nd-28th.

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

One or two in gardens at Old Hartley and Marden Estate throughout the month were the only reports.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Large flocks of around 170 were in a grain field at Needle's Eye (Berwick) on 10th and 140 at Backworth on 19th (MHu/CGK). Elsewhere, 64 were noted at Meldon, 50 at Holburn Grange, 43 at Beaconhill (Cramlington), about 42 at Chatton, Dinnington and Newbiggin. 23-32 were noted at three further sites.

Tree Sparrow *Passer Montanus*

75 was by far the largest count this month at Chugdon Woods on 30th and 31st (TB). Groups of 20-30 were observed on several dates at Ellington and on 31st at Waren Mill (TB/CGK/GPK). One to ten were at four further sites.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

Cresswell Pond held six birds on 11th, a female and five juveniles (TRD). Three were noted at Longhirst, St Mary's, East Chevington, Bank's Pond and Monks' House during the month (ASJ/AC/GB/CGK /GPK/IJ/NFO). One to two also observed at 16 further widespread sites during the month.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Ten were seen at Whittle Dene on 30th, with eight at Alwinton on 11th (SR/NFO). One to three were at 14 other sites.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

An impressive count of 67 was made at Bamburgh Castle Green on 22nd (CGK/GPK). 46 at Derwent Reservoir on 30th (IFo) was also a good count. 32 were at Prestwick Carr, 28 at Whittle Dene and 26 at St Mary's within the month (PCF/SR/ASJ). 16 were at Kielder Water on 20th (JMA).

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*.

Passage birds were observed at Brenkley (single) on 19th and at Tynemouth (two) on 22nd (GB/DRW).

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

A total of 70 in two areas of Holy Island on 22nd (MJC). Around 35 brought down by rain on 19th at Brenkley (GB). 15+ in the Cheviots at Newton Tors on 8th (MJC). One to 11 at five further sites.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Again observed at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) with single birds noted in the month. The only other sighting was of one at Stag Rocks on 16th.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Two records only this month, with one to five at garden feeders at Old Hartley (RJP). A single in Jesmond Dene. Under-recorded no doubt.

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Ten+ was the maximum group this month at Dipton on 1st (MJC). Seven were at Prestwick Carr on 30th (PCF). One to six were noted at nine further sites.

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

Some large gatherings were noted towards the month's end with 180 at Backworth on 31st and 120 at St Mary's fields on 20th (CGK/ASJ). 70 were observed at Cresswell on 12th (STH/IFo). Three flocks of 44, 46 and 56 were observed at Berwick during the month (Mhu). 40+ at Brenkley on 11th (PCF). Elsewhere, eight to 36 were at six further sites.

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis caberet*

Eleven flew S at Holy Island on 31st (MJC). Four also flew S at East Chevington on 29th (IF).

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

18 were at Blakehopeburnhaugh on 4th, with 11 seen at Sweethope on 22nd (JR/ASJ). Ten flew S at West Hartford on 8th (STH). One to three were at three further sites.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

At Bamburgh, 200 seen on 16th (CGK), with 150 at West Hartford on 28th (STH). St. Mary's held around 135 including many juveniles throughout (ASJ). 105 were at Prestwick Carr on 28th (PCF). Elsewhere, 70 were noted at Cresswell and eight to 62 were present at seven further sites.

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*.

102 moved S on 29th at East Chevington (IF). The next day five small groups totalling 59 birds flew S at Gosforth Garden Village (MJC). 36 also headed S at Cambois on 30th (STH). One to 17 were at seven other sites during the month.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citronella*

Birds were still singing at Brenkley, Big Waters and Sleekburn up to 11th (GB). Elsewhere, singles seen at twelve sites.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

The sole record this month was of a single at Grindon on 24th.

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

Two were found at Hauxley on 24th (HRS). An increasingly regular escape in recent years.

Budgerigar *Melopsittacus undulatus*

One was in a hedgerow at Beacon Lane, Cramlington on 27th (DM)

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Berwick Wildlife Group, Hauxley Ringing Station, Natural History Society of Northumbria, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

Apologies for any accidental omissions

BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION

This bulletin was compiled by Graeme Bowman (Mute Swan to Ruddy Duck), Steve Laing (Red Grouse to Black-necked Grebe), Trevor Blake (Honey-buzzard to Crane), Steve Holliday (Avocet to Godwit) Ian Forsyth (Turnstone to Skua), Eddie Crabtree (Puffin to Great Black-backed Gull), Tim Dean (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), Alan Jack (Dunnock to Corn Bunting), Kathy Evans (WeBS Coastal Counts) and Steve Holliday (WeBS Inland Counts).

Thanks to David Sanders of NNBC for providing data.

Proof reading was by Mike Smith.

July Bulletin please note Mike Smith did not proof-read this bulletin

Edited by Steve Barrett NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com

Mail distribution by Paul Stewart.

RECORD SUBMISSION

Please email ntbcorg@gmail.com for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and grid references: The use of standard location names and the include grid references as this 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.

Could club members ensure they to submit records direct to NTBC rather than just Birdtrack. There may be an assumption by some members this happens automatically. We do not want to miss records.

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

It is preferable if you re-size your photos before sending and a suggested size is 640 x 480 pixels. Please ensure you include the following information with your submissions: name, species, date taken, locality.

Photographs will not be used elsewhere without the photographer's permission.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual membership costs £10 for a junior, £30 for an individual, and £32 for a family. For membership enquiries please contact ntbc@jobentley.plus.com

Subscriptions are due from 1st October. Members are asked to check that standing orders have been paid.

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. Please submit any new content for the website to the main club email address.

NTBC SIGHTINGS PAGE

The Sightings Page contains current reports by members. Access is from the NTBC website and an email notification is available for new postings.

Members need to submit a request to be added to the website, specifying the email address they wish to post from before they can submit sightings to ntbcorg@gmail.com

COUNTY RECORDS COMMITTEE

Alan Curry will complete his four year spell on the committee in December 2015. 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 bird life 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.

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NHSN LECTURES

The NHSN are running interesting lectures again this season. Here is the programme:

Friday 9 October
How to see the world like an insect. Dr Vivek Nityananda

Friday 16 October
The wild flowers of Orkney. Eric Meek

Friday 23 October
Mammals through a lens. Cain Scrimgeour

Friday 30 October
Woodcock in Britain: migration, populations and trends. Chris Heward

Friday 6 November
Northumbrian geologists of the 19th century. Karl Egeland-Eriksen

Friday 13 November
British Divers Marine Life Rescue. Richard Ilderton

Friday 20 November
Lichens in the attic. Dr Rebecca Yahr

Friday 27 November
The Birds of Nepal and their conservation. Carol Inskipp

Friday 4 December
Active tectonics of the central Apennines. Professor Kein McCaffery

Lectures are at Great North Museum (Hancock), starting at 7PM.



A Common Sandpiper at Rothbury
17th August
Tim Dean

COASTAL WEBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND

AUGUST 2015

TB T. Brewis
MGA M. G. Anderson
MHu M. Hutchison

ACra A. Craggs
MLC M. L. Cadwallender / W. Dickson
TAC T. A. Cadwallender

SP S. Pantaby
DMT D. M. Turner
PF P. Fletcher
LJM L. J. McDougall

Site	Berwick North Shore (including Little Beach)	Tweed Estuary	Tweed: A1 By-Pass to Horncastle	Spittal - Cocklawburn	Lindisfarne MNR (including Buddle Bay)	Seahouses - Beadnell	Ain Estuary	Cresswell - Newbiggin	Blyth Estuary	St Mary's Island	East Howdon, (north bank only)	Redhugh - Scotswood Bridge, (north bank)	Scotswood - Newburn Bridge, (north bank)
Counter	MHu	MHu	TB	MHu	ACra	ACra	MLC	TAC	MGA	LJM	SP	DMT	PF
Date	12	13	15	11	16	16	15	16	17	16	16	29	31
TOTAL	12	13	15	11	16	16	15	16	17	16	16	29	31
Little Grebe					1								
Great Crested Grebe	1				1								
Comorant	241	18	17	38	29	4	22	4				47	29
Shag	168	40		45	4					78	1		8
Grey Heron	70	4	12	3	8			10				24	1
Mute Swan	299	2	248	32	7	4		2		2		5	
Greylag Goose	166												1
Canada Goose	56												
Light-bellied Brent Goose	2							24					
Shelduck	73				2								
Wigeon	8				63	32		4		5	1		
Teal	22				8	2							
Mallard	168		14	2	14			8					
Shoveler	4				39	3	24					54	17
Tufted Duck	7				4								
Eider	465	17	4	42	267	18	101				24	4	
Common Scoter	87			64	23								
Red-breasted Merganser	27			27									
Goosander	719	9	356	42	282	5	3	4		18			
Mooren	8				2		1	4		1			
Coot	4				4								
Oystercatcher	1,257	126	18	27	803	114	130	9	53	24	41	25	1
Ringed Plover	579	4	3	32	292	1	130	28	3	53	33	1	
Golden Plover	667				166						501		
Grey Plover	224	1			220		3						
Lapwing	577	46	5		12			262					
Knot	364	1			331	8		2	13	13	91	4	134
Sanderling	228			1	42	7	10		124	51			
Purple Sandpiper	11				11								
Dunlin	1,080				861	11	64	35	54	54	12		
Black-tailed Godwit	62				18	1		5		39			
Bar-tailed Godwit	535	1			528		5				2		
Whimbrel	13				11								
Curlew	1,151	29	146	8	805	17	6	114			32	5	1
Rodbank	957	22	120	24	377	77	36	145	50	115	15	8	25
Greenbank	9		1		2			6					9
Green Sandpiper	1							1					
Common Sandpiper	2				1								1
Turnstone	132	2			21		38		62		23	4	
Black-headed Gull	2,986	8	248	64	837	196	200	188		389		148	619
Common Gull	252	6	12	15	2	211		5					166
Lesser Black-backed Gull	128	3	4	3	1	7	9			1		1	81
Herring Gull	3,555	43	1026	25	21	1280	130	197	62	274		475	13
Great Black-backed Gull	91	7	3	4	9	3	10	1				50	135
Kittiwake	995						285					684	6
Sandwich Tern	250	22	2	62	40		16	48		40		20	1
Roseate Tern	19												
Common Tern	267				36			25		17	1	188	1
Arctic Tern	37							15				10	
ADDITIONAL SPECIES													
Little Egret	17	1	2		8	1		5		1			
TOTALS - WILDOFOWL	2,576	101	830	108	4,75	522	89	130	84	0	104	32	47
- WADERS	7,869	186	335	6	92	4,501	236	422	607	359	285	815	47
- GULLS & TERNS	8,580	89	1,321	127	140	2,417	337	717	356	6	741	1	1,576
												633	389
													67

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2015 No 9

MONTHLY SUMMARY SEPTEMBER 2015

18th November 2015



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WeBS inland

WeBS coastal

Subscription Reminder

Optics for Sale

CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

American Wigeon

Garganey

Long-tailed Duck

Great Shearwater

Balearic Shearwater

Storm Petrel

Little Egret

Bittern

Red-necked Grebe

Curlew Sandpiper

Wood Sandpiper

Jack Snipe

Black Tern

Caspian Gull

Mediterranean Gull

Hobby

Firecrest

Yellow-browed Warbler

Barred Warbler

Icterine Warbler

Eclipse drake present between 2nd and 4th.

A late individual at East Chevington on 27th.

The summering drake remained at Derwent reservoir until 2nd.

One tracked along N/E coast was seen at St Mary's and Newbiggin on 5th.

Several birds seen in first half of the month.

Two found on a pelagic trip off Tynemouth on 7th.

11 still at Wansbeck Estuary on 20th.

Two noted at Gosforth Park and one at East Chevington.

Single tracked north at Tynemouth and Newbiggin on 6th.

One at Newton flash on 7th. Scarce this autumn.

One at Stobswood on 20th.

One at Shiremoor on 24th.

Singles at St Mary's on 5th & East Chevington on 15th.

A ringed bird was noted at Blyth on 22nd.

Record count of 92 at Newbiggin on 22nd.

Singles at Holy Island on 11th and Budle Bay on 14th.

An obliging individual near Cresswell Pond hide on 13th.

Series of records from mid-month.

Singles at Snab Point and Holy Island.

Single at Holy Island excavations on 10th.

COMMITTEE NEWS

Data Manager Vacancy

Are you competent at IT? We still urgently need a Data Manager for club records. Your Club needs you!



A

Sooty Shearwater on the water during the 7th September pelagic.

By Jack Bucknall

INDOOR MEETINGS

NTBC indoor meetings are held at Northern Rugby Club, McCracken Park, Great North Road, Newcastle, NE3 2DT starting at 7.00pm and generally finish between 9.00pm-9.30pm. The next meetings of the 2015-2016 season are:

10th December

Colin Bradshaw 'Spoon Forks and Chopsticks'

Eight intrepid north-east birders braved bizarre food, awful driving and noisy brothels to chase a host of the world's rarest birds and watch a small patch of ground for some great sibs.

FIELD TRIPS

22nd November 2015

East Lothian sea birds

Contact Steve Anderson seaswan@btinternet.com

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 2013 page 233.

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.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Peak counts involved 82 at QEII CP Lake on 20th (CDH), 49 at Killingworth Lake on 6th (LJM), and 24 at Budle Bay (CGK/GPK). Five to ten were also at Broomlee and Greenlee Loughs, Bywell Haughs, Castle Island and Howdon, and two to four at five other sites. The last cygnet from a brood of seven from Holy Island Lough was killed by a fox during the month, having taken to feeding with poultry at St Coombs farmyard together with the pair of adult swans (IK).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

A total of 74 flew W at Cramlington on 13th and 23rd and 54 E there on 30th (DM). A notable count of 925 was made at Derwent Reservoir on 20th (PRM), 236 were at Big Waters on 24th (ISD *per* GB), 214 at Budle Bay on 30th (GPK), 150-160 at Airy Holm Reservoir (IFo), Prestwick Carr (PCF) and West Ord (MHu), and 60-101 at Haughton Strother GP and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Groups of 12-28 were also at Arcot and Linton Ponds, and Woodhorn Flashes, and one to nine were at Bothal Pond and Grindon Lough. One at Woodhorn Flashes on 24th was noted as still being attached to a family of Mute Swans (as it has been since May) (STH).

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Southerly movement involved 106-120 at East Ord on 25th and 27th (MHu), totals of 190 at Ellington between 25th-30th (TB), 130 S at Cramlington on 26th (DM), and 23-62 at Hexham, Lindisfarne NNR, Prestwick Carr, Tynemouth and West Hartford between 20th-27th, and a steady passage at Lindisfarne NNR on 26th involved skeins of 30-150, some passing over very high (IK). A group of 20 flew SW at Druridge Pools on 19th. Budle Bay held ten on 7th, 50 on 15th and 20th, 500 on 25th and 1,600 on 26th (CGK/GPK); 500 were at East Chevington on 27th (TF/JFa), and 98-159 at Grindon Lough (PRM) and Widdrington Moor Lake (MSH).

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Peak counts were 300 at QEII CP Lake on 28th (JMA), 244 at Derwent Reservoir on 20th (PRM), 170 at Bothal Pond on 4th (TF/JFa), 115-125 at Grindon Lough (PRM) and West Ord (MHu), and 30-46 at Arcot and Linton Ponds, Big Waters, Newcastle Leazes Park and West Stobswood Pool. More unusual were two on the River Tyne at Elswick on 17th (DM).

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

46 SW at Prestwick Carr on 19th (PCF) were followed by 15 at Budle Bay on 24th (GPK) and 450+ there on 30th (GPK). A skein of 50 flew S at St Mary's on 29th (SPP) and groups of ten to 20 flew over Lindisfarne NNR on 26th (IK).

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

Reports of pale-bellied *hrota* race birds involved a total of 93 N, beginning with 14 N on 3rd and ending with 68 N on 18th (SSWT), 11-20 flew N at Boulmer (TRD/JD) and Stag Rocks on 4th (GPK), 29 N at Newbiggin on 5th (GB/TF/JFa), 24 N at Annstead Point on 5th-6th (CGK/GPK), six N at Newton Point on 7th (TRD/JD), and singles at Newbiggin on 9th and Boulmer on 13th. At Lindisfarne NNR, 185 had returned by 4th (IK) and rose to a peak of about 3,000 by 20th (TRD/JD). Dark-bellied *bernicla* race birds involved five to six N at Newbiggin (STH) and St Mary's (JBu/DMcG) on 9th. Groups of 15-16 un-raced birds flew N at St Mary's and Tynemouth on 5th (IJ/SPP), 23 flew N at Newbiggin on 18th (ADMc) and three N at Snab Point on 20th.

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Budle Bay attracted a peak of 370 on 30th (CGK/GPK), 12 were at Cresswell Pond on 26th (MSH), three to four at Bell's Pond and Castle Island, and one to two at the Blyth Estuary, Bothal Pond and Howdon. A juvenile flew W at Big Waters on 2nd (GB).

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

A well-below average 630 flew N at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), a total of 255 moved N at Newbiggin on 5th and 9th (GB/STH/TF/JFa), and 70-108 N at Annstead Point, Stag Rocks (CGK/GPK), and Tynemouth (DRW) on 4th-5th. Ten at Budle Bay on 2nd increased to 75 by 5th, 120 by 17th, 700 by 25th and 1,500 by 30th (CGK/GPK). A steady arrival at Lindisfarne NNR produced about 6,000 by 12th (IK), 165 were at Grindon Lough on 2nd (PRM), 160 at East Chevington on 27th (NFO), and 32-67 at Big Waters, Derwent Reservoir and Gosforth Park NR. Ten to 15 were also at Bothal and Cresswell Ponds, St Mary's and West Stobswood Pool.

American Wigeon *Anas americana*

A drake in eclipse plumage was found at Grindon Lough on 2nd (PRM) and was still present on 4th (AJH).

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Sea-watching records involved singles N at Newbiggin on 7th (STH) and Seaton Sluice on 12th (SSWT), and two S at Newbiggin on 9th (STH). Largest concentrations were 78 at Big Waters on 14th (GB), 45 at Swallow Pond on 11th (SPP), 25 at East Chevington on 29th (TRD/JD) and 20 at Arcot Pond on 8th (LJM), and 11-16 at Bothal and Holywell Ponds, Castle Island and Gosforth Park NR. Four to five visited Linton Ponds, West Stobswood Pool and Widdrington Moor Lake, and one to two at Budle Bay, Druridge Pools, St Mary's Wetland and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Teal *Anas crecca*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was an above-average 918 N and 60 S (SSWT), a total of 427 flew N at Newbiggin between 1st-9th, including 244 on 9th (GB/STH/TF/JFa), and 65-147 N at Stag Rocks (GPK) and Tynemouth (DRW) on 4th. At Budle Bay, 250 on 14th increased to a peak of 900 by 28th (CGK/GPK) when 320 were at Grindon Lough (AJR), 181-203 were at Arcot Pond (LJM) and Derwent Reservoir (PRM), and 64-85 at Castle Island, Holburn Moss and Monks' House Pool. Counts of 15-40 came from Big Waters, Bothal and Holywell Ponds, Gosforth Park NR, Howdon, Newham Bog and West Stobswood Pool.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Two flew N at Newbiggin on 7th (STH). Large counts were few, with peaks of 185 at Derwent Reservoir on 20th (PRM), 98 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 1st (SR), and 53-70 at Bothal Pond (TD), Castle Island (DM/STH) and St Mary's Wetland (MSH). Groups of 20-38 were at Gosforth Park NR, Linton Ponds and Newcastle Exhibition and Leazes Parks, and one to six at Arcot Pond, Jesmond Dene, Wark and Whitley Bay.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

Northerly passage involved 11-15 at Tynemouth (SPP/DRW), seven at Newbiggin (GB/TF/JFa) and two at Annstead Point (CGK/GPK) on 5th, while nine were noted at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). Ten were at East Chevington on 24th (ADMc) and one to nine between 19th-28th (TB/TRD/JD/NFO *et al.*), three at Budle Bay on 5th (CGK/GPK), and one to two at Arcot and Swallow Ponds, Big Waters and Grindon Lough on odd dates between 4th-19th.

Garganey *Anas querquedula*

One was at East Chevington north pool on 27th (TF/JFa/NFO).

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

One flew N at Newbiggin on 5th (GB/TF/JFa). Small numbers included peaks of 11 at Bothal Pond on 4th (TF/JFa), three to five at Big Waters (AJJ *per* GB), Gosforth Park NR (NHSN), Grindon Lough (PRM) and Linton Ponds (CDH), and one to two at Arcot, Bell's and Cresswell Ponds, Budle Bay and East Chevington.

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Ten were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 25th (MSH), five at Bothal Pond on 1st and 19th (TB/TF/JFa), three at Linton Ponds on 20th (CDH), and one to two at Big Waters, Derwent Reservoir, East Chevington, Gosforth Park NR, Holywell Pond, Killingworth Lake and West Stobswood Pool.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Six flew N at Seaton Sluice on 30th (SSWT) and two N at Newbiggin on 5th (GB). Generally modest numbers included peaks of 30 at Castle Island on 20th (DM), 26 at Newcastle Exhibition Park on 28th (GB), 17-20 at Bothal (TD) and Cocklawburn (MHu) Ponds, Newcastle Exhibition and Leazes Parks, and QEII CP Lake (CDH), and ten to 15 at Airy Holm Reservoir, Big Waters, Wansbeck Riverside Park and West Stobswood Pool. Two to six were also at Derwent Reservoir, Grindon Lough, Jesmond Dene, Linton Ponds, St Mary's and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

29 were at Newbiggin on 17th (PRM), 18 at Cocklawburn on 24th (MHu) and three at the Tyne Estuary.

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

The long-staying drake remained at Derwent Reservoir until at least 2nd (IFo).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

1,223 flew N at Seaton Sluice during the month and included 647 on 9th and 415 on 29th (SSWT), while 1,072 flew N at St Mary's in just four hours on 9th (JBu/DMcG) when 787 moved N at Newbiggin (STH). About 200 were off Druridge Bay CP on 8th (TRD/JD), 34 at Cocklawburn on 28th (MHu), five to 20 off Druridge between 11th-29th, and seven at Snab Point.

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

All records were of birds on active passage; two flew N at St Mary's (JBU/DMcG) and one N at Newbiggin (STH) on 9th, and singles N at Newbiggin on 1st (GB), Stag Rocks on 4th (GPK) and Tynemouth on 12th (DRW). One flew S at Seaton Sluice on 12th (SSWT).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Two were at Budle Bay between 22nd-25th (CGK/GPK), and one at Bothal Pond regularly during the month (TF/JFa *et al.*).

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Two were at Budle Bay on 26th (CGK/GPK).

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

33 flew N at Stag Rocks on 4th (GPK), eight N at Annstead Point on 5th (CGK/GPK) and four N at Seaton Sluice between 6th-26th (SSWT). A flock regularly at Holy Island harbour peaked at about 300 (full-winged juveniles)(IK), 125 were at Berwick on 20th (JMA), 29 at Branton GP on 29th (JD), and 14 at Budle Bay on 5th (CGK/GPK). Six to nine were at the Blyth Estuary and Fourstones, and four to five at Caistron and Warkworth.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

20 at Holburn Moss on 20th (GPK), six at Hepple Whitefield on 1st (TRD/JD), two at Alnwick Moor on 20th and a single at the roadside in Cambois on 16th were the only reports this month.



A Red-legged Partridge at Linhope
30th September by Janet Dean

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

A single bird was at Hepple Whitefield on 1st (TRD/JD).

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Several double-digit counts including a total of 24 birds, in coveys of 13 and 11, at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 13th (TB), 14 at Waren Mill (Bamburgh) on 28th (CGK/GPK), 13 at Backworth on 29th (CGK) and ten at Brenkley (Blagdon) on 1st (GB). One to nine were at several other localities.

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

Passage at Seaton Sluice Watch Tower was above average for September with a total of 194 (95 N and 99 S) recorded (SSWT). On 9th passage birds included a total of 27 (18 S and nine N) past Newbiggin between 0620-0900h (STH) and 26 past St Mary's in four hours (JBU/DMcG). Eight were at Druridge on 14th (PRM) and many records were submitted of sightings of one to six birds all along the coast.

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*

Two flew N past St Mary's on 5th (IJ/AC) and an adult in breeding plumage was also sighted past Tynemouth on the same day (SPP) which may have been one of those birds. One landed on the sea at Seaton Sluice on 2nd (SSWT).

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

One was found during the pelagic trip from North Shields on 7th (JBu/PS/AC/SPP/LMc/IJ).

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

On 5th, 220/h moved N into headwinds past Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) (IK). 120 were seen during the pelagic trip from North Shields on 7th (AC/IJ *et al.*). Ten were at Boulmer on 4th and at Newton Point on 7th (TRD/JD). One to five were present at various coastal localities and no movements were noted from Seaton Sluice Watch Tower during the month.



A Fulmar photographed during the 7th September pelagic by Jack Bucknall

Great Shearwater *Puffinus gravis*

A well tracked individual was seen at various points during its travel northward on 5th, starting at St.Mary's at 1810h (GB/IJ/TF/AC *et al.*).

Sooty Shearwater *Puffinus griseus*

Passage peaked on 5th with a maximum count of 26 N past Newbiggin in five and a half hours (TF/JFa). Peaks on other days were 14 N past Annstead Point (Seahouses) on 6th (CGK/GPK), 12 N at Holy Island on 7th (SR), two S at Tynemouth on 12th (DRW) and one N at Cresswell on 27th (JL). Five were seen on the Pelagic Trip from North Shields on 7th and one came to a "chum" slick off Whitley Bay on 13th (DM/GB *et al.*).



A Sooty Shearwater during the 7th September Tyne pelagic by Jack Bucknall

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

The monthly total of 73 N past Seaton Sluice was "extremely low" for September (SSWT) and there were none recorded after 5th. On 5th, peak counts were 70 N past St Mary's in four hours (AC), 54 N past Annstead Point (CGK/GPK), 50 N past Newbiggin (GB) and 30 N past Tynemouth from 0630-0900h (DRW). One to two birds were seen at various other locations but passage ceased after 7th.

Balearic Shearwater *Puffinus mauretanicus*

The first of the year was spotted flying N along the shoreline of Boulmer on 3rd whilst the observer was enjoying a meal in a pub whilst frantically scrabbling for his bins! (JD). This was followed by singles flying N past St Mary's (AC/IJ) and Seaton Sluice (SSWT) on 5th, Tynemouth on 6th and 12th (DRW) and two at Holy Island on 7th (SR).

Storm Petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus*

Two were seen during the North Shields Pelagic Trip on evening of 7th (AC/IJ/JBu *et al.*).

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

At Seaton Sluice, the highest count by far was 2,000 N in one hour on 2nd (SSWT). 1,147 flew N past Newbiggin during a seawatch from 0655-0755h on 7th (STH) and 250 per hour moved N into strong headwinds past Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) on 5th (IK). Ca. 320 were feeding close inshore at Spittal Bay (Berwick) on 24th (MHu) and 100 were recorded during the North Shields Pelagic Trip on 7th (IJ). Two to fifteen were also reported from various coastal localities.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

No obvious signs of migratory movement at Seaton Sluice, however the maximum count was 18 N and 15 S in two and a half hours on 25th (SSWT). Blyth Harbour held 123 on 16th (STH) and Amble Harbour peaked at 43, also on that date (LJM). 41 was the peak count at Derwent Reservoir on 20th (PRM) with that same number on staithes within the Blyth Estuary on 27th (STH). A WeBS count on 20th found 27 present at Castle Island (River Wansbeck) (DM/STH). 18 were on the River Tweed, also on 20th (JMA), 17 were sitting on offshore wind turbine rails at North Blyth on 5th (LJM) and 15 were at Amble Weir on 5th. Gosforth Park NR held up to five birds during the month (NHSN) and one to nine were at several other localities.

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

47N and 8S was the monthly total from Seaton Sluice, mainly between 1st-2nd (SSWT). Ca. 100 were present at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 20th (TRD/JD) and a single at Boulmer on 4th was the only other record.

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

A single bird increased to two from mid-month at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN). One was seen at East Chevington North Pool at 0936h on 13th (NFO).

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

The roost at Warkworth held 12 birds on 3rd (JMA) and the monthly peak at Castle Island (River Wansbeck) was 11 on 20th (GB). Lindisfarne NNR numbers peaked on 20th when eight were at Beal Point (TRD/JD), with seven regularly seen at nearby Budle Bay (CGK/GPK). The Wansbeck Estuary, away from Castle Island, regularly held up to six throughout the month, as did Cresswell Pond (TB/MSH/TF/JFa). One to five were at several other typical locations including Amble Weir, Fenham-le-Moor, Hauxley, Monks' House Pool, River Blyth and Seahouses Harbour.



A Little Egret at Hauxley NR by Janet Dean on 8th September

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Howdon peaked at an impressive 25 on 26th (CB), whilst 15 at Old Hartley on 30th was also an excellent count (MNC). Up to eight birds were present at three other locations – Amble Weir on 5th (JMA), Castle Island during a WeBS count on 20th (DM/STH) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 1st (SR). Five were at Holywell Pond on 15th (MSH), with the same number at Derwent Reservoir on 20th (PRM). One to four were seen at many other localities.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Peak counts were as follows:

Locality	Peak Count	Date	Observer/notes
Holywell Pond	34	1st	17 Adults and 17 Juveniles (LJM)
Big Waters NWT	28	23rd	(GB)
East Chevington	16	12th	WeBS count (JL)
Airy Holm Reservoir	11	1st	(IFo)
Bothal Pond (Coney Garth)	10	6th	Six adults and four immature. One pair had three very young birds (TD)
Castle Island	9	20th	WeBS count (DM/STH)
Druridge Pools	8	11th	(TRD/JD)
Gosforth Park NR	4	Sept	(NHSN)
Linton Ponds	4	20th	(CDH)

One to three birds were at several other typical localities.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Widdrington Moor Lake proved popular all month, peaking at 11 during a WeBS count on 12th (JL). Derwent Reservoir held four on 3rd and two were at Airy Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield) on 1st (IFo). One to two birds were at Branton GP and Druridge Bay Country Park.

Red-Necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

An individual, presumably the same bird, was sighted flying N past Tynemouth at 0740h (DRW) then past Church Point (Newbiggin) a little later (TB).

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Only a single record this month of a single bird at Low Waskerley on 1st (IFo).

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

All sightings came from the Druridge Bay area with a female and a juvenile at East Chevington on 12th (TB) and a male flew N and a female/immature flew S at Cresswell pond on 13th (ADM). Other birds were noted at Cresswell Pond, Hemscott Hill (Cresswell), Druridge, East Chevington and at Widdrington Moor Lake. On the 12th a male was in active pursuit of a Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus* with prey at Cresswell Pond (ADM).

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

On 9th a bird with jesses became entangled in a tree at Gosforth Park NR, it was rescued and returned to its owner (NHSN).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Up to three birds were at Gosforth Park NR throughout the month and on several occasions were seen chasing and attempting to catch Kingfishers *Alcedo atthis*. Three were also seen at Howdon on 4th (CB) and two were noted at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) also on 4th (MNC). Single birds were noted at 17 sites including a juvenile female which was trapped and ringed at Bamburgh on 30th (BRS).

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Eight + birds were at Kyo Woods on 20th (GPK) and five birds were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 6th (PRM) and at Big Waters NWT on 19th (GB). Four birds were seen at Prestwick Carr on 1st (PCF) and one to three birds were at over 25 sites.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

Two birds were seen at Derwent Reservoir on 3rd (IFo) and single birds were observed at Kielder Reservoir on 2nd (JSB) and at Church Point (Newbiggin) on 5th (GB/TF/JFa).

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Three+ were at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN) throughout the month and at three were at Swallow Pond (Wallsend) on 6th (SPP). Two + were at Big Waters NWT throughout the month (GB). The only other record was of a single bird at the North Pool (East Chevington) on 15th (TB).

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

18 birds at Bothal Pond on 13th was the highest count, followed by 17 birds at Gosforth Park NR throughout the month (NHSN). 12 were at Woodhorn Flashes on 24th (STH) and 11 were at Arcot Pond on 6th (DM). One to eight birds were at Castle Island, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Jesmond Dene, Leazes Park (Newcastle) and at Linton Ponds.

Coot *Fulica atra*

On 11th 163 birds were at Swallow Pond (Wallsend) (SPP) and Widdrington Moor Lake peaked at 160 on 25th (MSH). Other high counts were 104 at QEII CP on 20th (CDH), 68 at Big Waters NWT on 30th (AJJ *per* GB), 47 at Bothal Pond on 13th (TD) and 22 at Gosforth Park NR throughout the month (NHSN). One to ten birds were also seen at Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Leazes Park (Newcastle) and Killingworth Lake. On 11th a bird with a white Darvic ring B6V (BTO- GR81336) was at QEII CP, this bird was ringed at Killingworth Lake on 28/12/14 and was recorded at Gentoft Lake near Copenhagen (Denmark) on 9th May 2015.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Passage at Seaton Sluice totalled 41 N and 130 S during the month (SSWT). The high-tide roost at St Cuthbert's Island, Holy Island totalled 700 on 26th (IK), 210 were in nearby Budle Bay on 6th (CGK/GPK) and the maximum high-tide roost on the R. Blyth Estuary was 153 on 27th (STH). Further coastal counts included 90 on the Berwick coast on 22nd (MHu), 73 at St Mary's Island on 20th (MSH) and ten at Whitley Bay (Rockcliffe) on 13th (IJ), whilst two remained inland at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd (IFo).

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

Large numbers were present at St Mary's Island where peak counts included 2,300 on 20th and 2,500+ on 22nd (AC/MSH). Grindon Lough held 275 on 28th (AJR), 250 were noted at both Football Hole (Newton) on 7th (TRD/JD) and flying S at Newcastle Town Moor on 22nd (GB) and 130 were at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd (IFo). Groups of 20-50 were also logged at Bothal Pond, Broomlee Lough, East Chevington and Warkworth Gut, and single-figure records came from five locations.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

The monthly maximum in the high-tide roost at Budle Bay numbered 120 on 12th (CGK/GPK) but an absence of records from Seaton Sluice suggested a poor autumn for this species (SSWT). At Newbiggin, four moved N in 5.5 hours on 5th (TF/JFa) and four headed S/SE on 20th (GB). Three were seen at Beal Point (Lindisfarne NNR) on 20th (TRD/JD) and singles were seen at Tynemouth (flying S) on 4th (DRW) and Warkworth Gut on 18th (TRD/JD).

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

Large inland flocks included 1,200 at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd (IFo), ca.1,100 at Grindon Lough on 26th/28th (PRM/AJR), 647 at Bothal Pond on 17th (TF/JFa), 600 at Airy Holm Reservoir on 3rd (IFo) and 400 at Broomlee Lough on 6th (MRS). Further good sized flocks included 440 at Castle Island on 20th (DM/STH), 400+ at Monks' House Pool on 13th (MSH), 355 at Arcot Pond on 6th (STH), 338 on the R. Tyne between Elswick Wharf-Newcastle Business Park on 4th (DM), 325 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 1st (SR) and 200+ at Holywell Pond on 15th (MSH). Counts of 71-80 came from Cocklawburn, Druridge Pools and Shield on the Wall; 28 were near Chugdon Wood (Ellington), 20 at Bywell Haughs and six at Howdon.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

The monthly peak was 74 at Cocklawburn on 24th (MHu), whilst estuarine counts included 60 on the Wansbeck Estuary on 1st (GB) and 30 in Budle Bay on 16th (GPK). Seahouses harbour attracted 26 on 6th (CGK/GPK), 15 were near the Heritage Centre (Newbiggin) on 6th (TB) and at Low Newton on 7th (TRD/JD) and 12 were seen at Tynemouth also on 7th (KWY). Seven were in Warkworth Gut on 8th (TRD/JD) and four inland at Grindon Lough on 26th (PRM), whilst one to three were also reported from Bamburgh (Stag Rocks), Boulmer, Cresswell and Newbiggin.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Singles flew S past Newbiggin on 3rd (ASH) and both N and S on 5th (TF/JFa/GB), with another noted here on 7th (TB), the latter date also being the latest report in Budle Bay (CGK/GPK). Late singles were also noted at St Mary's Island on 22nd (AC/MSH) and on the R. Blyth Estuary on 29th (ASH).

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Few reports this month, with the largest flocks being 53 at Hadston Links (Druridge Bay) on 25th (MSH), 52 on the R. Blyth Estuary on 27th (STH), 50 at Cresswell on 15th (TB) and 42 on the Berwick coast on 22nd (MHu). The high-tide roost at Howdon held 26 on 4th (CB), 22 were at Cocklawburn on 24th (MHu), 11 flew E at Big Waters on 26th and single-figure reports also came from Big Waters, Castle Island and on the R. Tyne between Elswick Wharf-Newcastle Business Park.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Most reports came from the R. Blyth Estuary this month where a peak of 22 was noted on both the 5th (LJM) and 27th (ASH) with birds present throughout. Arcot Pond held a peak of 17 of 5th (GMi *per* LJM) with declining numbers thereafter including 11 on 13th (DM) and the last one on 16th (STH). Twelve were seen at both Cresswell Pond (NFO) and Druridge Pools (JSB/EC) on 1st. Budle Bay held four to six during 7th-16th and on 25th (CGK/GPK); four were also seen at Cresswell Pond on 6th (TB), at Monks' House Pool on 16th (MSH) and on the R. Tyne at Wharf-Newcastle Business Park.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

A count of 97 at Newbiggin on 17th (PRM) was the highest; 22-36 were in the Blyth area roosts on 16th and 27th (STH) and 14 were at Berwick on 22nd. Eight or fewer appeared along the coast at Boulmer, Hauxley, Low Newton, St Mary's, Seahouses and Stag Rocks and one ventured inland a little to Howdon on 6th.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

The peak in Budle Bay was 60 on 14th (CGK/GPK), 28 were at Stag Rocks on 6th and 15 flew S at Tynemouth on 1st. One to three were noted at Boulmer, Newbiggin and Warkworth Gut and one at Lindisfarne South Low on 29th was still in full breeding plumage (IK).

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

The peak counts at the most favoured locations were of seven at Bothal Pond on 4th (TF/JFa), six at Castle Island on 1st (GB), five at Arcot Pond on 16th (STH) and five at Monks' House Pool on 30th (MSH). Also four were at East Chevington on 15th, regularly up to three at Cresswell Pond, three at Holywell Pond on 1st and two in Budle Bay on 24th. Singles appeared at Big Waters, R Blyth Estuary, Low Newton and Warkworth Gut and one inland at Grindon Lough on 26th.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

Two records of single juveniles: at Low Newton scrape on 7th (TRD/JD) and Druridge Pools on 13th (PRF).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

At St Mary's 91 were present on 9th (SPP) and in nearby Whitley Bay 80 were noted on 1st (JMA). Elsewhere 12 were at Hauxley on 8th, ten at Low Newton on 7th and seven or eight at Tynemouth on 13th.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

At Newbiggin a total of 73 flew N during 06:20-09:00 on 9th (STH). The larger concentrations were of 150 at Howick and 50 at Boulmer both on 3rd (JMA) with 86 in R. Blyth Estuary on 29th (ASH), 60 in Budle Bay on 17th (GPK) and 40 at Warkworth Gut on 8th. Ten or fewer were recorded occasionally at Bothal Pond, East Chevington, Lindisfarne, Low Newton and Widdrington Moor Lake and singles were inland at Grindon Lough on 2nd and Derwent Reservoir on 3rd.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

There were five reports, involving a maximum of 12 at Stag Rocks on 27th (CGK/GPK), ten roosting on East Pier at Blyth Harbour on 16th (STH) and eight at Newbiggin on 17th.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

One was in Budle Bay on 8th (GPK).

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

At Seaton Sluice Watch Tower three flew S on 21st and two did so on 12th. Three were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 8th (SR) and three at Bell's Farm pond at Cresswell on 12th (GB). Two were at Bothal Pond on 13th with singles there on another four days and singles were at Castle Island on 5th and 20th. Other singles appeared at Big Waters, Budle Bay, Derwent Reservoir, Newbiggin and St Mary's with one at Cresswell Pond on 25th the last.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Three were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 19th (SR). The remainder were singletons: at Bothal Pond on five dates during 5th to 22nd, at Big Waters on four days during 6th to 25th, at Castle Island on 5th, Blagdon on 12th and at Arcot Pond on 13th.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

An adult present throughout in Budle Bay (CGK/GPK *et al.*) roosted on the same rock at high tide.

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

The maximum in Budle Bay was ten on 25th (CGK/GPK). Six were at Castle Island on 20th (DM/STH) with three there on 5th and one to two on three other dates; four were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 1st (SR). Singles were present on four dates at Cresswell Pond and on one day at each of Beal Point, Beal saltmarsh, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Hauxley NWT, Monks' House Pool, South Low, Warkworth and Widdrington Moor Lake.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

One was at Stobswood Pools on 20th (NFO).

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

At Holy Island 400 roosted in the Rocket Field pools on 26th (IK), the area total at high tide in R Blyth Estuary was 345 on 27th (STH) with 285 noted in the estuary on 29th (ASH) and the peak in Budle Bay was 225 on 12th (CGK/GPK). Castle Island, Newbiggin, St Mary's and Whitley Bay all held 19-75 at times and small numbers appeared at eight other places.

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyptes minimus*

One was feeding in a small puddle in a horse field at Shiremoor on 24th (CGK/SPP) and one was at Big Waters on 25th (SPP).

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

One was at Grindon Lough on 20th (PRM).

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Low numbers were reported, with the most ten at Arcot Pond on 16th (STH). Three to eight were seen at Big Waters, Caistron, Castle Island, Gosforth Park NR and Grindon Lough, including three in a Tynemouth garden on 27th! (DWY). One or two were found at Bothal Pond, Cresswell Pond and at Beal Point.

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

An adult flew N at Tynemouth at 06:50h on 6th (DRW) and possibly the same one flew N at Annstead Point (CGK/GPK). Juveniles were off Tynemouth on 5th (SPP) and 12th (DRW) and Newbiggin on 6th (TB) and one was at Holy Island on 7th (SR).

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

At Seaton Sluice Watch Tower 65 flew N and 11 S, including 50 N during 3rd-7th, described as very low totals. Ten flew N at Newbiggin in 30 minutes on 8th (JSB/EC) and eight moved S at St Mary's on 9th (SPP). Other reports include six N at Newbiggin on 5th and four there on 6th when six were noted off Snab Point; four were off Annstead Point on 5th. One to two were seen at Blyth South Harbour, Boulmer, Druridge Bay and St Mary's and the latest were one off Cullernose Point on 14th and four N at Snab Point on 27th.

Long-tailed Skua *Stercorarius longicaudus*

Possibly the same juvenile was seen at Tynemouth (SPP) and St Mary's (AC/IJ) on 5th and a juvenile flew N at Annstead Point on 6th (CGK/GPK). Two juveniles flew N off Seaton Sluice Watch Tower on 12th (SSWT), the latter earlier seen off St Mary's (AC).

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

Only seven flew N and one S at Seaton Sluice Watch Tower, during 1st-12th. On 5th four flew N at Annstead Point, three did so at Newbiggin and three also at St Mary's. Two were off Snab Point on 6th, two were seen on an evening pelagic out of North Shields on 7th and one flew S at Newbiggin on 13th.

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

A monthly total of only eight was recorded passing N at Seaton Sluice from 1st-20th (SSWT).

Razorbill *Alca torda*

The monthly counts at Seaton Sluice comprised 21N on 20th, 520N in two hours on 21st and 125S in 1.5 hours on 29th; no other auk species were recorded within these movements (SSWT). Elsewhere, five were off Tynemouth on 13th (DM/GB) and two at Cocklawburn on 28th (MHu).

Guillemot *Uria aalge*

Few were noted from the Seaton Sluice watch point with a maximum of 17 moving N on 3rd (SSWT). At least 40 were on the sea between the Tyne Estuary and Whitley Bay on 13th (DM/GB) but numbers elsewhere, apart from ten at Snab Point on 5th (TRD/JD) were in single figures; one to six, at Cocklawburn, Cullernose Point, Druridge and Newton Point (TRD/JD/MHu).

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

Two records only, comprising a juvenile at St Mary's Island on 5th (AC/IJ) and an adult at East Chevington North Pool on 15th (TB/NFO).

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

Noted passage at Seaton Sluice was 69N, 59S on 1st and 62S on 15th with only small numbers thereafter up to the month end (SSWT). Ten and eight were at Boulmer (TRD/JD) and Howdon (CB) respectively on 4th but numbers declined rapidly beyond this date with one to five recorded from 7th-20th at Cresswell (Snab Point), Cullernose Point, Druridge Bay CP, Hauxley, Low Newton, Newbiggin, St Mary's Island and Tynemouth (TRD/JD/MSH/PRM/KWY). Two at Cocklawburn on 24th were the last record (MHu).

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Numbers recorded at Seaton Sluice were 24N from 1st-2nd and 11N and 27S from 12th-24th (SSWT). On 5th, 50 were off Snab Point and 40 at Druridge (TRD/JD) with 30 recorded at sea during a pelagic trip on 7th (IJ). One to four were at Boulmer, Hauxley, Newbiggin, North Shields Fish Quay and Tynemouth on various dates between 4th-17th (TRD/JD/DM/GB/PRM/KWY).

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*

Three were seen flying N during an extended sea watch at Newbiggin on 5th (TF/JFa), one from a pelagic trip from North Shields on 7th (SPP/JBu/AC/LMc/PS) and an adult and juvenile together at St Mary's Island on 9th (SPP/JBu *et al.*).

A Roseate at St. Mary's in a camera phone image by Jack Bucknall



Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

Five headed S off the coast near Newbiggin on 13th, the latest record of the month (DM/GB *et al.*) and on 5th, four were at St Mary's Island (IJ) and singles at Druridge and Snab Point (TRD/JD).

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

Birds remained on their nesting ledges on the Quayside buildings at least until 2nd when 50 juveniles were present (JMA/DM); the ledges were deserted by 8th (DM). The large passage movements noted last month continued at Seaton Sluice, with significant numbers moving N during the early mornings of 1st and 2nd comprising 2,000N in one hour and 3,000N in half an hour respectively (SSWT). Hundreds also moved N on 12th after a day of heavy rain and SE wind at St Mary's Island (AC/MSH). On 4th-5th, 300 were at Cullernose Point (TRD/JD), 250+ at Blyth South Beach (LJM) and 120 moved N at Boulmer (TRD/JD). Smaller numbers of 35 roosted at Blyth Harbour on 18th (STH) and 10-20 were noted at Cresswell (Snab Point), Cullernose Point and Druridge (TRD/JD).

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

The largest gatherings were 3,200 at Budle Point on 5th (CGK) and 1,000 on the same day at Linton Ponds (GB). Other concentrations of 300-400 were noted at Arcot Pond, Big Waters, QE II CP Lake and West Ord (DM/MHu/CDH/GB) with 100-200 at Alnmouth, Boulmer, Castle Island, Howick, Newcastle Quayside and Whitley Bay (JMA/DM). Smaller flocks of up to 100 were at Bothal Pond, Exhibition Park, Jesmond Dene and Leazes Park,



A ringed Black-headed Gull
Brier Dene car park by Jack Bucknall

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

A very poor month for this normally well-represented visitor. Two were recorded moving S at Snab Point on 6th (JL) and singles were noted from Newbiggin, St Mary's Island, Seaton Sluice and Tynemouth on five dates from 4th-23rd (GB/STH/SPP/SSWT).

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

The late-summer influx to the favoured Newbiggin continued and the numbers increased from last month's maximum of 50 to a county record of 92 in the south bay on 22nd, mainly adult/sub-adults but including two juveniles (ADM_c); numbers ranging from 20-77 were also noted there on various other dates throughout (PRM/ADM_c). At Snab Point 12 moved N on 20th (ADM_c), six-ten were recorded there on 12th and 27th (JL) and nearby Cresswell Pond and Bell's Farm held up to three on various dates. Elsewhere, six were at Ellington on 13th with one to three at Big Waters NWT, Blyth, Budle Bay, East Chevington, Holy Island village, Linton Ponds, Newton Pool and St Mary's Island. The Polish-ringed adult bird, red PLL1, was again recorded in the county on 19th, this month at St Mary's Island (AC).

Common Gull *Larus canus*

The roost at Budle Bay contained 3,200 and 3,500 on 5th and 26th respectively (CGK) and 1,000 were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 10th (SR). Smaller numbers were 530, counted in a strong movement E/NE at Big Waters NWT in the evening of 2nd (GB), 300 at Doddington on 2nd (JD) and 180 in the roost at Berwick (West Ord) on 30th (MHu).

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

Small numbers passed the hide at Seaton Sluice during the month with a maximum of 4S on 12th (SSWT). The Budle Point roost still contained 80 on 5th but this reduced to 30 by 26th as the autumn exodus took place (CGK) and numbers elsewhere were in single figures with seven at Castle Island, five at Arcot pond and three at Exhibition Park on dates 10th-20th (DM *et al.*); one or two were at Derwent Reservoir, Grindon Lough, Jesmond Dene and Leazes Park (MJCo/DM/PRM).

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

Numbers at Budle Point were 1,700 on 5th and 450 on 26th (CGK) with 1,500 noted at Tynemouth on 9th (KWY). Smaller gatherings comprised 73 at Big Waters NWT, 52 at Castle Island, 46 on a newly harvested field at Cramlington and 38 at the QEII CP Lake (GB/DM/CDH) with one to six at four other localities.

***Caspian Gull** *Larus cachinnans*

An adult in the Blyth Estuary at the Sleekburn confluence on 22nd was possibly the Amble Harbour bird but distant views of the ring code suggested a different bird, perhaps from the same colony in Poland. The observer will submit further details in due course (JL).

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

The only three-figure count came from Budle Point where 110 gathered on 5th and a later count there on 26th produced 30 (CGK); the islands in the East Chevington North Pool were attractive to the species and 80 were present there on 8th with similar numbers through the month (EC). At inland sites, four were noted at Derwent Reservoir on 20th and two adults at Grindon Lough on 26th (PRM). Single birds were on the Tyne at Elswick Wharf on 4th and 17th (DM).

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

A peak of seven at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 7th with six at Ellington on 13th (TB), four at Grindon Lough on 2nd and three at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 6th (PRM). One to two were at eight widespread localities.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

Around 250 were in one field at Hartley West Farm (Holywell Dene) on 26th (RJP) and six at Jesmond Dene on 14th (MJCo).

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

On 5th 12 were at North Blyth, six at Cramlington on 26th (PCF) and three at High Heaton (Newcastle) on 23rd (CDH).

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Two were at Spindleston throughout the month (CGK/GPK) with singles at Chollerford on 26th (CB) and Holy Island on 27th/28th. Whilst birds were present at Holy Island all year, to date, breeding has not occurred for the first time since re-colonisation in 2008, possibly due to a shortage of voles, unlike 2014 where two pairs fledged 14 young (IK).

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

At Shiremoor two were present all month (CGK) with one regularly at Dinnington from 1st to 6th (PCF).

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

A male and female called at Prestwick Carr on 4th (PCF), one vocal at Waren Mill Caravan Park (near Bamburgh) from 6th (CGK/GPK) and singles also at Big Waters NWT on 16th, Prestwick Carr on 18th, Wark (N.Tyne) on 28th and Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 28th.

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

One was at St Mary's Island on 12th (AC/MSH).

Swift *Apus apus*

Two late birds were at Budle Bay on 6th (CGK/GPK) with one at Newcastle Great Park on 2nd (ATR).

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Very well reported with three or more including two juveniles at Gosforth Park NR during the month (NHSN) and three at Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth) on 8th (TB). Two were at Low Angerton on 6th and 25th (IRD), Jesmond Dene on 14th (MJCo), Corbridge on 15th (AJH) and on rocks at St Mary's Island on 26th (SPP). Singles were at seven other coastal and ten inland locations.

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Three birds were at Hemscott Hill (Cresswell) on 10th (PRM), and two birds were observed at Old Hartley on 9th (MNC) and at Nedderton (Bedlington) on 17th (TB), Cresswell Pond on 21st and 29th (TB). One to two were also recorded at over 20 sites.

Red-footed Falcon *Falco vespertinus*

A first-summer male which was found the previous day was still in the same place at Bell's Farm (Druridge) on 10th (SPP).

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Three were present on Holy Island (IK) and a single bird at Budle Bay all month (CGK/GPK). Other single birds were at an inland site on 1st (JD); one came in off the sea at Newbiggin on 5th (TF/JFa) and at Monks' House Pool on 6th (CGK/GPK).

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

A juvenile was over the Rocket Field (Holy Island) on 11th (SR) and an adult was watched for 15 minutes hawking over fields west of Budle Bay on 14th (GPK *et al.*).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Budle Bay had two birds present all month (CGK/GPK) and two juveniles were noted together at an inland site on 13th (PRM). Single birds were noted at over 16 sites.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Present all month at Rothbury often eating ants on the observer's front lawn (TRD/JD), at Rowley Burn on 6th (AJH) and the observer's garden at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 19th (TD).



A Green Woodpecker on the County Recorder's (TRD) lawn at Rothbury

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Three were at Arcot Pond on 13th (LJM) and Derwent Reservoir on 20th (PRM) with two in a Holywell Garden during the month (RJP) and at Jesmond Dene on 6th (MJCo). Singles were at 14 other widespread localities including a first sighting for the site at Howdon on 2nd (CB).

Magpie *Pica pica*

Only one report of four at Jesmond Dene on 27th (MJCo).

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Well reported as birds prepared for winter with five the highest count at Harwood Forest on 16th (MNC), four at Gosforth Park NR during the month (NHSN) with two at Fourstones on 14th, Holywell Dene on 18th and 23rd, Hexham on 22nd, West Denton on 23rd, Ellington on 24th, Big Waters on 26th and Longhirst on 30th. Singles were at a further 15 widespread localities.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

High counts of 40-50 on mudflats at Wansbeck Estuary on 20th (DM/STH), 50 at East House (Warkworth) on 5th, 25 at Boulmer on 3rd (JMA) and six at Paddy Freeman's Playing Field (Jesmond Dene) on 6th (MJCo).

Carriion Crow *Corvus corone*

Pre-roost gatherings at Prestwick Carr numbered 55 on 30th and 35 on 18th (PCF), 18 on mudflats at Wansbeck Estuary on 20th (DM/STH), six at Jesmond Dene on 6th (MJCo) and four one mile out to sea at Seaton Sluice on 19th (SSWT).

Raven *Corvus corax*

Four at Hepple Whitefield on 1st and Hartside on 30th (TRD/JD), three at Kylloe Woods on 20th (GPK), two at Whitfield Moor on 11th (AJH) and Huds Head (Spittal, Berwick) on 30th (MHU) with singles at four further upland locations.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

More than 18 were at Derwent Reservoir on 20th and 15+ at Newbiggin on 17th (PRM), three at Woodhorn Church on 29th (STH) and one to two at six further locations.

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapillus*

On 13th one was behind the hide at Cresswell Pond (TB *et al.*).

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Three at Jesmond Dene on 6th (MJCo) and two at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 13th (IJ).

Great Tit *Parus major*

One report of three at Jesmond Dene on 6th (MJCo).

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

During the month two were in an Old Hartley Garden (RJP), at Grindon Lough on 6th (PRM), Jesmond Dene on 27th (MJCo) and Chare Ends (Holy Island) a rare sight here on 28th (IK). Singles were at Newbiggin on 17th and Linton Ponds on 20th.

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

Two were noted regularly during the month at Big Waters NWT (GB) and Swallow Pond on 6th (SPP) with singles at Prestwick Carr on 1st, Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 6th and 20th (NFO), Newbiggin Moor on 13th, Morpeth Common, Rothbury and Newbiggin all on 17th and in an Old Hartley Garden on 25th.

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

Singles at Rowley Burn on 6th (AJH) and Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 19th (NFO).

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

More than 20 at Town Moor (Newcastle) on 10th (DM) and Widdrington Moor Lake on 27th (MSH), 12 at Prestwick Carr on 23rd (PCF), eight at Middle Farm (Cramlington) on 26th and East Cramlington on 26th (DM) with one to two at Cramlington and Grindon Lough.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

Movement S was noted at Gosforth Park NR with 50+ on 20th (NHSN), 40 at Alnmouth GC on 3rd (JMA), 30 at Big Waters NWT on 2nd (GB), ten at Widdrington Moor Lake on 13th (TRD/JD), four at Budle Point on 6th (CGK/GPK) and two at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd (IFo).

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

A large count of 118 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 8th (SR), 50 at Druridge Pools on 11th and Big Waters NWT on 26th (MSH/GB), 47 at Prestwick Carr on 5th (PCF), and 40 at Wark (N.Tyne) on 4th (PRM). Movement S was noted at Newbiggin with 36 on 20th and 25 on 17th (GB/PRM). One to 30 were at 12 other widespread localities. A nest at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) held four healthy juveniles on 10th with two remaining on 14th (GB).

Breeding was reported as average with delayed nesting and losses due to cold weather at start and end of the season. Around 55 pairs on Holy Island fledged ca.200 young, well down on 2014. 28 pairs were monitored in Upper Coquetdale of which 17 had second clutches. A total of 196 eggs were laid with 130 young hatched and 115 fledged. (IK/MR).

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

Active passage noted at Newbiggin on 20th with 76 S between 08.15-10.00h. (GB). 46 were at East Ord (Berwick) on 26th (MHu), 41 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 14th (PCF) and 30 at Boulmer on 3rd and Alnmouth on 6th (JMA). One to fifteen were at nine other locations.

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

18 were at East Chevington on 13th (TB), 15 at Waren Mill on 27th, 12+ at Bamburgh on 30th and 12 at Prestwick Carr on 19th. Elsewhere ten to 11 were noted at Fulbeck (Morpeth), Leazes Park (Newcastle), Newcastle City Centre and Woodhorn Church with eight at Derwent Reservoir and Valley Park (Cramlington), six at Holywell Dene, four at Linton Ponds and two at Old Hartley.

Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides*

August The individual at Holy Island on 24th August was at the 'excavations' and not Chare Ends (GB/AIB/LAR).

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*

The first arrival was at Cresswell Pond on 13th (TB/TF/JFa). Two were at Newbiggin on 17th (PRM) and a single at Druridge pines on 19th (TF/JFa). A further light influx occurred at the end of the month when singles were at Budle Bay on 28th (CGK/GPK), Woodhorn Church on 29th (STH) and at Bamburgh and Berwick on 30th (BRS/MHu).

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Continues to be well reported with a peak count of ten+ at Budle Point on 25th (CGK/GPK). Up to seven were noted at Newbiggin on 17th (PRM) and four were reported from Bamburgh on 7th, Derwent Reservoir on 20th, Druridge Pools on 14th and Kyoie Woods on 20th. Counts of three+ came from Exhibition Park (Newcastle) and three were at Cambois, Prestwick Carr and Woodhorn Church. One to two were noted at a further 16, mainly inland localities.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Between 6th and 20th, singles were noted at Craster, Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Grindon Lough, Holy Island, Howdon, Newbiggin, Wark (North Tyne), Valley Park (Cramlington) and Whitley Bay Cemetery. The final bird was at Berwick on 27th.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Six were at Backworth and four at Bamburgh on 30th (CGK/BRS), while two were reported from Big Waters on 22nd, Cambois on 29th and Newbiggin on 17th. Elsewhere singles were noted at Berwick, Craster, Derwent Reservoir, Dinnington, Druridge Pools, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Grindon Lough, Hexham and Wark (North Tyne).

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

Single passage birds were noted at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) and Waren Mill on 7th (GB/GPK).

Barred Warbler *Sylvia nisoria*

Single first-winter birds were at Priors Park (Tynemouth) on 1st (SPP), Snab Point on 6th (JL) and Holy Island on 10th (PRM).



Two views of a Barred Warbler at Lynemouth Bay on 6th September by James Littlewood

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

On Holy Island, singles were in the Straight Lonnen on 12th and at Chare Ends dunes on 13th (IK).

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

Two at Newbiggin on 12th increased to five by 17th (PRM). Two were at Druridge Pools on 14th, while elsewhere singles were at Arcot Pond on 6th, Bamburgh and Big Waters on 16th, Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 14th and Warkworth on 18th. The final bird was at Budle Point on 27th.

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

Singles were at Prestwick Carr on 5th (PCF) and Arcot Pond on 6th (DM).

Icterine Warbler *Hippolais icterina*

A first-winter bird showed well at The Excavations (Holy Island) on 10th (PRM).

An Icterine Warbler

Holy Island excavations

9th September

Mike Carr



Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

One to two were noted at Arcot Pond from 6th-13th (LJM/GB/DM) and two were at Corbridge on 15th (AJH).

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

One was trapped and ringed at Bamburgh on 13th (BRS).

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Up to five were noted in Jesmond Dene (MJCo), two at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) and singles at Eshott, Holywell Dene, Rothbury and Wark (North Tyne).



A Nuthatch in a Woolsington garden
by John Littleton

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

One to two were reported from Derwent Reservoir, Wark (North Tyne) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

The only reports were from Fulbeck (Morpeth) and Jesmond Dene.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

Roost counts at Big Waters rose from 400 on 2nd and 700 on 6th to 2,000 by 26th (GB); 2,000 also roosted at East Chevington on 27th (NFO) and 200-300 were reported from Old Hartley and Prestwick Carr.

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

The most unusual report came from Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 23rd, when a single bird sat on a boardwalk at the edge of the lake. It was flushed by a jogger and not seen again. This was presumably a dispersing bird (note that the lake has neither inlet stream nor outlet-GB). More typical were reports of one to two from Atlee Park (Bedlington), Beanley, Fourstones, Holywell Dene, Jesmond Dene and Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth).

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

The only report was of a single in Jesmond Dene on 6th.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

The only report was a single at Holy Island on 28th (IK).

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Six flew high SW at Holy Island on 28th (IK). Singles were at Holy Island on 10th and at Holywell Dene on 15th.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

The first arrival was at Holywell Dene on 7th (RJP). Another was at Seaton Sluice on 14th and two were at Big Waters on 16th. Two were at Derwent Reservoir on 20th and a single at Wark (North Tyne) on 22nd.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

A gathering of 30+ was at Waren Mill throughout the month (CGK/GPK). Inland, 23 were at Derwent Reservoir on 20th (PRM) and 15 at Settlingstones on 19th (AJH). Counts of six came from Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 3rd and Woodhorn Church on 29th, while one to three were reported from Harwood Forest, Southfield Green (Cramlington), Wark (North Tyne) and West Hartford.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

At Big Waters, two were noted on 3rd, one on 4th and one on 18th. Singles were also at Craggside on 9th and Holy Island (Castle) on 11th.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

At Prestwick Carr there were counts of 11 on 19th and 16 on 23rd (PCF). A light influx occurred at Holy Island on 28th, when ten were noted in the Vicarage garden alone (IK). The only other report was of five at Jesmond Dene on 14th.

An alert Robin
Holy Island on 27th September
Mike Carr

**Pied Flycatcher** *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Ten were in Holy Island Village on 13th (IK). Between 10th and 14th singles were reported from Bamburgh, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Holy Island and St Mary's Island, while a further single was at St Mary's Island on 18th.

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Three were at Holy Island on 10th (PRM) and two at Big Waters on 3rd and Cresswell Pond on 13th. Elsewhere singles were noted at Swallow Pond on 2nd, Hadston, Snab Point and St Mary's Island on 12th and Backworth on 29th.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

Two were at Snab Point on 12th, when singles were also at Hadston and Tynemouth, while on 13th singles were at Boulmer and Ellington. Later in the month one to two were at Cresswell Pond dunes on 26th-27th.

A Whinchat

Holy Island

11th September

Mike Carr

**Stonechat** *Saxicola rubicola*

Six were at Newton on 7th (TRD/JD). Five (including two juveniles) were at Newbiggin on 17th and at East Chevington on 20th, while up to five were also noted at Cresswell Pond during the month. Two to three were reported from Druridge Pools and Hemscott Hill. Elsewhere, two were at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 7th, Cocklawburn on 28th, Prestwick Carr on 23rd and Warkworth on 18th, while singles were reported from Boulmer on 13th, Derwent Reservoir on 20th and Gosforth Park NR on 19th.

Wheatear *Oenanthe Oenanthe*

An influx on 1st produced 19 at Tynemouth (SPP), 18 at Newbiggin (GB), eight at Cresswell Pond (JSB/EC), two at Bondicarr and at East Chevington and a single migrant at Derwent Reservoir. From 12th-13th, three to five were reported from Annstead Point (Seahouses), Bell's Farm (Cresswell), Boulmer, Hadston, Newbiggin and Snab Point, while during the same period singles were at Caistron and Ealinghamrigg Common (Bellingham) and a passage bird was at Newcastle (Town Moor) on 14th. The final birds of the month were on the Otterburn Ranges on 26th and at Snab Point on 27th.

Duncock *Prunella modularis*

One to two were in Jesmond and Holywell Dene during the month.

House sparrow *Passer domesticus*

65 were at Church Farm (Earsdon) on (MNC) and 38 in a Marden Estate garden all month (ASJ). 20 were at Wark and Castle Island in the month.

Tree Sparrow *Passer Montanus*

30+ were at Waren Mill all month(CGK/GPK) and 21 at Holywell Grange on 8th (SPP). Elsewhere, one to ten were at five sites.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla Flava*

Four were roosting at East Chevington North Pool on 15th (NFO). Three were noted at Longhirst and Blagdon on 1st(TB/GB). One to two were at five further sites.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Well reported with three at Jesmond Dene on 14th and at Newbiggin on 20th (MJCo/GB). Two were noted at 12 widespread sites during the month with singles at a further 17 sites.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

Around 40 at Grindon on 2nd increased to 50 by 6th(PRM) 33 at Whittle Dene on 1st (SR). 25 at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd (IFo). A minimum of 21 were seen at Bothal on 15th (JSB/EC). A flock at Newton on 1st consisted of around 12 Pied and 15+ White Wagtails(AJR). 11 were at Prestwick Carr, eight at Newcastle Town Moor and five at Old Eldon Square, Newcastle in the month.

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

One was at Crooked Lonnen (Holy Island) on 13th (IK).

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

On 20th 136 were counted flying N at Newbiggin and a single S (GB). A total of 78 flew S at Marden Quarry on 13th (KWY). 52 were at Grindon on 20th (PRM) and 50+ at Bamburgh flew S (BRS). Groups of between three and 45 were observed migrating S at Marden Estate on many days throughout the month. (ASJ). 22 at Berwick Golf Course on 22nd (MHu) and 14 noted flying W at Royal Quays (North Shields) (DM). Small numbers moved SW at Monkseaton on 19th (MHS). Six came in off the sea at Whitley Bay on 13th (DM) and one to eight were noted at six other sites.



A Meadow Pipit on Holy Island by Mike Carr. 9th September

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Five were seen at Hauxley on 5th and St Mary's on 20th (PCF/ASJ). Two were at Blyth Harbour on 16th and Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) throughout the month (STH/ASJ). Singles noted at a further three sites.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Two reports only, with pairs at Old Hartley and Jesmond Dene.

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Five birds, a family group, were noted at Bamburgh all month (BRS). In Holywell Dene and along adjacent waggonways, three pairs observed feeding on several dates (ASJ/RJP). Three were seen at Arcot, Cambois, Prestwick Carr and Ealingham Rigg during September. One to two were noted at seven other locations.

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

16 at Whittle Dene on 10th was the month's sole record (SR).

Linnet *Carduelis canabina*

Several large flocks observed this month, with the largest being 350 at Waren Mill on 26th (CGK/GPK) and 200 in fields at Cresswell Pond on 24th (STH). 90-100 were at St Mary's on several dates (ASJ), with 85 at nearby Old Hartley perhaps the same group (MNC). 80 were at Bothal and Cocklawburn on 5th and 24th (GB/MHu). Elsewhere, 20 – 60 were at five sites and one to eight were at four further sites.

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis canabina*

The species observed flying S this month at St. Mary's on 26th (21 birds), Grindon on 20th (ten birds), Bamburgh on 30th and Cambois on 16th (six birds)(ASJ/PRM/BRS/STH). One to three were noted at eleven further sites.

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

Seven were at Craggside on 9th (JD) and three at Kyoeloe on 20th (CGK). One to two were noted at six sites, including birds over Monkseaton, Marden Estate, Druridge and Wark.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Several large flocks were observed during this month. 320 at Cocklawburn on 28th was the largest (MHu), with 200 at Arcot on 21st and Budle Bay on 28th (CK/GK/STH) and 150+ at St Mary's on 9th and 10th (MHS/ASJ). 125 at East Holywell on 3rd and 120 on 4th at Stag Rocks, 100 at Druridge Pools on 11th and Prestwick Carr on 19th (MNC/GPK/MHS/PCF). 85+ were seen at Arcot on 8th (LJM), with 45 at Corbridge on 15th (AJH). One to 20 were at five further locations.

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

24 were noted at Prestwick Carr on 5th (PCF) and 21+ at Derwent Reservoir on 20th (PRM). 20 flew S at East Chevington on 13th (NFO). 15 were feeding in Alders at Derwent on 1st (IFo) and 14 at Linden Hall on 19th (NFO). 13 flew S on the morning of the 20th at Newbiggin (GB) and 12 headed W at Tynemouth on 12th (KWY). Elsewhere, one to 12 were noted at a further 15 widespread sites during the month.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

Seven noted at Budle Point on 27th (GCK/GPK) was the largest gathering reported. Two at Cresswell and one at Grindon and Seghill were the only other sightings.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

22 had gathered at Budle Point by the 28th (CGK/GPK). Seven remained at St Mary's and surrounds throughout the month and five noted on S passage on 20th at Newbiggin (ASJ/GB). One to three at Grindon and a single at Howdon were the other reports this month.

A Reed Bunting

Holy Island

Mike Carr

9th September



ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN

Escapes

Bar-headed Goose *Anser indicus*

A group of six was present at East Chevington between 19th and 29th (TF/JFa/TRD/JD). Also a group of four at Widdrington Moor lake on 13th (TRD/JD) were likely to have been part of the same group.

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

One with jesses became entangled in tree at Gosforth Park on 9th (NHSN). It was released and the owner traced.

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Berwick Wildlife Group, Natural History Society of Northumbria, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

Apologies for any accidental omissions

BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION

This bulletin was compiled by Graeme Bowman (Mute Swan to Ruddy Duck), Steve Laing (Red Grouse to Black-necked Grebe), Trevor Blake (Honey-buzzard to Crane), Steve Holliday (Avocet to Godwit), Ian Forsyth (Turnstone to Skua), Eddie Crabtree (Puffin to Great Black-backed Gull), Tim Dean (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), Alan Jack(Dunnock to Corn Bunting), Kathy Evans (WeBS Coastal Counts) and Steve Holliday (WeBS Inland Counts).

Thanks to David Sanders of NNBC for providing data.

Proof reading was by Mike Smith.

Edited by Steve Barrett NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com

Mail distribution by Paul Stewart.

RECORD SUBMISSION

Please email ntbcorg@gmail.com for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and grid references: The use of standard location names and the include grid references as this 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.

Could club members ensure they to submit records direct to NTBC rather than just Birdtrack. There may be an assumption by some members this happens automatically. We do not want to miss records.

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

It is preferable if you re-size your photos before sending and a suggested size is 640 x 480 pixels. Please ensure you include the following information with your submissions: name, species, date taken, locality.

Photographs will not be used elsewhere without the photographer's permission.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual membership costs £10 for a junior, £30 for an individual, and £32 for a family. A membership form is attached to this bulletin. For membership enquiries please contact ntbc@jobentley.plus.com

Membership subscriptions were due at the beginning of October. Many thanks to everyone who has renewed their membership already. I've attach a copy of the membership form to this bulletin with all the details of subs, bank account and treasurers address if sending a cheque. If you internet bank you can pay online, please include your name in the ref. It is helpful if you email me to let me know when you've made the transfer ntbc@jobentley.plus.com

If you decide to set up a standing order please date the first payment at least a fortnight from your posting date to allow time to process with the bank. You can also set up your standing order directly with your bank if you wish, just let me know.

Finally, if you know anyone who might like to join NTBC please pass on the club information - new members are always welcome.

Jo Bentley - Hon Treasurer

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. Please submit any new content for the website to the main club email address.

NTBC SIGHTINGS PAGE

The Sightings Page contains current reports by members. Access is from the NTBC website and an email notification is available for new postings.

Members need to submit a request to be added to the website, specifying the email address they wish to post from before they can submit sightings to ntbcorg@gmail.com

OPTICS FOR SALE**BINOCULARS**

Leica 8 x 32Bn - £600 ono

Vortex Viper 8 x 42 HD (as new, in box) - £300 ono

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or 01661 862928

Ken Dawson

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Leica Televid 77 (non APO) angled telescope

22xWW eyepiece

Leica stay on case.

Minimal wear to body

Coatings and optics are in pristine condition.

A new thread insert has been inserted to the tripod mount.

Asking price £500

Stewart Hingston

Tel 07808 777432 or contact via Facebook

COASTAL WeBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND

SEPTEMBER 2015

JAR J. Roper & W. Banks
AB A. Brunt
KAE TB
ACra A. Craggs
TAC T. A. Cadwallender
MGA
K. A. Evans
T. Brewis
A. Craggs
T. A. Cadwallender
LJM
KVB
M. G. Anderson
L. J. McDougall
K. Brooks
SP MK
S. Parnaby
M. Kerby

Site	TOTAL	Bewick North Shore (including Little Beach)	Tweed Estuary	Tweed: A1 By-Pass to Horncliffe	Spittal - Cocklawburn	Lindisfarne NNR (including Budle Bay)	(Budle Bay)	Budle Pt. - Seahouses	Howick - Boulmer	Boulmer - Alnmouth	Aln Estuary	Cresswell - Newbiggin	Blyth Estuary	Blyth Estuary - Seaton Sluice	St Mary's Island	Whitley Bay - Tynewood
Counter		TB	TB	TB	TB	ACra	ACra	KAE	JAR	AB	TAC	MGA	LJM	KVB	SP	MK
Date		8	9	13	11	12	15	11	14	10	11	13	5	24	20	12
Red-throated Diver	10				4					2	1				3	
Great Northern Diver	0															
Black-throated Diver	0															
Little Grebe	4					1					3					
Great Crested Grebe	0															
Red-necked Grebe	0															
Slavonian Grebe	1							1								
Black-necked Grebe	0															
Cormorant	340	59	10	7	37	56		8	7	5	7		104	5	35	
Shag	37	16			5	6				4					2	4
Grey Heron	64	5	23	2	1	6		3	3	2	12		1		6	
Mute Swan	183		61	68	2	47	25				2		3			
Bewick's Swan	0															
Whooper Swan	0															
Pink-footed Goose	0															
Greylag Goose	27			24		1	1				2					
Canada Goose	202		1	35							156				10	
Barnacle Goose	0															
Dark-bellied Brent Goose	5					5										
Light-bellied Brent Goose	1,277					1277										
Shelduck	474					464	20				8		2			
Wigeon	5,532					5496	700				34				2	
Gadwall	0															
Teal	409		3			349				9	40		7		1	
Mallard	623		9	177		351	250				37		4		45	
Pintail	23					23										
Shoveler	2					2										
Pochard	0															
Tufted Duck	0															
Scaup	0															
Eider	521	8	7		37	236		78	32	39	8		23	49	3	1
Long-tailed Duck	0															
Common Scoter	43				39									4		
Velvet Scoter	0															
Goldeneye	6					6										
Smew	0															
Red-breasted Merganser	17					17										
Goosander	50	5	18	13	4	1							8	1		
Ruddy Duck	0															
Moorhen	10					3					3				4	
Coot	5					2									3	
Oystercatcher	1,721	130	18		55	724	15	79	147	130	141	54	25	46	55	117
Avocet	0															
Little Ringed Plover	0															
Ringed Plover	353	6			49	102			4	5	56	10	101		20	
Golden Plover	3,310					800			510						2000	
Grey Plover	529				1	508				20						
Lapwing	966			120		290			87		217				252	
Knot	1,349					1330		2	4		5		1	6	1	
Sanderling	433					227		4		2		132		26	42	
Little Stint	0															
Curlew Sandpiper	0															
Purple Sandpiper	3															3
Dunlin	946	1			1	739			6	60	55		72		12	
Ruff	5										4		1			
Jack Snipe	0															
Snipe	0															
Woodcock	0															
Black-tailed Godwit	30							2	1		5		22			
Bar-tailed Godwit	585					571		1	2	8	3					
Whimbrel	4					2		1							1	
Curlew	1,604	16	28		8	1114		29	166	18	103	7	42	1	72	
Spotted Redshank	0															
Redshank	1,590	26	102	3	3	780	210	66	94	52	148	53	133	35	25	70
Greenshank	66					60					6					
Green Sandpiper	0															
Wood Sandpiper	0															
Common Sandpiper	4										2					2
Turnstone	292	3	3		7	27		53	29	48		7	4	25	54	32
Little Gull	0															
Black-headed Gull	3,379	22	598	453	29	876	500	140	80		291		428			462
Common Gull	928	10	213	306	27	327	200	9	1		35					
Lesser Black-backed Gull	38		3		3	11	10	1			6		14			
Herring Gull	2,045	68	476	470	23	179		120	322		18		215			154
Great Black-backed Gull	239	3	14	1	2	15		59	61		26		42			16
Kittiwake	81												81			
Iceland Gull	0															
Glaucous Gull	0															
Mediterranean Gull	2											1			1	
Sandwich Tern	178	2	7		80	3		33	42				11			
Roseate Tern	0															
Common Tern	34				5	22			2				5			
Arctic Tern	0															
Little Tern	0															
Kingfisher	0															
ADDITIONAL SPECIES																
Arctic Skua	1							1								
Little Egret	23		5	2		7	2				9					
	0															
TOTALS - WILDFOWL	9,865	93	132	326	129	8,349	996	90	42	61	313	0	152	59	114	5
- WADERS	13,790	182	151	123	124	7,274	225	237	1,050	343	745	263	401	139	2,534	224
- GULLS & TERNS	6,924	105	1,311	1,230	169	1,433	710	362	508	0	376	1	796	0	1	632

INLAND WeBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND

Interim

Version:

Year: 2015
Month: September[illegible]

NOTE - no counts possible at Longhirst Flash from July 2015 onwards due to the site being drained and re-landscaped

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2015 No 10

MONTHLY SUMMARY OCTOBER 2015

15th December 2015



CONTENTS

WeBS inland

WeBS coastal

Estuarine Bird Survey

CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Tundra Bean Goose

Long-tailed Duck

Little Egret

Bittern

Red-necked Grebe

Curlew Sandpiper

White-rumped Sandpiper

Pectoral Sandpiper

Great Grey Shrike

Firecrest

Bearded Tit

Shorelark

Yellow-browed Warbler

Radde's Warbler

Siberian Chiffchaff

Barred Warbler

Red-breasted Flycatcher

Hawfinch

Little Bunting

Five flew over Holy Island on 4th.

The long staying drake remained at Derwent reservoir all month.

Record county total of 22 at Fenham le Moor mid month.

Three noted at Gosforth Park and one at East Chevington.

Two noted at their favoured locality of Holy Island on 31st.

Only one record this month - a juvenile at Grindon Lough on 11th.

One at Stag Rocks, Bamburgh from 14th to 18th.

Single at Grindon Lough on 11th.

One on Holy Island.

Influx mid month with records from at least seven localities

Three at Holy Island 13th-14th with singles at East Chevington & Hauxley.

One at Blyth South Harbour proved very popular mid month.

Continued influx during month.

One on Holy Island on 8th.

One at Tynemouth on 8th.

Several records during month.

One on Holy Island on 11th.

Migrant on Holy Island on 6th.

Two trapped and ringed at Bamburgh on 11th.

COMMITTEE NEWS

Data Manager Vacancy

Are you competent at IT? We still urgently need a Data Manager for club records. Please contact NTBC.

INDOOR MEETINGS

NTBC indoor meetings are held at Northern Rugby Club, McCracken Park, Great North Road, Newcastle, NE3 2DT starting at 7.00pm and generally finish between 9.00pm-9.30pm. The next meetings of the 2015-2016 season are;

A Gadwall at Druridge Pools by Colin Bradshaw

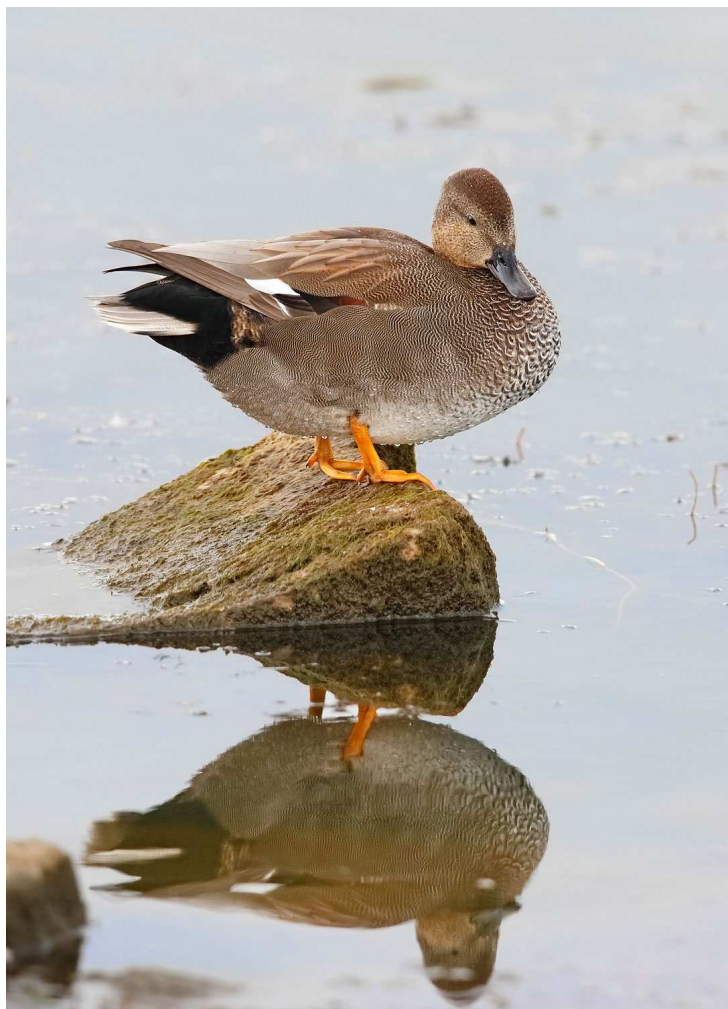
January 14th 2016

Tom Cadwallender 'Birding in Retirement'

Tom's adventures since he retired. A whistle stop tour of some of the countries Tom has visited.

February 11th 2016

Geoff Sample 'Sites and Sounds' 20 years of recording birds in Northumberland from the perspective of wildlife sound recording. Sounds will include memorable scarcer species and vagrants. Many well-known birdy sites are noisy places so I have had to find habitat that offers species and soundscapes in a quieter setting. I will talk about experiences.



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 2013 page 233.

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.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

The largest concentrations were 90 at QEII CP Lake on 18th (CDH), 30 at West Ord on 11th (MHu), 28 at the Tweed Estuary on 15th (MHu), 26 at Castle Island on 18th (DM/STH/PJA), and 13 -18 at Big Waters, Fenham Mill and Howdon. Five to ten were also noted at Druridge Pools, Greenlee Lough, Hauxley Reserve and Holywell Pond, and two to four at Bothal and Linton Ponds, Broomlee Lough, Budle Bay, and Newcastle Exhibition and Leazes Parks.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Two groups, totalling 60 birds, flew over Boulmer on 25th (RB/MB). A 'herd' of 36 at Widdrington Moor Lake on 25th included just one juvenile (AJ), 35 were at Fenham-le-Moor on 31st (IK), 25 (five juveniles) at Derwent Reservoir on 26th (IFo), and 13-14 at the causeway and Chare Ends areas of Lindisfarne NNR (IK/ADM). Six to ten were also at/over Boulmer, Branton GP, Budle Bay, East Chevington and Holywell Pond, with two to four at Druridge Bay CP, Norham, Shield on the Wall and St Mary', with the first (four) at Wooler on 7th (DGB/RHB).

Bean Goose *Anser fabalis*

Five were noted overhead at Holy Island on 4th (IBDa/KDa).

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Southerly movement involved 1,000 at Bamburgh on 8th (BRS), a total of 539 at Holy Island on 4th (MJC/ADM), 300 at Hauxley Reserve on 5th (MJC), 110-220 at Cocklawburn and Spittal between 8th-15th, 50-95 at Alnmouth, Berwick, Castle Island, East Ord, St Mary's, the Wansbeck Estuary and Whitley Bay between 1st-10th, and 27-37 at Derwent Reservoir, East Ord, Howick, Spittal Groups of 110-230 flew N at East Ord and Middle Ord on 18th (MHu), and 12-34 flew N at Stag Rocks and St Mary's.

Largest numbers were in the north of the county, with peaks of 3,900 at Holy Island on 8th (ADM), 3,300 at an evening roost at Budle Bay on 4th (CGK/GPK), 3,300 heading from Goswick to Holy Island on 29th (PRM), 1,100 at Smeafield (seen from a train; MHu), and 800 at Scremerston (PRM). Further south, 1,200 were at Cresswell Pond on 13th (AJR), 300 at Widdrington Station, 100 at Hauxley Reserve and 20-23 at Derwent Reservoir and Doddington.

White-fronted Goose *Anser flavirostris*

Two adults of the Greenland *flavirostris* race were at Budle Bay on 10th (CGK/GPK) and two adults of this race had returned to Grindon Lough by 27th (PRM). One, of the Eurasian *albifrons* race, was at Branton GP on 29th (IBDa/KDa).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

72 flew E at Cramlington on 4th (DM), 12 moved N at Cocklawburn on 2nd (MHu) and one circled over Wark on 31st, apparently disorientated by fog (PRM). Peak counts involved 537 at Hauxley Reserve on 9th (HRS), 350 at Derwent Reservoir on 17th (IFo), 244 at Big Waters (GB), 242 at Budle Bay on 23rd (PRM), 100 at Bothal Pond on 24th (TF/JFa), 60-78 at Colwell and Holywell Pond, and 25 at Grindon Lough.

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Grindon Lough attracted a peak of 296 on 18th (PRM), with 36-285 on various other dates. Elsewhere, peak counts were 146 at Airy Holm Reservoir on 10th (IFo), 139 at Bothal Pond on 24th (TF/JFa), 103 at Hauxley Reserve on 9th (HRS), 52-77 at Greenlee Lough, Newcastle Leazes Park, QEII CP Lake and West Ord, and 30 at Linton Ponds. Eight to ten were also at Castle Island and Wallington Hall.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

About 50 flew S at Snab Point on 4th(JL); on 5th, 200 flew N and then S at Seaton Sluice (SSWT) and 148 flew S at Berwick (MHu); on 8th 46 flew N and 192 S at Holy Island (MJC/ADM), and 69 moved N at Stag Rocks on 22nd (IF). At Budle Bay, 30 were noted on 2nd (GPK), 3,500 roosted on 8th, 800 on 10th and 300 on 20th (CGK/GPK/TRD/JD). Nearby, 3,000 were at Goswick on 9th (TRD/JD), 1,000 at Holy Island causeway on 8th (AA), 340 at Harper's Haugh (near Budle Bay) on 14th (SVM), and 84 at Elwick (SVM). One to six were also noted at/over Beal, East Chevington, Grindon Lough, Low Newton and Tynemouth.

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

About 5,000 pale-bellied *hrota* race birds were noted at Holy Island on 9th (TRD/JD) and 3,000 during the month (IK), while 13 flew N at Seaton Sluice between 4th-17th (SSWT) and seven N at Newbiggin and Tynemouth on 17th (GB/DRW). Records of dark-bellied *bernicla* race birds involved 250 at Lindisfarne NNR during the month (IK) and six at Seaton Sluice on 27th (SSWT).

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

A total of 34 flew N at Seaton Sluice between 24th-27th (SSWT). About 780 used the Fenham Flats area of Lindisfarne NNR on 29th (PRM), 533 were at Budle Bay on 31st (ASJ), and one to two at Cresswell Pond and Stag Rocks.

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

A drake came for bread, with Mallards, at Tyne Green, Hexham on 23rd (MJC).

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

A total of 552 flew N and 403 S at Seaton Sluice during the month, including 202 N and 344 S on 29th (SSWT).

Numbers at in the Elswick-Fenham Mill area of Lindisfarne NNR varied from 4,500 on 14th (SVM) and 23rd (JDL), 9,900 on 18th (IBDa/KDa) and about 14,000 'late in the month' (IK), while 1,200 were at Budle Bay on 10th (CGK/GPK). Peak counts away from Lindisfarne involved 300 at Cresswell Pond on 22nd (MSH), 124-186 at Big Waters (GB), Bothal Pond (TD) and Derwent Reservoir (IFo), and 90-94 at Gosforth Park NR and Grindon Lough. Counts of 20-47 came from Druridge Pools, Hauxley Reserve, QEII CP Lake and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Swallow Pond held 135 (a site record) on 21st (GPK) and 24th (SPP), 51 were at Big Waters on 18th (GB), 37 at Gosforth Park NR on 31st (NHSN), 30 at Druridge Pools on 4th (TD), 30 at East Chevington north pool on 30th (JSB/EC), and 11-15 at Hauxley and St Mary's Island. Five to seven were also at Bothal Pond and QEII CP Lake, and singles at Newton Pool and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.



A Gadwall at Druridge Pools by Colin Bradshaw

Teal *Anas crecca*

A total of 197 flew N and 297 S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), and 16 flew N at Berwick pier on 6th (MHu). Budle Bay attracted a peak of 1,050 on 11th (CGK/GPK), about 400 were at the 'rocket field' and the lough, Holy Island during the month (IK), 332 at Derwent Reservoir on 7th (IFo), 163 at Arcot Pond on 31st (LJM), and 102 at Howdon (CB). Counts of 50-98 came from Alnmouth, Big Waters, Bothal Pond, Grindon Lough, Prestwick Carr and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, 20-45 from Castle Island, Druridge Pools, Elswick, Fenham Mill and Hauxley Reserve, and 12-19 from Gosforth Park NR, Holywell Pond and West Ord.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

A total of 14 flew N and three S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), and three flew N and four S at Hauxley on 24th (HRS). Peak counts were moderate, with 126 at Derwent Reservoir on 3rd (IFo), 120 at Woodhorn Flashes on 3rd (GB), 93 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 12th (SR), 50-66 at Big Waters (GB), Castle Island (DM/STH/PJA), St Mary's Island (MSH) and Tyne Green, Hexham (PRM), and 22-48 at Airy Holm Reservoir, Bothal and Linton Ponds, Hauxley Reserve, Newcastle Leazes Park, QEII CP Lake, the Tweed Estuary and West Ord. Groups of 13-17 were at Holywell Dene, St Mary's and Wallington Hall.

September Bulletin addition 150 were at Holborn on 27th (MJC).

Pintail *Anas acuta*

18 flew S at Berwick pier on 6th (MHu). About 90 were at Lindisfarne NNR during the month (IK), five at Budle Bay on 10th (CGK/GPK), up to four regularly at both East Chevington (JL/IK *et al.*) and Grindon Lough (PRM), and one to two at Big Waters, Bothal Pond and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.,

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

A total of 14 flew N at Seaton Sluice during the month, including nine S on 29th (SSWT). Largest counts were 12 at Gosforth Park NR on 4th (CGK/PS), nine at Holy Island Lough on 16th (STH/IFo), eight at Grindon Lough on 19th (MRS), and three to five at Arcot and Cresswell Ponds, and Big Waters. One to two were also at Hauxley Reserve and Newton Pool.

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

The only reports were of four at Druridge Pools on 9th (JSB/EC), two at East Chevington (JSB/EC) and Gosforth Park NR (NHSN), and singles at Bothal Pond (TF/JFa/IFo) and Broomlee Lough (MRS).

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Five flew S at Seaton Sluice on 29th (SSWT). Counts of 70 at Killingworth Lake on 18th (LJM), 57 at Castle Island on 18th (DM), 36 at QEII CP Lake on 18th (CDH), and 32 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 9th (SR), and 25 at Newcastle Exhibition Park (GB) were the largest received. Groups of 14-15 were at Big Waters, and Bothal, Cocklawburn and Linton Ponds, while two to nine were at Airy Holm and Derwent Reservoirs, Hauxley Reserve, Holy Island Lough, Jesmond Dene, Newcastle Leazes Park and St Mary's Island.

Scaup *Aythya marila*

Four flew S at Tynemouth on 19th and three S at St Mary's on 26th (SPP). One was at Castle Island on 18th (DM/STH/PJA).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

A total of 55 flew N at Seaton Sluice during the month. Counts were low, with peaks of 65+ off Cocklawburn on 23rd (PRM), 30-32 at Berwick North Shore (MHu) and Fenham Flats (PRM), and 12-24 at Berwick pier, Blyth Harbour, Budle Bay, Stag Rocks and the Tweed Estuary. Many drakes displayed at Holy Island during mild, sunny conditions on 20th (IK).

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

One flew N at Seaton Sluice on 24th (SSWT). Singles were at Cocklawburn on 23rd (PRM) and Holy Island on 31st (ADM). The long-staying drake remained at Derwent Reservoir all month (IFo).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

At Seaton Sluice, a total of 445 flew N and 268 S during the month, including 241 N and 112 S on 29th (SSWT), and six flew N at Hauxley. Numbers offshore were small, with peaks of 66 at Cocklawburn on 2nd (MHu), 50 at Stag Rocks on 20th (JPL), 30 at Holy Island on 1st (JDL) and 22 at Cheswick. Two to five were also off Cambois and Druridge.

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

11 flew N and two S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), and two flew N and three S at Newbiggin on 6th (AA/MH). One was in the North Blyth-Newbiggin area on 13th and 25th (LJM/AJR).

September Bulletin addition A male was at Holy island on 6th (MJC).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

A well below-average 16 flew N and 31 S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), and five to six moved N at St Mary's and Tynemouth on 17th (MSH/DRW). Peak counts were 25 at East Chevington on 31st (TF/JFa), 12 at New Water Haugh on 29th (MHu), five to seven at Derwent Reservoir, Hauxley Reserve and Holy Island, and three at Gosforth Park NR. One to two were also at Arcot, Bothal and Cresswell Ponds, Branton GP, Broomlee, Greenlee and Grindon Loughs, Bywell, Cragside, Horncliffe and Killingworth Lake.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Six flew N and three S at Seaton Sluice on 27th (SSWT), three S at Dunstanburgh on 5th (TM) and three N at Newbiggin on 17th (GB). Peak counts were 14 at East Chevington on 27th (TF/JFa), 11 at Budle Bay during the month (CGK/GPK), ten at Holy Island on 31st (ADM), and three to five at Cocklawburn and Druridge. One to two were also at the Blyth Estuary and Stag Rocks.

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

One flew N with Common Scoters at Seaton Sluice on 31st (SSWT). Branton GP held a notable 76 on 10th (JD), 28 were at Tillmouth on 22nd (MJC), 24 at Branton GP on 2nd (DGB/RHB), 11-15 at Castron, Cheswick, Killingworth Lake and Norham, and five to seven at Derwent Reservoir and West Ord. Three to four also visited Bywell, Kilham and Stag Rocks, and one to two at Berwick Little Beach, Big Waters, Broomlee and Greenlee Loughs, Newburn, Swallow Pond and the Tweed Estuary.

September Bulletin addition 163 were on the Tweed on estuary on 25th (MJC).

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

Three were at Hartley West Farm (Holywell Dene) on 14th (RJP). Two were at Alnwick Moor, Warton and Whittle Dene Reservoirs and a single at Big Waters.

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

On 8th 148 were in the Simonside Hills in five large groups totalling 100 and several smaller parties indicating a good breeding season (JD). A large count of 46 was made at Broadstruther ((The Cheviots) on 10th (JD). Seven were at Beefstand Hill (Upper Coquetdale) on 26th, six in the Harthope Valley on 23rd and one at Addycombe (Rothbury) on 18th.



A Red Grouse on the Simonsides
by Janet Dean
8th November

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

The only report was of a lek of nine at Sinderhope on 10th (AA).

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

The peak counts were 29 in two groups on Holy Island causeway from Beal Road End to Beal Point on 16th (ADM), 22 at Blyth Links on 25th (PRM), 15 in stubble fields at Chare Ends (Holy Island) on 31st (IK) and ten at Boulmer on 18th (RB/MB). Nine were at Beaconhill (Cramlington) on 19th (STH), eight at Hemscott Hill (Cresswell) on 3rd (NFO) and seven at Spittal (Newbiggin) on 27th (GB). One to six were noted at Acklington Park, Blyth Cemetery, Cresswell Pond, Ellington, Goswick, Hauxley, Linton Ponds, Prestwick Carr, Scremerston, West Ord and West Hartford.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

Six males were at Prestwick Carr on 25th (PRM) and four were at Hartley West Farm (Holywell Dene) and Grindon Lough.

Diver species *Gavia sp.*

An unidentified diver, not Red-throated, flew over Holy Island Lough on 13th (IF).

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

At Seaton Sluice 54 flew N and 68 S in 35 hours of sea-watching (SSWT). One flew S at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 4th. Peak offshore counts were 51 at Druridge Links on 20th (MH/AA), 22 at Cocklawburn Dunes on 23rd (PRM), seven at Berwick on 7th (JDL), six at Cheswick on 25th (TRD/JD) and five at Spittal Bay (Berwick) on 24th (MHu). One to four were noted at Cambois, Cheswick, Hauxley, Holy Island, Howick, Meadow Haven (Berwick), Newton Point and St Mary's Island.

Black-throated Northern Diver *Gavia arctica*

The only record was of a single at Cheswick Black Rocks on 16th (MHu).

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

At Seaton Sluice singles flew S on 26th/29th (SSWT) and at Boulmer one in partial summer plumage was offshore on 25th (RB/MB).

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

The only records were of singles N on 3rd/4th at Seaton Sluice (SSWT).

Sooty Shearwater *Puffinus griseus*

At Seaton Sluice, in a very poor year again for this species, nine flew N and three flew S during the month. On 17th singles flew N at Newbiggin and Tynemouth (GB/DRW).

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

Very few were noted during the month with two N at Snab Point (Cresswell) on 18th (JL) and on 17th a single flew N at Tynemouth (DRW), St Mary's Island (MSH) and Newbiggin (GB).

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

The only large movements noted were 800/hour S on 24th and 500 S in one hour on 6th in Spittal Bay (Berwick) (MHu) and 500 N with 30 S at Seaton Sluice on 29th, where the species was also well recorded from 24th-28th (SSWT). At St Mary's Island 61 flew S in 30 minutes on 17th (MSH). 45 were noted from Cocklawburn Dunes on 23rd (PRM), 40 at Newton Point on 2nd (TRD/JD) and at Stag Rocks 30 were seen on 23rd (PRM) with 20 on 19th/20th (RD/IF/TRD/JD). One to five were noted at Berwick Little Beach, Cheswick, Holy Island and Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay).

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

The peak counts were 59 at Blyth Harbour on 22nd (STH), 56 at Berwick North Shore on 14th (MHu), 46 at Calot Shad (Tweed Estuary) on 9th (MHu), 40 at Derwent Reservoir on 10th (IFo), 28 at New Water Haugh (Tweed Estuary) on 4th (MHu), 22 at North Shields Fish Quay on 15th (STH) and 14 at Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 25th (MHu). Ten were Stag Rocks on 23rd, nine roosted all month at Gosforth Park NR, eight were at Big Waters on 12th and six at Hauxley NR on 9th. One to five were noted at Newburn, QEII Lake, Tyne Green CP (Hexham) and Wark.

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

At Seaton Sluice only three flew N and two S during the month (SSWT). 70 were at Stag Rocks on 20th (TRD/JD). In the Berwick area 25 were at Cocklawburn Dunes on 23rd (PRM), 22 were at North Shore on 14th, 20 roosted at Meadow Haven on 25th (MHu), and ten were at Little Beach on 20th (TRD/JD). Two to five were noted at Cheswick, St Mary's Island and in the Tweed Estuary.

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

Three birds were noted on two dates at Gosforth Park NR with two being seen regularly (NHSN). A single was seen at East Chevington North Pool on 11th/25th (IK/TB).

Little Egret

Mike Carr

Holy Island

15th October



Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

The peak count in the Lindisfarne NNR area was 22 mid-month at Fenham-le-Moor, where 14/15 roosted in trees (IK). Up to seven were noted at the reserve on 19 further dates. Elsewhere seven were on the River Wansbeck at Ashington on 23rd (TB) with six noted on the Wansbeck Estuary on 31st (STH). Three were in Warkworth Gut on 20th. Two were noted at Monks' House Pool on 5th and Stakeford on 21st and singles at Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Seahouses GC, Stag Rocks and Tweed Estuary.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

The peak counts were 27 at Howdon on 25th (CB), 20 in the Tweed Estuary on 10th (MHu), and 15 in the Blyth Estuary on 27th (STH). Six were near Newcastle Business Park on the River Tyne on 4th (PCF), Hauxley NR on 9th/24th/31st (HRS), Holy Island Lough on 13th (MJC/ADM) and North Blyth on 25th (LJM). Five were at Gosforth Park NR throughout the month (NHSN) and in the Wansbeck Estuary on 6th (STH). One to four were noted at Arcot Pond, Berwick North Shore, Derwent Reservoir, Hartley, Holywell Dene and Pond, Jesmond Dene, Linton Ponds, St Mary's Island, Stag Rocks and Wark.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

The peak counts were 33 at Castle Island on 18th (STH/DM), 29 at Hauxley NR on 17th (HRS), 22 at Big Waters on 1st (GB), 17 in the Wansbeck Estuary on 4th (CGK/PS) and seven at Airey Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield Reservoir) on 1st/11th (IFo). Six were at Norham on 22nd (MJC) and five at Bothal Pond on 2nd (TF/JFa/TD) and Woodhorn Flashes on 3rd (GB). One to four were noted at Blyth Estuary, Broomlee Lough, Cocklawburn Pond, Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Holywell Pond Linden Hall, Marden Quarry, Newton Pool, St Mary's Wetland, Tweed Estuary, Tynemouth Boating Lake with a surprising record of three feeding close inshore at Beacon Point Newbiggin on 27th (GB).

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps Grisegena*

Three were at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd where one remained until 27th (IFo) and Widdrington Moor Lake on 15th (MSH). Two were at QEII Lake on 26th/27th (LJM/PRM), one was at Gosforth Park NR throughout the month (NHSN) and a juvenile was at The Heugh (Holy Island) from 18th until at least 22nd.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

Two, one with a partial red neck, were offshore at St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) on 31st (IK).

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

Four were at Holy Island on 31st (ADM). Two were on Widdrington Moor Lake on 18th (JL) and singles were noted at Holy Island on 17th/24th (IK/ADM).

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Two records this month with four birds together near Whittonstall which circled, gained height and then moved N into a headwind on 15th (IFo) and a single bird at Low Waskerley on 8th (IFo).

Harrier sp

On 12th a juvenile ringtail harrier with orange under parts and showing some features of a Pallid Harrier flew through Chare Ends and over the Straight Lonnen to the Lough (Holy Island) between 17:11h & 17:20h (MJC/ADM), while on 25th a large Harrier sp (five visible primary tips) showing some characteristics of Northern Harrier was watched for 30 seconds near Gloucester Lodge Farm (Blyth) at 14:50h before flying S (PRM).

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Once again all sightings came from the Druridge Bay area with a juvenile at Cresswell Pond on 6th (TB/IFo) and a female at East Chevington and West Chevington on several dates (AA/MH *et al.*) and at Cresswell Pond on 24th (ADMc).

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

A male was noted at an inland site on 11th (PRM), while a juvenile was noted at a Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa* release area on 16th (MH). A juvenile came in off the sea at East Chevington on 31st. It hunted the reed beds then vanished inland (MH).

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

An adult male was at Billsmoor on 1st (MJC)

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Four birds (adult male, two juvenile females and a juvenile male) were noted on Holy Island on 29th (MJC) and up three birds were noted on Holy Island on several dates (MJC/ADM *et al.*). Three birds were at St Mary's Island on 25th (STH) and two birds were at Tynemouth on 5th (CB) and at Hauxley NWT on 31st (HRS). Single birds were noted at 19 sites.

September Bulletin addition On Holy Island there were one or two during month.

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

At Harwood Forest six birds were present on 1st (MJC), four birds were seen at Scremerston on 23rd (PRM) and three were at Billsmoor on 1st (MJC), Swallow Pond on 20th (SPP) and at Laverock Hall (Blyth) on 26th (MSH). One to two birds were at 23 sites.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

Two birds were seen at Derwent Reservoir on 3rd (IFo) and single birds were observed at Kielder Reservoir on 2nd (JSB) and at Church Point (Newbiggin) on 5th (GB/TF/JFa).

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Four were at Cresswell Pond on 11th, 19th and 21st (ADMc/RD/IF), three birds were at Gosforth Park NR throughout the month (NHSN) at Cresswell Pond on 8th and 18th (IK/IRD) and at North Pool (East Chevington) on 25th (ADMc). Two birds were at Big waters NWT on 1st and 4th (GB) and at Holy Island Lough on 13th (MJC/ADM). Single birds were also heard or seen at Castron, Cambois, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Holy Island Lough, and St Mary's Wetland and at Swallow Pond.

September Bulletin addition One was at Holy Island on 6th and 12th.

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

15 birds were at Hauxley NWT on 17th (HRS), 14 were at Gosforth Park NR throughout the month (NHSN) and 13 birds were seen at Bothal Pond and Castle Island on 18th (IRD/DM/STH/PJA). Ten birds were at Wallington Hall on 27th (CDH) and nine were at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 26th (DM). One to seven birds were at Arcot Pond, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Hauxley NWT, Jesmond Dene, Leazes Park (Newcastle), QEII CP, St Mary's Island, Wark (R Tyne North) and at Wallington Hall.

Coot *Fulica atra*

High counts this month included 163 at QEII CP on 18th (CDH), 160+ at Swallow Pond on 4th (SPP) and 72 at Big Waters NWT on 4th (GB). One to 16 were at Bothal Pond, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Gosforth Park NR, Hauxley NWT, Leazes Park (Newcastle) and St Mary's Island.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

The WeBS count at Berwick North Shore numbered 162 on 14th (MHu) and the high-tide total for the R. Blyth area reached 156 on 27th (STH). Gatherings elsewhere included 75 at Newbiggin (Beacon Point) on 30th (GB), 68 at Tynemouth on 1st (DRW), 60 at Snab Point on 10th (GB) and 28-48 at Amble, Cocklawburn dunes, Hauxley NWT, Howick Dene-Craster and Stag Rocks. 14-15 were on the R. Tweed Estuary and at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay), whilst two late inland birds were at Derwent Reservoir on 13th.

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

Numbers increased from last month with up to ca.5,000 present on Holy Island often seen gathering in a massed flock at the eastern end of Pilgrims' Way (IK). Counts of 3,000 were recorded at St Mary's Island on 2nd (MSH), Holy Island (Crooked Lonnen) on 8th (MJC/ADM) and Lindisfarne NNR on 9th/14th (TRD/JD). At Smallburn (Longhorsely) 220 on 2nd increased to ca.1,500 on 3rd before falling to 110 by 22nd with the birds seen feeding on a 540-acre seeded field (AB/LB). Further inland flocks included 1,050+ at Grindon Lough on 11th (PRM) and 1,000 at Derwent Reservoir on 31st where up to 560 was regularly seen throughout the month (IFo). Additional coastal flocks included 450-600 at Alnmouth, Boulmer, Newton Point and Tynemouth (AB/LB/TRD/JD/CB/RB/MB), whilst 100-300 were also noted at Blyth (Laverock Hall), Elswick (R. Tyne) and Newcastle Town Moor (MSH/GB). A total of 88 moved E over QEII CP on 26th, 80+ were in Budle Bay on 23rd and 70 were on East Chevington north pool on 25th, whilst up to 19 were recorded at eight further sites.

September Bulletin addition 2,500 were at Holy Island on 13th and 350 there on 12th (MJC/ADM).

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

The monthly maximum at Budle Bay totalled 86 on 9th (CGK/GPK). Elsewhere in the north, 22 were seen on the Berwick north shore WeBS count on 14th (MHu) and 20 were at Lindisfarne NNR on 9th (TRD/JD). One to two were also reported from Berwick Little Beach, Hauxley NWT and Newbiggin.

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

Well reported this month. The large inland flock at Derwent Reservoir regularly reached 1,400 but peaked at 2,000 on 31st (IFo), whilst the largest coastal gathering was 1,600 in Budle Bay on 9th (CGK/GPK). Grindon Lough saw a peak of 650 on 2nd (PRM) and Bothal Pond held a high of 560 on 2nd (TF/JFa). Other good sized flocks included 392 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 9th (SR), 391 on the R. Tyne at Scotswood on 8th (MH/AA), 300 at Fourstones on 19th (AJH), 250 at both Airy Holm Reservoir on 13th (IFo) and just to the north of Big Waters NWT on 11th (GB) and 210 at Cocklawburn on 16th (MHu). A seeded field at Boulmer attracted 180 on 23rd (AB/LB), 160 were on the R. Tweed Estuary on 15th (MHu), 150 were at Big Waters NWT on 4th (GB) whilst 122 were counted at both Arcot Pond and Howdon on 11th and 19th respectively (LJM/CB). Elsewhere, 60-92 were noted at Bywell Haughs, Castle Island, Holy Island, R. Tyne (Newcastle Business Park), Throckley and West Ord. A further 20-40 were logged at Broomlee Lough, Goswick and Woodhorn Flashes. At Seaton Sluice an exhausted bird flew in off the sea on 29th and 68 flew S over the sea on 31st.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

A good series of coastal counts included 96 at Berwick North Shore on 14th (MHu), 60 at Berwick Little Beach on 20th (TRD/JD), 57 roosting on shingle at Chevington Burn on 29th (TD), 52 at Cocklawburn on 2nd (MHu) and 50 roosting at Newbiggin on 27th (GB). Several counts at St Mary's Island included a peak of 36 on 4th (MSH), 33 were noted in Druridge Bay on 10th (PCF) and seven were on the beach at Hauxley on 24th (HRS).

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

A late bird was on The Snook at Holy Island on 4th (CMur *et al.*).

Curlew *Numerius arquata*

The largest gathering by far was 283 at Boulmer on 9th (TM), with 114 at Hauxley NWT on the same date the next highest (HRS). Further groups included 60 at Budle Bay on 23rd (PRM), 54 on the R. Tweed Estuary on 15th, 48 at Cocklawburn on 20th and 38 at Berwick North Shore on 14th (MHu). Fields adjacent to Big Waters NWT attracted a high of 17 on 11th (GB) and 16 were at St Mary's Island on 3rd (PRM). Single-figure reports also came from Blyth Links, Bothal Pond, Castle Island, Goswick, Holywell Dene, Howdon and on the R. Tyne (Newcastle Business Park).

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Dispersing birds resulted in reducing numbers this month with a high of six being noted at Monks' House Pool on 5th (TM) and in the R. Blyth area on 27th (STH). Five were seen on Low Newton scrape on 8th and three were at East Chevington on 11th (TRD/JD). Arcot Pond held three on 31st (LJM) with two present here on 3rd/11th (STH/DM/LJM). Two were also feeding on the muddy north shore at Elswick (R. Tyne) on 20th (GB) and at Holy Island on 30th (EHa et al). Singles were logged at Bothal Pond, Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond, Fenham-le-Moor, Holy Island (on the north shore with Turnstones) and Woodhorn Flashes.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Under-reported this month, with only 100 reported from Lindisfarne NNR on 9th (TRD/JD). Additional coastal reports included two at Berwick Little Beach on 20th and singles at Berwick North Shore, Hauxley NWT, Newbiggin and Tynemouth.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

There were several reports of 43-61 from Stag Rocks in the second half and a peak of 100 on 19th (RD/IF *et al.*). The WeBS at Berwick, North Shore produced 88 on 14th (MHu), 65 were in R Blyth Estuary at high tide on 27th (STH), 64 were at Hauxley NWT on 10th (HRS) and 61 along the stretch from Hartley to St Mary's on 23rd (CDH). The peak at St Mary's was 53-55 on 3rd (MSH/PRM). Elsewhere 27 were noted from Howick Dene to Craster on 14th, 20 at Low Newton on 2nd, 14 at Berwick, Little Beach on 25th with single figures at Cocklawburn, R Tweed Estuary and Whitley Bay.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

By far the most was 2,500 at Fenham Flats on 20th (JPL). Other peak counts were of 63 at Stag Rocks on 22nd and 40 in Budle Bay on 9th and small numbers occurred at Cocklawburn, Hauxley NWT and Newbiggin.

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

Three were at Monks' House Pool on 5th (TM) and singles at Cresswell Pond on 3rd, Druridge Pools on 4th, Hauxley NWT on 9th, Grindon Lough on 11th and Bothal Pond on 31st.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

A juvenile was at Grindon Lough on 11th (PRM).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

A total of 100, in two flocks, was at East Chevington on 29th (TD), the St Mary's peak reached 94 on 3rd (MSH) and 80 were at Newbiggin on 30th (GB/LAR). Druridge Links and Holy Island held 39-57, Hauxley up to 15 with three at Berwick.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Lindisfarne hosted 800 on 9th (TRD/JD) and the peak in Budle Bay was 220 on 22nd (CGK). Other totals were relatively modest with 41 at high tide in R Blyth Estuary on 27th the most and ten or fewer appeared at seven other coastal areas.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

The majority of records came from the Stag Rocks stronghold, mostly 30-56 but a peak of 130 on 20th (TRD/JD) and 85+ on 23rd (PRM). The only other counts to reach double figures were 23 at Berwick on 14th, 22 at Newbiggin on 30th and 14 at Tynemouth on 19th.

White-rumped Sandpiper *Calidris fuscicollis*

One was present at Stag Rocks during 14th to 20th (per ADM *et al.*). The finder is apparently unknown at this stage.

The White-rumped Sandpiper stretches
Stag Rocks
by Chris Barlow

Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos*

A juvenile was present at Grindon Lough during 13:40-15:20 on 11th (PRM).

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Just two records of singles: at Bothal Pond on 2nd (TD) and at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 9th (SR).



Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

The long-staying adult vacated its usual roosting rock in Budle Bay on 8th (CGK/GPK *et al.*) after ten weeks. Almost certainly the same individual was seen at Holy Island on 11th (SR/AH).

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Singles were found at Sleaford Burn on 1st, Branton GP on 1st/2nd, Alnmouth on 2nd, R Wansbeck estuary on 6th, Budle Bay on 10th, Castle Island on 18th, Foxton Bends on 19th and Fenham Mill on 29th.

September Bulletin addition One flew S on 10th at Holy Island MJC/ADM).

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

The largest concentrations were of 310+ in Budle Bay on 23rd (PRM), around 300 at Fenham Mill on 29th (PRM), 206 in R Blyth Estuary at high tide on 27th (STH) and 147 at Howdon on 26th (CB). Several places had 38-94 at times: Berwick, Elswick, Hauxley NWT, St Mary's, R Tweed Estuary, Tynemouth and R Wansbeck Estuary and small numbers were at four other places.



A Redshank at Tynemouth by Mike Carr on 3rd October

Jack Snipe *Limnocryptes minimus*

One came in off the sea at St Mary's on 29th (MSH). Two were in the north dunes at Holy Island on 12th (MJC) and two at Cresswell Pond on 13th (AJR). Singles were seen at Holy Island on 5th/6th and at St Mary's on 6th. Later singles appeared at Fenham Flats on 18th, High Humbleton on 22nd, near Big Waters on 25th, East Chevington on 27th and at Howdon on 30th.

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

A strong south-east wind and thick fog brought 40 to Holy Island on 28th (ADM/BC), including 24 at Snook, and nine were noted next day. This influx was reflected elsewhere: six in off the sea on 29th at Seaton Sluice (SSWT), seven at Hauxley on 29th (HRS) and eight at Newbiggin on 30th (GB/LAR). Also one to two appeared during 28th to 30th at a further eight coastal localities. Earlier, Holy Island had two on 4th, three on 11th and singles on 15th and 17th. One flew W at dawn at Cramlington on 9th and another was at Tynemouth on 11th.

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Peaks at some of the more favoured locations were of 15 at Cresswell Pond on 27th, 15 at Gosforth Park NR during the month, 14 at West Hartford on 23rd and 13 at Big Waters on 12th. Four to six were noted at Arcot Pond, Bothal Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Grindon Lough, Holy Island, Holywell Pond, Linton Ponds and Prestwick Carr and small numbers at another seven spots.

September Bulletin addition Nine were at Holy Island on 9th.

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

At Seaton Sluice three pale-phase adults flew N together on 26th (SSWT) and two pale adults were off St Mary's also on 26th (SPP). Two adults flew N off Newbiggin on 17th (GB *et al.*) and an adult flew S at St Mary's on 7th (AC).

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

At Seaton Sluice there were just four, two N and two S during 4th to 5th. Three flew N at Newbiggin on 6th (AA/MH), two of which had spent some time standing on a large piece of driftwood.

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

Two flew N at Newbiggin on 17th (GB). One moved N at Seaton Sluice on 5th and singles did so at Newbiggin and Berwick Pier on 6th.

Skua *sp.*

Two distant pale-phase birds were off Newbiggin on 17th (GB).

Auk *sp*

At Seaton Sluice, the maximum movements were 80N in six hours on 29th and 50N, 120S in 2.5 hours on 26th (SSWT). Elsewhere, 14 flew N at Boulmer during an early morning half-hour on 17th (MSH) and 'dozens', most apparently Guillemots, moved S at Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) on 24th (ADM).

Guillemot *Uria aalge*

At Cocklawburn on 23rd at least 22 were present (PRM) and 20 were at Newton on 2nd (TRD/JD). Three to seven were noted at Bamburgh (Stag Rocks), Berwick (Spittal Bay), Holy Island and St Mary's Island (TRD/JD/ADM/PRM/MHu).

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

The only records were of two at Seaton Sluice on 2nd (SSWT).

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

A juvenile was at Derwent Reservoir on 7th (IFo) and an adult in Budle Bay on 22nd (CGK).

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

A late-staying juvenile fished off Emmanuel Head, Holy Island on 31st (ADM).

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

On 6th, 40, including three juveniles, passed S at Newbiggin Church Point (AA/MH) and six moved N at Berwick Pier (MHu); ten were seen at Bamburgh, Stag Rocks on 23rd (PRM).

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Maximum counts were 600 at Budle Point on 9th (CGK), 500 at Newcastle (Elswick) on 20th (GB) and 479 at the QEII CP Lake on 18th (CDH). Smaller gatherings of 130-228 on dates throughout were recorded at Berwick (North Shore), Bothal Pond, Castle Island, Hauxley, and the River Tyne at Elswick (MJC/MJCo/TD/MHu/DM) with up to 100 elsewhere at Arcot Pond, Exhibition Park, Hauxley, Jesmond Dene, Leazes Park and St Mary's Island.

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

Records came from only two localities, comprising two birds at Snab Point on 4th (JL) and at Tynemouth, single adults on 5th-6th (CB/DRW) and on 12th (SPP).



A Tynemouth Little Gull by Duncan Watson

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

Four sightings from Seaton Sluice of one-two, totalling four birds, passing N and S on three days (SSWT). The gathering at Newbiggin declined significantly from last month's record total to a maximum of only seven on 13th (AJR). Single birds, the majority adults, were noted by many observers from 11 widespread localities namely Bamburgh (Stag Rocks), Big Waters NWT, Cresswell (Snab Point), East Chevington, Holy Island, Holywell Pond, Newton Point, Newcastle (Elswick), the River Wansbeck Estuary, Swallow Pond and Tynemouth.

September Bulletin addition One was at Holy Island on 11th. (MJC/ADM).

Common Gull *Larus canus*

Budle Point again held the largest concentration with counts of 4,500 and 1,000 on 9th and 22nd respectively (CGK) and another large count was 1,000 in fields at High Hauxley on 17th (HRS). A WeBS survey on 15th on the River Tweed Estuary found 156 (MHu) but elsewhere were only small numbers, four to 14, at Arcot Pond, Berwick (North Shore), Castle Island, Cramlington (Alexandra Park) and Jesmond Dene.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

Possible migrant birds, numbering 11, passed SW over Billsmoor on 1st (MJC) and only small numbers remained in the county after the autumn exodus including a monthly maximum of six at Budle Point on 9th (CGK) with four in the River Tweed Estuary on 15th (MHu) and at Derwent Reservoir on 31st (IFo). Singles, mainly adult birds, were noted from Big Waters NWT, Castle Island, Cramlington, Howdon, Jesmond Dene, Swallow Pond and Woodhorn.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

A WeBS survey in the River Tweed Estuary included 3,364 on 15th (MHu) and another large count was 1,500+ at Budle Point on 22nd, up from 300 there on 9th (CGK). The evening gull roost at the QEII CP Lake held 210 on 26th (PRM), a flock of 200 was at Old Rugley on 1st (JMA) and 103 were noted on the River Tyne (Elswick Wharf to the Business Park) (DM/STH/PJA). Elsewhere, smaller groups of 15-75 were at Berwick (North Shore), Blagdon, Bothal Pond, Castle Island and Leazes Park (JMA/DM/STH/PJA/MHu/TD) with one to four at four other localities.

Six adult birds of the Northern race *argentatus* were at the QEII CP roost on 26th (PRM) and another two adults were identified in Budle Bay on 23rd (PRM)

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

Gatherings of 35-75 were at Castle Island on 18th (DM), Budle Point on 9th and 22nd (CGK), and in the River Wansbeck Estuary on 31st (STH) with three to nine at three other localities.

Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

On 18th 32 were at Blyth South Harbour (DM/STH/PJA).

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

A pre-roost gathering of 138 at Howdon on 26th with 93 there on 5th and 68 on 2nd (CB). Elsewhere, 60 were at Holywell Pond on 25th (STH), 50 in a mixed flock at Fourstones on 19th (AJH), 13 at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 13th (BWG) and one to seven at Big Waters, Longhorsley and Jesmond Dene.



Stock Doves above Howdon Wetland by Colin Bradshaw

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

Around 800 were at Paxton Dene (Longhorsley) on 20th (AB/LB), 400 at Prestwick Carr on 26th (PCF), 220+ at Scremerston on 23rd (PRM) seven at Jesmond Dene with a pair seen mating near the Western Bypass on 1st (MJCo/JMA).

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

A gathering at North Moor Farm (Cramlington) saw 97 on wires on 29th and 65 on 20th (STH), 32 were at Widdrington on 18th (PCF), 29 at Elwick on 31st (ASJ) and four to six at Cramlington and Ogle.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

All sightings from the north of the county with three to four, likely the resident pairs present at Holy Island with singles seen regularly during the month (IK *et al.*) and also at South Charlton on 4th, Ellingham on 13th, Chathill on 25th, Wooler on 27th and Bamburgh on the same date. Unfortunately the only report in the south was a road casualty on the A1 at Northgate (Morpeth) on 4th (IRD).

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Two at Shiremoor all month (CGK) with singles at Derwent Reservoir on 1st (IFo), Dinnington on 9th (PCF) and Beacon Lane (Cramlington) on 11th.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

A pair called at Scremerston on 23rd (PRM) with singles perched on the Bamburgh Village sign on 6th (TM), at Wark on 12th (PRM) with the same observer finding birds at Wark Common, Bellingham, Castron and Shitlington Common on 23rd. One called regularly during the month at Fulbeck (Morpeth) (TD).

Long-eared Owl *Aiso otus*

One was at St Mary's Island on 10th (AC), Holy Island Lough on 18th (IK), Howdon on 26th, (CB) and at the Snook (Holy Island) on 29th (PRM).

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

A continental influx resulted in all sightings being coastal with the peak four at Holy Island and St Mary's Island with two seen regularly at both sites. Singles were also at Berwick Castle, Blyth, Druridge Pools, Goswick, Hemscott Hill (Cresswell), Hauxley, Newbiggin, Tynemouth, Swallow Pond, and 'in off' at Seaton Sluice on 9th. One found moribund on cliff top at St Mary's Island on 30th subsequently died and there was a road casualty just north of Cresswell Pond (AC/PCF).

September Bulletin addition A bird was at Holy Island on 9th (MJC)



A Holy Island Short-eared Owl
15th October by Mike Carr

Swift *Apus apus*

September Bulletin addition One was seen on Holy island on 30th (ADM).

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

More than two were at Gosforth Park NR during the month and two at Furnace Bridge (Bedlington) on 19th (JR/NA). There were many reports of singles with birds regularly at Boulmer, Budle Bay, Holywell Dene & Pond, Seaton Sluice and Wark (R.North Tyne) along with 18 other widely spread localities.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Single birds at Harwood Forest on 1st (MJC), feeding on the observer's lawn at Rothbury on 2nd (TRD/JD) and Morpeth on 10th (TF/JFa).

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

One observer found four birds at Harwood Forest on 1st, Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth) on 23rd and Wallington on 24th (MJC). Three were in the observer's garden at Tynemouth on 3rd (CB) and at Tyne Green (Hexham) on 23rd (MJC), two in an Old Hartley Garden, Valley Park (Cramlington), Lynemouth, Jesmond Dene, Scremerston and Hauxley on three dates. Singles were at many of the aforementioned and six other locations.

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Three birds were noted at Harwood Forest on 1st (MJC), Holy Island on 18th (BCFT), Prestwick Carr on 25th (PCF) and three birds including a male devouring a Great Tit *Parus major* were at Derwent Reservoir on 27th (lfo). One to two were also recorded at over 20 sites.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Two birds, a juvenile male and a juvenile female, were present on Holy Island (IK *et al.*) throughout the month and two birds were at Budle Bay on 22nd (CGK). Single birds were at Bellingham, Billsmoor, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Ellingham, St Mary's Island, and Tynemouth & West Chevington.

September Bulletin addition One was on Holy Island on 20th and 27th.

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Budle Bay had two birds present all month (CGK/GPK/TM) and an adult and a juvenile were noted together at St Mary's Island on 4th (AC) and a male and a female were at Elswick (Newcastle) on 6th (GB). Single birds were recorded from 16 sites.

Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor*

A single report of one at the Straight Lonnen (Holy Island) on 4th (CMur) and presumably another individual found on 11th (SR) identified as *melanopterus* type and remaining till the next day having killed a Robin (MJC/ADM/NFO).



Great Grey Shrike on Holy Island
by Mike Carr on 11th October

Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

On 4th seven were at Station Road (Wallsend) (PRF).

Magpie *Pica pica*

A peak count of 18 at Howdon on 3rd (CB), six at Jesmond Dene on 4th (MJCo), two at St Mary's Island on 25th and one ringed at Hauxley on 10th (HRS).

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Five at Wallington on 24th was the peak count (MJC) with four at Gosforth Park NR during the month and at Bedlington on 26th. Three were at Kilham on 11th, Thrunton Woods on 12th and Bywell Bridge on 20th with two at Ellington, Gunnerton and West Sleekburn. Singles were at 21 other widespread localities.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

A pre-roost gathering of more than 700 at Budle Bay on 22nd (CGK), 250 at Alnmouth on 2nd and Derwent Reservoir on 10th (MJC/IFo) with 60 found between Howick Dene to Craster and five in Jesmond Dene.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

On 2nd 100 were at Alnmouth and 60 found between Howick Dene and Craster on 14th (MJC), 40 in fields near Battlesteads Hotel (Wark) (CB), five at Holy Island on 5th and one on the beach at Hauxley on 29th.

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

Fields at Whitelea Beacon (Cramlington) held 67 on 4th (DM), a 'parliament' of 64 was at Calot Shad (R. Tweed Estuary) on 9th (MHu) and 33 pre-roost at East Cramlington LNR on 26th (STH). Regular counts of 19 to 30 at Hauxley between 10th & 31st, 29 at R. Wansbeck Estuary on 6th, 26 at Tynemouth on 4th and flying east early a.m. at the Snook (Holy Island) on 10th with one to nine at Cramlington, Jesmond Dene and St Mary's Island.

Raven *Corvus corax*

One on 4th and two on 11th & 16th at The Snook (Holy Island) with one at Chare Ends on 21st (CMur/MJC/ADM/IK). More typically one at Harwood Forest on 1st (MJC), at Ottercops on 19th (MH) and Harthope Valley on 23rd (TRD/JD).

September Bulletin addition two were at Holborn on 27th (MJC).

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

A large influx from the continent saw 76 records returned with double figures all month. The peak counts were on Holy Island with 131 on 12th, 124 on 11th and counts of 49 to 79 daily from 13th to 18th (MJC/ADM). 51 were found from Howick Dene to Craster on 14th (MJC), 30 at Hauxley on 10th (HRS), 25+ at Budle Point on 11th (CGK/GPK) and more than 20 at St Mary's Wetland, Tynemouth and Bamburgh from 11th to 13th. Inland 50+ were at Wallington on 27th with 20+ there on 24th, ten at Humshaugh on 17th and four at Grindon Lough on 18th (PRM). One to 16 were at all of the above and 17 other widespread locations.



One of the Holy Island Goldcrest influx
12th October by Mike Carr

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapillus*

On 11th one was found by Tom Middleton at the base of the pier Tynemouth, one heard at Hauxley (HRS) and one at the mounds St Mary's Island (SPP/AC) sexed as female. At Prior's Park (Tynemouth) possibly the same bird re-located from the previous day (SPP/GPK) and one was trapped and ringed at Bamburgh on 13th (BRS). Singles were also at Crooked & Straight Lonnens (Holy Island) on 16th (ADM) and a male at Burnfoot on 27th (AA).

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Over 2km 12 were found at Prestwick Carr on 10th (PCF) and 12 were at Hauxley on 11th (HRS) with two of six ringed there on 31st. One to two were at Jesmond Dene and Whitley Bay.

Great Tit *Parus major*

Four at Hauxley on 31st with three there on 3rd & 4th. Regarded as rare at this location, two were present on Holy Island from 3rd to 12th with one remaining till 27th (MJC/ADM/IK).

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

Between Howick Dene and Craster 13 were found on 14th (MJC) with 10 at Hauxley on 10th where four were ringed on 18th (HRS). Four were present there on 3rd & 11th, at Bamburgh on 8th and in an Old Hartley garden during the month (BRS/RJP). A first site record of two at Howdon on 1st remaining till 26th (CB) with two at Holy Island on 12th & 14th (MJC/ADM) and at QEII CP on 26th (PRM). Singles were at Jesmond Dene, Humshaugh and Whitley Bay with nine ringed during the month at Bamburgh (BRS).

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

Two were at Newbiggin Ash Bank on 9th 27th and 30th (JSB/EC/GB), Arnold Memorial Reserve (Craster) on 14th (MJC), Prestwick Carr on 15th (PCF) and Derwent Reservoir on 19th (IFo) with singles there on five other dates and at an encouraging six other locations.

September Bulletin addition Three were at Lynemouth Dene on 18th and two were at Craster on 30th(MJC).

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

At the regular site of Scotch Gill Woods three were present on 23rd (MJC) with two in feeders in the observer's garden at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 11th (TD) and singles at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 4th & 11th (NFO) and Letah Wood (Hexham) on 17th (AJH).

Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus*

Two males and two females were at East Chevington N. Pool on 1st with four seen and heard flying south past Cresswell Pond on 4th (ADM/R Dunn). At The Lough (Holy Island) up to two males and a female were seen and heard frequently on 13th with one on 14th (MJC/ADM *et al.*). Singles were at Hauxley on 31st the second record here the first being in 1965 (HRS/MJC) and at East Chevington on the same date (TF/JFa).

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Movement S was noted with 109 the high count over the Snook (Holy Island) on 10th (MJC), 50 at Hauxley in 31st (HRS) with 35 over both these sites and East Chevington on 31st (TF/JFa). More than 30 were flushed by a Sparrowhawk at Beacon Lane (Cramlington) on 14th with 20 over Whitelea (Beacon Hill) on 4th (LJM/DM). One to 20 were at the aforementioned sites during the month and 12 other locations.

Shore Lark *Eremophila alpestris*

One found at South Harbour (Blyth) on 12th remained until 17th giving some excellent views to all (PCF *et al.*).

The popular Shore Lark at Blyth by Mike Potts

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Around 20 remained at Wark (N.Tyne) on 4th (PRM), eight flew south at Big Waters on 7th (GB), seven at Beaconhill (Cramlington) on 3rd and six at Dinnington on the same date. One to three were reported on nine dates till the month end with three at Tynemouth on 15th, singles at Cresswell Village on 20th & 21st and at Church Point Newbiggin and Low Newton scrape on 31st (TB/IBDa/KDA).

September Bulletin addition 250 were at Holy Island on 13th (MJC/ADM).

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

Six or more were around the observer's garden at Fulbeck (Morpeth) as late as the 6th (TD), five at Hauxley on 3rd (HRS), four at East Ord (Berwick) on 2nd (MHu), three at Ellington on 4th (TB) with two at Rockcliffe (Whitley) on 1st, Low Newton on 2nd and Ellington on 3rd (IJ/TRD/JD/TB).

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

There were some sizeable gatherings during the month, the largest of which was 30+ at Bamburgh on 31st, rising from 21 on 18th (BRS). Counts of 20 came from Humshaugh on 17th (PRM) and Hauxley NR on 31st (HRS). A flock of 18 at Holy Island from 24th to early November was an impressive island count (IK). Further 'tribes' included 17 at Cramlington (Beacon Lane) on 14th and at Berwick Moor on 16th; 15 were at Derwent Reservoir on 4th and at Prestwick Carr on 29th, 12 were noted at Tillmouth on 22nd and 11 from Howick Dene-Craster on 14th. Elsewhere counts of seven to ten came from Cramlington (Valley Park), East Cramlington LNR, Leazes Park, Plessey Woods CP, Wark (North Tyne) and Woodhorn with three to six at a further ten localities.

September Bulletin addition Five were at Craster on 30th.



Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*

A significant influx occurred in October. Holy Island was a 'hot spot' with an estimated total of 19-22 birds on the island during the month and a daily peak of 16 on 6th, the second highest day total for the island / County. Further daily totals from the island are tabulated below:

Date / Location	4th	6th	8th	11th	12th	14th	16th	17th	24th	28th
Snook	2	3	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Excavations to Chare	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Chare Ends	2	3	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0
Chare Bungalows	1	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Vicar's and Churchyard	2	3	3	1	3	2	1	1	0	0
Other Village gardens	1	0	1	1	1	2	4	2	1	0
Straight Lonnen	2	2	2	3	2	0	0	1	0	0
Crooked Lonnen	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Lough	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	12	16	9	10	9	7	5	4	1	0

(Data supplied by ADM/MJC from the records of MJC/BC/TRD/AH/STH/IK/ADM/SR).

This arrival was witnessed in at least 19 further coastal localities. At Bamburgh a single was trapped and ringed on 8th, four were ringed here on 11th and four+ were noted on 13th, two of which were in Castle Wood to 14th (BRS/ADM). At nearby Budle Point the daily totals were one on 5th-6th, two on 8th, one on 9th and four+ on 11th (CGKGPK). Further multiple counts came from Tynemouth, where there were two on 3rd, three on 4th and two on 11th (DRW/CB); Hauxley NR held one on 9th and two to three on 10th-11th (HRS) and two were at Woodhorn Church on 6th (STH). Elsewhere singles were reported (in chronological order) from Whitley Bay Cemetery on 3rd (PRM), St Mary's Island/Wetland from 3rd-5th (AJ/AC/MSH/SPP), East Chevington and the Farne Islands on 4th (TF/JFa/TM), Druridge Pools from 4th-5th (TF/JFa/TD/ADM), Blyth Cemetery, Ridley Park (Blyth) and Craster on 6th (PRF/AJ/CGK/TRD/JD), Marden Quarry from 7th-10th (AC/DRW), Low Newton on 8th (TRD/JRD), St Mary's Island on 10th (AC), Whitley Bay Cemetery on 11th, Brierdene on 12th (GPK), Prior's Park on 13th (TRD/JD), Craster on 14th (MJC), Cresswell Pond on 16th (ADM), Brierdene on 19th (AC) and the Blyth Estuary and Druridge Pools on 20th (LJM/JFa).

September Bulletin addition One was at Holy Island on 11th and two were there on 12th and 13th (MJC/ADM).

Yellow-browed Warbler / Hume's Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus* / *Phylloscopus humei*

A bird at Newbiggin from 28th-29th showed some characteristics of *P. humei*, but stubbornly refused to call and therefore could not be positively identified to either species (GB/LAR).

Radde's Warbler *Phylloscopus schwarzi*

One was at Holy Island on 8th (SR).

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

A notable 17 were at Alnmouth on 2nd (MJC). Numbers on Holy Island fluctuated throughout the month, with peak counts of 16 on 11th and 12 on 13th (MJC/ADM); there were counts of one to nine on a further twelve dates from 3rd-20th and a second light influx at the month's end which produced three to six from 27th-31st. Counts from Hauxley NR included ten on 3rd, five on 4th and eight on 10th (HRS), while nine were counted between Howick Dene and Craster on 14th (MJC). Five were at Whitley Bay Cemetery, four at St Mary's Island and three+ at Lynemouth on 3rd (PRM/GB), while three were at Druridge Pools on 4th, in a suburban garden at Chapel House on 6th and at Bamburgh Castle dunes on 10th. One to two were reported from a further 13 coastal and ten inland localities.

A very pale 'eastern type' bird was noted at Holy Island on 28th (ADM).

A bird showing characteristics of 'Siberian' Chiffchaff *P.c.tristis* was in a Tynemouth garden on 8th (CB), while four birds also characteristic of this race were noted at Ridley Park (Blyth) on 15th (AJ).

September Bulletin addition Ten were at Craster on 19th and eight there on 30th (MJC). Nine were at Holy Island on 30th (MJC).

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Late birds were noted at Holy Island on 3rd, 4th (two) and 8th (MJC/ADM), at Bamburgh on 13th (BRS) and again at Holy Island on 31st (ADM).

September Bulletin addition Ten were at Holy Island on 11th and eight there on 13th (MJC/ADM) and seven were at Holborn on 27th (MJC).

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

The peak count from Holy Island was seven on 11th (MJC/ADM); six were at Hauxley on 4th (HRS) and five+ at Bamburgh on 13th (BRS). Four were reported from Branton GP on 1st (IBDa/KDa) and three at St Mary's Wetland on 13th (AJ) and Seahouses on 21st (JPL). Singles were also reported from Alnmouth, Bamburgh, Big Waters, Blyth Cemetery, Cambois, Craster, Druridge Pools, Low Newton and Wansbeck Estuary.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

September Bulletin addition On Holy Island there were several records – six on 13th, two on 11th and one on 12th and 26th (MJC/ADM).

Barred Warbler *Sylvia nisoria*

One was at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) from 1st-2nd (AC). On Holy Island the first was found on 4th (MJC/ADM) followed by a single in the Churchyard on 13th and what was believed to be a different bird in the Straight Lonnen on 14th (MJC/ADM), with confirmation of two birds present on 15th (both in Straight Lonnen-IK); a bird was in the Vicar's garden from 17th-21st (IK *et al.*). Another was at St Mary's Island from 6th-9th and one was trapped and ringed at Bamburgh on 11th (BRS). A bird trapped and ringed at Hauxley RS on 11th was re-trapped on 17th and again on 18th, having gained five grams in weight.

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

Singles were at Tynemouth on 9th (CB) and Marden Quarry on 19th (AC).

September Bulletin addition Singles were at Craster on 19th (MJC) and Holy Island on 26th (ADM).

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

A late individual was at St Mary's Wetland on 14th (MSH).

September Bulletin addition One was at Holy Island on 13th (MJC).

Icterine Warbler *Locustella naevia*

September Bulletin addition One was at Holy Island on 11th (MJC).

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

September Bulletin addition One was on Holy Island on 10th (MJC/ADM).

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Four were counted in Jesmond Dene on 25th (MJCo). Three were at Holystone Woods on 1st (JMA) and at Wark (North Tyne) on 15th (PRM) and two at Humford Mill (Bedlington) on 19th. Singles were also reported from Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Cramlington (Valley Park), Holywell Dene, Tyne Green (Hexham) and Wallington Hall.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Well reported this month with up to five at Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth) and Wallington Hall and three from Howick Dene-Craster (MJC). Reports of up to two came from Alnmouth, Derwent Reservoir, Hauxley NR, Tyne Green (Hexham) and Wark (North Tyne) with singles at Bamburgh, Bellingham, Big Waters, Corbridge, Craggside, East Cramlington LNR, Holywell Dene, Jesmond Dene, Leazes Park and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. One at Holy Island on 8th was a good island record.

September Bulletin addition Three were at Holborn on 29th.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Numbers on Holy Island rose from nine to ten on 4th and 8th respectively, to 15 on 10th, 17 on 11th-12th, 23 on 14th and 22 on 18th (MJC/ADM). A second influx here produced 15 on 28th, rising to 26 on 29th and 24 present on 31st (MJC/ADM). A total of 16 were found from Howick Dene-Craster on 14th (MJC) and 13 were inland at Prestwick Carr on 10th (PCF). Further peak coastal counts included ten at Bamburgh Castle dunes on 14th, up to eight at Hauxley NR (3rd) and Budle Point (29th) and five at Alnmouth.

September Bulletin addition On Holy Island nine were present on 26th and eight on 30th (ADM).

A Starling at Holy Island on 9th October by Janet Dean

**Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris*

An encouraging 8,000 were roosting at Holy Island Lough (IK) by the end of the month (compared to 6,000 in 2014). A large roost at Big Waters contained 2,000 on 1st (GB), 200 were at Derwent Reservoir on 8th, 100 at Newbiggin on 27th and up to 50+ roosted at Gosforth Park NR during the month.

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

Two pairs disputed territory at Tyne Green (Hexham) on 23rd (MJC). One to two noted at Holywell Dene during the month occasionally visited the estuary. One to two were also reported from Blakehopeburnhaugh, Fulbeck (Morpeth), Holystone Burn, Humford Mill, Jesmond Dene and Scotch Gill Woods.

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

Holy Island held two on 4th (CMur *et al.*), ten on 6th, two on 8th, nine on 11th and two on 12th (MJC/ADM) with another present here on 17th (CGK/GPK/PS). Elsewhere, there were five at Craster and one at Budle Point on 6th (TRD/JD/IBDa/KDa), one at St Mary's Island on 7th, (JBU/AJJ/AC), two at Budle Point on 9th and 11th (CGK/GPK) and one to two at Tynemouth from 10th-12th (CB/DRW). Later in the month singles were at Holy Island on 28th (Crooked Lonnen) and 29th (Snook).

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Holy Island witnessed a significant arrival at the month end, with numbers rising from 25-35 mid-month and 46 on 27th to 1,840 on 28th and 710 on 29th (ADM/NJC). At Hauxley NR small numbers were noted to 18th with 250-300 from 28th-29th (HRS) and 130 present on 31st. Elsewhere, 130 were at Druridge Pools on 28th (MJC), 131 flew in-off at Seaton Sluice on 29th (SSWT) and there was a 'steady arrival' at Bamburgh on 31st (BRS); 45-51 were also noted at Budle Point, Goswick, Newbiggin and Tynemouth during this period.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

Small numbers were noted from 6th at nine, mainly coastal localities. A total of 230+ moved SW at QEII CP on 26th, 225+ were at Holy Island on 29th and 500 moved SE near Humshaugh on 31st (PRM/MR). Elsewhere at the end of the month 130 were noted at Derwent Reservoir and 60 at St Mary's Island on 27th, 145 at Druridge Pools on 28th and 72 at Prestwick Carr on 31st; 25-36 were also reported during this period from Corbridge, Cramlington, East Cramlington LNR and Morpeth.

September Bulletin addition On Holy Island three flew S on 13th and singles were present on 10th, 11th and 26th. (MJC/ADM).

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

An estimated 540 were moving with Redwings over Wark (North Tyne) on 31st (PRM). On Holy Island there were counts of 20-24 on 3rd and 11th-12th, 55 on 6th and 180+ on 29th (MJC/ADM), while 85+ were noted at Budle Point and 40 at St Mary's Island on 6th (GPK/AC). Other sizeable counts include 40 at Fenham Mill on 29th and 34 at Hauxley NR on 10th. Nine+ were at the Wansbeck Estuary on 10th and seven at Tynemouth on 11th and up to six at a further four localities.

September Bulletin addition 11 were present on Holy Island 11th (MJC/ADM).



A Song Thrush at Holy Island in October by Jack Bucknall

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

Parties totalling 400 birds moved SW over Holy Island and 185+ arrived at Bamburgh on 5th (IK/BRS) and 301 were on Holy Island on 6th (MJC/ADM). By 11th, Holy Island was holding 1,523 and 500+ were moving through Budle Bay (MJC/ADM/CGK/GPK). A major arrival occurred at the end of the month, with 730 coming in off the sea at Seaton Sluice and 570+ at QEII CP on 26th (SSWT/PRM), 737 were at Holy Island on 27th (MJC) and 2,757 at Holy Island on 28th (ADM). Birds were moving quickly inland, as 800+ moved SE near Humshaugh on the morning of 31st (MR) and 2,460 were moving over nearby Wark (North Tyne) during the evening of the same day (PRM). Further sizeable gatherings during this latter period included 350 at Druridge Pools, 240 at St Mary's Island, 200 at Morpeth, 140 at St Mary's Island and 100+ at Tynemouth.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Seven were noted from Howick Dene-Craster on 14th, five at Tynemouth on 11th and four at Corbridge on 30th. One to three were reported from a further nine localities.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

September Bulletin addition On Holy Island there were ten on 11th, six on 12th and four on 13th. (MJC/ADM).

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

The Howick Dene-Craster area produced a count of 52 on 14th (MJC). On Holy Island birds were present throughout, with peak counts of 43 on 11th, 42 on 6th and 12th and 31-35 on 8th, 13th and 28th with 17-23 on six further dates (MJC/ADM). Similar fluctuating numbers were apparent at Hauxley NR, where peak counts included 40 on 3rd, 36 on 10th and 23-24 on 9th and 31st with seven to 16 on six further dates (HRS). Elsewhere, 12 were at Budle Point on 29th, ten at Prestwick Carr from 25th-31st, seven+ at St Mary's Island on 6th, seven at Alnmouth on 1st and at Druridge Pools on 28th, six at Bamburgh Castle dunes on 14th and four in Jesmond Dene on 4th.

September Bulletin addition

There were several counts from Holy island – 33 on 26th, 32 on 27th, and 16 on 30th ((MJC/ADM). 25 were at Craster on 25th (MJC).

A Robin in full voice on Holy Island by Jack Bucknall

**Pied Flycatcher** *Ficedula Hypoleuca*

September Bulletin addition On Holy Island there 18 present on 13th, ten on 11th, six present on 12th and five on 11th. (MJC/ADM).

Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva*

A first-winter was at Holy Island (Chare End bungalows) on 11th (ADM).

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

The first of the month was at Cresswell Pond on 14th (TB). During the final four days of the month there was a light influx, beginning with singles at Newbiggin and Tynemouth on 27th (GB/LAR/DRW), followed by two on Holy Island and one at Low Newton on 28th (TF/JFa). Numbers at Newbiggin increased to three on 29th with two still present to 31st (TB *et al.*). Three were also at Goswick on 29th (PRM) and at Hauxley NR on 31st (HRS), while singles were at Druridge Pools from 29th-30th and at Tynemouth on 29th.

September Bulletin addition One was on Holy Island on 9th (MJC/ADM).

A Black Redstart
Holy Island
by Alan Jack
31st October

**Redstart** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

At Holy Island there was one on 8th, four on 11th, eight on 12th and one on 13th (MJC/ADM/AH). Elsewhere, two were at Ridley Park (Blyth) on 6th and one at Cresswell Pond on 14th.

September Bulletin addition There were several records from Holy Island – nine on 13th, six on 12th and five on 11th (MJC/ADM).

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

A late bird was at St Mary's Island on 8th-9th (SPP/MSH).

September Bulletin addition A notable 13 were at Holy Island on 10th (MJC/ADM).

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

Well reported this month with records from at least 25 coastal and four inland localities. Three pairs were noted at Amble Links on 9th (MH) and three pairs were also at Warkworth Gut on 20th (MH/AA). The highest count from Holy Island was five on 6th (MJC/ADM), while counts of up to four came from Druridge Bay, Goswick, Hauxley, Newbiggin and St Mary's Island. Three were at Budle Point and Cocklawburn and two at Blyth Links, Boulmer, Cresswell Pond, Hemscott Hill (Cresswell), Low Newton, North Blyth, Prestwick Carr, Snab Point (Cresswell), Stag Rocks (Bamburgh), Wansbeck Estuary and West Hartford. Singles were also noted at Alnmouth, Bamburgh (Greenhill), Craster, Derwent Reservoir, Dunstanburgh Castle, Hartley, Harwood Forest, Howick Haven and Spittal (Berwick).



A Stonechat at Tynemouth by Alan Jack

Wheatear *Oenanthe Oenanthe*

Singles were at Holy Island on 4th and 5th, Budle Point and Fenham Flats on 8th, Boulmer and Holy Island on 9th, Holy Island and Low Newton on 11th, Holy Island on 17th, Blyth on 18th, Stag Rocks on 21st, Holy Island on 28th and Newbiggin on 31st.

A bird showing characteristics of **Greenland Wheatear** *O.o.leucorhoa* was at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 8th (MHu).

September Bulletin addition Four were on Holy Island on 12th and three on 13th (MJC/ADM).

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

Ten birds were observed at Hauxley on 10th and 11th(HRS). Nine were at Prestwick Carr on 25th and two in gardens at Old Hartley and Marden during the month.



An alert Dunnock at
Howdon Wetland by Colin
Bradshaw

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

A good count of 150 was made at Battlesteads Hotel, Wark on 2nd(CB), with 100+ at Elwick on 31st (ASJ). 60 were at Hauxley on 17th and up to 33 in a Marden garden and 12 noted at an Old Hartley garden in the first half of the month. 15 at Alnwick Garden on 8th. 39 seen at Beacon Lane on 4th(DM).



A Pair of House Sparrows on Holy island by Chris Barlow

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

60 counted at Hauxley on 10th and about 55-60 at Fenham le Moor on 31st(HRS/ASJ). 28 flew south at Tynemouth on 11th (CB). 21 noted between Howick and Craster on 14th(MJC) with 15 - 20 at Hauxley on several dates. 15 birds were also at Snab Point, Cresswell on 10th and at Smallburn, Longhorsely on 22nd. One to ten were at sixteen further widespread sites, including three at Holy Island flying west at the Lough on 13th.

September Bulletin addition 30 were at Craster on 19th (MJC).

Yellow Wagtail *otacilla flava*

Three were reported from Longhirst Hall Golf Course during the month(TD).

September Bulletin addition

One flew S at Holy Island on 10th (MJC/ADm).

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Four were seen in Jesmond Dene on 11th(MJCo) with three at Lynemouth on 10th (GB). One to two were noted at 51 county-wide sites.

A Grey Wagtail at Cragside,
Rothbury
by Janet Dean on 15th
November



Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

The maximum count this month involved 22 in Holy Island Village on 4th(STH). 13 were at Warren Mill on 11th. One to three at seven other localities during October.

September Bulletin addition 25 were at Holy Island on 9th and 17 at Bamburgh on 25th (MJC).

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

A late bird was observed flying S, calling at St Mary's on 3rd(PRM).

September Bulletin addition Two were at Holy Island on 11th and one on 12th (MJC).

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

97 flew S over the Snook on 10th, with 37 doing likewise at the same site on 29th. 30 per hour headed S at Harwood on 1st(MJC). 20 birds were noted at West Chevington on 20th and 10-20 at Snook between 8th and 20th, the former flushed by a hunting Marsh Harrier (MH/AA). Small numbers noted at St Mary's fields during the month (ASJ/IJ). One to two were at Southfield Green and Arcot in the month (DM).

September Bulletin addition At Holy Island 46 plus 146 flew SE on the morning of 6th. 134 were there on 10th and between 9th and 12th 51 to 65 were seen (MJC/ADM).

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

A high total of 35 was noted from various Holy Island sites on 24th, rising to 40 by 31st(ADM). 11 were between Howick Dene and Craster on 14th and nine at Sandon Bay on 12th(MJC). One – five at ten other sites.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

Some good counts this month as numbers of arrivals increased. Three were at Holy Island village on 4th increasing to 16 on 8th, rising to 45 by 11th and 88 -120 by 28th(MJC/ADM/TF/JFa). At Tynemouth, eight included three at garden feeders on 11th (CB).11+ were at Grindon on 18th (PRM) with one to ten noted at a further 23 widespread sites through the month.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Few reported this month, with 5-12 at Hauxley on several dates and one to three at three further sites during the month.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

One was noted on Holy Island on 6th(SR).

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Seven + were seen at Grindon on 18th(PRM). Elsewhere, one to six were noted at a further eight localities.

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

30 birds were at Hauxley on 18th (HRS) and 20 at Newcastle Town Moor on 2nd, with 15 at Snab Point on 10th(GB). A further one to eleven were at eight other sites.

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

250 were at Budle Bay on 9th and 190 at nearby Warren Mill the following day (CGK/GPK). Around 200 were seen at Longhoughton Steel on 9th(TM). 50 were observed at Holy Island Snook on 4th increasing to sightings of 80 on 10th and 11th(MJC/ADM). Flocks of 40+ were at Grindon, Fenham Mill and Budle Point in the month and two to 37 at seven other sites.

September Bulletin addition 70 were on Holy Island on 26th.

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*

52 were at Cocklawburn on 16th, and on 11th 46 were at Ord Moor, Berwick (MHU). 32 were noted at Chare Ends and 15 at nearby Snook car park on 31st(ASJ). Counts of 25 at Chare Ends on 30th(EHa) with 15 there on 31st (ADM) could involve some overlap with the Snook birds. Other sightings involved five at Newbiggin on 30th and two at Fenham Mill on 29th(GB/PRM).

A Twite at Seaton Sluice
by Alan Jack



Redpoll sp.

Six were at Hauxley on 10th and two were there on 24th and a single was seen on 29th. Single birds were also noted at Newbiggin and Big Waters in the last week of the month.

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis caberet*

35 at Whitley Chapel on 11th was the largest gathering (AJH). 20+ flew S at East Chevington on 31st(TF/JFa) with 19 doing the same over Snook on 10th(MJC). One to 13 were noted at a further 24 widespread sites.

September Bulletin addition 14 were at Holborn on 29th.

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

Coastal movements involved groups of seven and 18 flying S at Stag Rocks on 8th (TM) with a total of 25 comprising of small groups heading N at nearby Bamburgh on that day. 14 at Holywell on 25th moved S (STH), seven at Bamburgh on 5th flew N (BRS). Two flew over Holy Island on 8th and three on 10th and eight flew S at Little Waters on 11th (GB). Inland, 20 were at Blakehopeburnhaugh on 4th and 15 noted at Harwood on 1st(TRD/JD/MJC). One to seven were at nine further sites.

September Bulletin addition 28 were at Holborn on 27th and 16 were there on 29th (MJC). 13 flew N at Bamburgh on 25th and 15 were at Duke's House (Hexham) on 22nd (MJC).

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

180+ in Budle Bay on 9th was the month's largest count, with 140 + there on 23rd(CK/GK/PRM). 110 were at Cocklebur on 8th(MHu) and 100 at Hauxley on 3rd(HRS). 94 were at Prestwick Carr on 4th(PCF) with 60+ at St Mary's on 9th(ASJ/MHS). Feeding flocks of 20- 60 were observed at 11 sites throughout the county, with one to 15 at a further eight localities.

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

40+ at East Chevington on 31st and 30 at Hauxley on 17th were the largest gatherings seen. One -22 noted at 21 further sites including coastal passage S noted at Holy Island, Blyth and Whitley Bay.

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Only three sightings involving two at Holy Island on 11th and singles at St Mary's and at Blyth Beach.

September Bulletin addition One flew S at Holy Island on 9th (MJC).

Lapland Bunting *Calcarius Lapponicus*

Two were on Holy Island on 10th(MJC), and singles noted at St Mary's on 11th and on Holy Island on several dates during the month and at Guile Point (ASJ/AC/TF/JFa/IBDa/KDa).



A Lapland bunting at St. Mary's by Alan Jack

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citronella*

Spilt grain attracted 22 birds at Elwick on 31st with 20 at Budle Bay on the same day (ASJ). 15 were also at Budle Point on 11th (CGK/GPK). One to 12 were at nine other sites including one at St Mary's where the species is scarce.

Little Bunting *Emberiza pusilla*

One trapped and ringed at Bamburgh on 11th was incredibly followed by a second bird also trapped the same day, both being first winter birds(BRS).

Reed Bunting *Emberiza Schoeniclus*

50 on Holy Island on 11th consisted of 30 at Snook and 20 along Straight Lonnen (MJC/ADM). 26 were counted on Snook the previous day. One to 14 were seen at 15 other sites, including unusually a single at Town Moor, Newcastle.

September Bulletin addition 45 were at Holy Island on 26th (ADM).

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

A group of four were present at Derwent Reservoir on 1st (IFo) with two still there up to 19th. Three were also noted at Hauxley on 9th and 10th with one also seen there flying over on 15th.

Lesser White-fronted Goose *Anser erythropus*

The long-staying individual was again seen at East Chevington on 25th (TB).

Exotica**goose (sp.)**

One was at Hauxley Reserve on 9th-10th (HRS).

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Bamburgh Ringing Society, Berwick Wildlife Group, Natural History Society of Northumbria, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

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

This bulletin was compiled by Graeme Bowman (Mute Swan to Ruddy Duck), Lindsay McDougall (Red Grouse to Black-necked Grebe) (card records not available), Trevor Blake (Honey-buzzard to Crane), Steve Holliday (Avocet to Godwit), Ian Forsyth (Turnstone to Skua), Eddie Crabtree (Puffin to Great Black-backed Gull), Tim Dean (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), Alan Jack(Dunnock to Corn Bunting), Kathy Evans (WeBS Coastal Counts) and Steve Holliday (WeBS Inland Counts).

Thanks to David Sanders of NNBC for providing data.

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RECORD SUBMISSION

Please email ntbcorg@gmail.com for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and grid references: The use of standard location names and the include grid references as this 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.

Could club members ensure they to submit records direct to NTBC rather than just Birdtrack. There may be an assumption by some members this happens automatically. We do not want to miss records.

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

It is preferable if you re-size your photos before sending and a suggested size is 640 x 480 pixels. Please ensure you include the following information with your submissions: name, species, date taken, locality.

Photographs will not be used elsewhere without the photographer's permission.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual membership costs £10 for a junior, £30 for an individual, and £32 for a family. A membership form is attached to this bulletin.

For membership enquiries please contact ntbc@jobentley.plus.com

Membership subscriptions were due at the beginning of October. Many thanks to everyone who has renewed their membership already. If you use internet banking you can pay online. Please include your name in the reference. It is helpful if you email me to let me know when you've made the transfer ntbc@jobentley.plus.com

If you decide to set up a standing order please date the first payment at least a fortnight from your posting date to allow time to process with the bank. You can also set up your standing order directly with your bank if you wish; just let me know.

Finally, if you know anyone who might like to join NTBC please pass on the club information - new members are always welcome.

Jo Bentley - Hon Treasurer

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. Please submit any new content for the website to the main club email address.

NTBC SIGHTINGS PAGE

The Sightings Page contains current reports by members. Access is from the NTBC website and an email notification is available for new postings.

Members need to submit a request to be added to the website, specifying the email address they wish to post from before they can submit sightings to ntbcorg@gmail.com

ESTUARINE BIRD SURVEY

A request for people to volunteer for the BTO Non Estuarine Waterbird Survey (NEWS). This survey is running in December and January. The BTO has not contacted people directly, so the uptake is not very good at the moment.

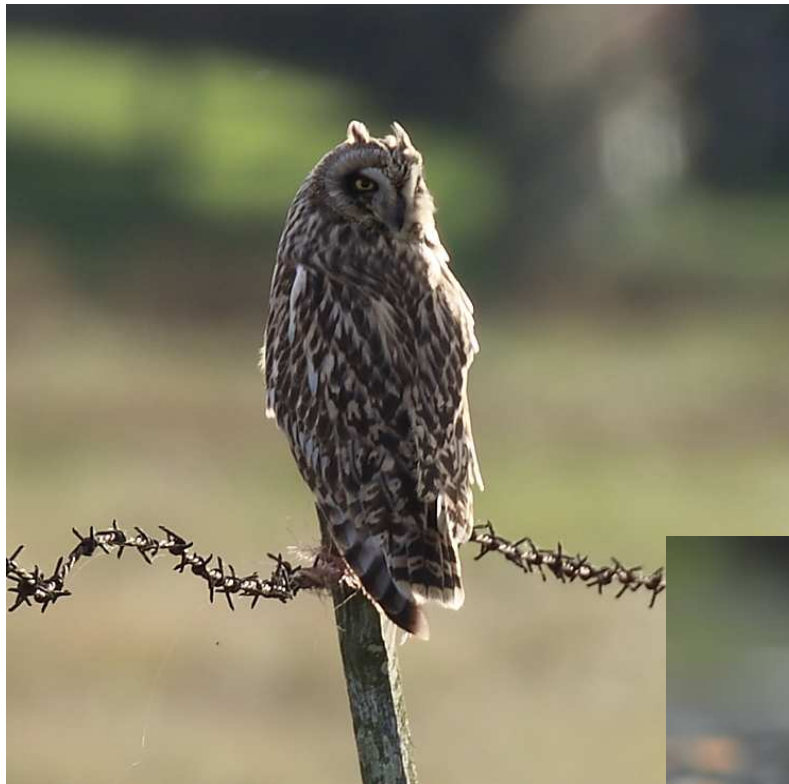
Please volunteer to help out in this valuable work

All the information is on the BTO website www.bto.org

It only involves one visit to each fairly short sector of coast. Fingers crossed you can help out!

Best wishes and many thanks

Kathy Evans



Two of the most popular species of the winter.

Top: a resting Short-eared Owl at Holy island on 31st October by Alan Jack and below: the popular Shore Lark at Blyth by Jack Bucknall



COASTAL WeBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND						KAE	K.A. Evans	MLC	M. L. Cadwallender & W. Dickson			MGA	M. G. Anderson						
				TAC	T. A. Cadwallender	TB	T. Brewis	MK	M. Kerby										
October	2015			SP	S. Pamaby		ACra	A. Craggs	JAR	J. Roper / W. Banks					LJM	L. J. McDougall			
				MHu	M. Hutcheson		RP	R. Poyer	AB	A. Brunt					KVB	K. V. Brooks			
Site	TOTAL	<i>Berwick North Shore (including Little Beach)</i>	<i>Tweed Estuary</i>	<i>Tweed: A1 By-Pass to Gainslaw House</i>	<i>Spttal - Cocklawburn</i>	<i>Lindisfarne NNR (including Budle Bay)</i>	<i>(Budle Bay)</i>	<i>Budle Pt - Seahouses</i>	<i>Seahouses - Beadnell</i>	<i>Howick - Boulmer</i>	<i>Boulmer - Alnmouth</i>	<i>Aln Estuary</i>	<i>Alnmouth South</i>	<i>Coquet Estuary</i>	<i>Cresswell - Newbiggin</i>	<i>Blyth Estuary</i>	<i>Blyth Estuary - Seaton Sluice</i>	<i>St Mary's Island</i>	<i>Whitley Bay - Tynemouth</i>
Counter		MHu	MHu	TB	MHu	ACra	ACra	KAE	MLC	JAR	AB	TAC	RP	RP	MGA	LJM	KVB	SP	MK
Date	17.24	14	15	18	16	18	18	18	12	19	23	20	20	20	18	14	13	17	18
	2.91																		
Red-throated Diver	22				14	3					1		1				1	2	
Black-throated Diver	3				1					1	1								
Little Grebe	9				1	1						7							
Cormorant	272	56	10	8	4	61		16	2	8	6		18			40	2	35	6
Shag	36	22			3	4					2							5	
Grey Heron	91	1	20	1	1	11	1	6		11	7	8		9	2	5		7	2
Mute Swan	135		28	68	1	36	9					2							
Whooper Swan	11					1					10								
Pink-footed Goose	97				2							95							
Greylag Goose	236			3	1	230	230					2							
Canada Goose	256											256							
Barnacle Goose	800					800	800												
Dark-bellied Brent Goose	35					34				1									
Light-bellied Brent Goose	3,001					3000					1								
Shelduck	571					556	280				3	6				6			
Wigeon	15,233		1			15000	950					95		120				17	
Gadwall	16																	16	
Teal	629			49		450	390					87		20		17		6	
Mallard	391		32	59	6	158	150		12			59		22		11		32	
Pintail	99					99													
Tufted Duck	30				24	4												2	
Scaup	1					1													
Eider	957	32	7		32	572		38	104	21	38	6	14	26		7	57	2	1
Long-tailed Duck	2					2													
Common Scoter	134				36	89							8				1		
Goldeneye	11					3						8							
Red-breasted Merganser	29					26	1				3								
Goosander	33		2	27	4														
Moorhen	27			1		3			1			8		8		2		4	
Coot	6					1						2						3	
Oystercatcher	1,655	162	14		16	529	95	70	137	107	96	125	36	8	72	28	31	83	141
Ringed Plover	378	96				70		17	48		4				9	75		45	14
Golden Plover	6,320					2318			63	451	546			460	392	40		2050	
Grey Plover	140	22				88			8	2	15		3			2			
Lapwing	1,484		160		210	148	15			158	180	253		220				155	
Knot	624					587				17	1		5			2	11	1	
Sanderling	171					68			2		9		2		7		17	46	20
Purple Sandpiper	37	23						12										2	
Dunlin	900		2			695			13	3	10	48		62	1	41		22	3
Jack Snipe	1					1													
Snipe	12					2						8						2	
Black-tailed Godwit	19					1						12				6			
Bar-tailed Godwit	803	1				785	20		3		14								
Curlew	1,127	38	54	17	62	415	20	10	12	120	32	138	2	105	5	42		73	2
Redshank	1,496	56	94	14	2	685	130	29	33	60	37	137	3		31	123	45	61	86
Greenshank	5											5							
Turnstone	627	88	4			121		75	129	44	6		9		8	11	47	50	35
Black-headed Gull	3,604	32	228	340	118	1800	40	136	229	107		375				239			
Common Gull	1,214	2	156	710	108	166	91	14	1	1		54				2			
Lesser Black-backed Gull	6		4			1	9									1			
Herring Gull	4,703	44	3244	410	38	196	40	46	275	185		96				169			
Great Black-backed Gull	110	5	9	1	11	18	3	3	48	2		8				5			
Mediterranean Gull	4											2			1			1	
Kingfisher	4								1		1	1		1					
ADDITIONAL SPECIES																			
Little Egret	7		1				2					1		2		3			
TOTALS - WILDFOWL	23,173	111	100	216	130	21,145	2,811	44	133	36	74	639	31	223	2	88	61	131	9
- WADERS	15,799	486	328	31	290	6,513	280	213	448	962	950	726	60	855	525	370	151	2,590	301
- GULLS & TERNS	9,641	83	3,641	1,461	275	2,181	183	199	553	295	0	535	0	0	1	416	0	1	0

INLAND WeBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND

Version: Interim

Year: 2015
Month: October

[illegible]

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2015 No 11

MONTHLY SUMMARY NOVEMBER 2015

15th January 2016



CONTENTS

WeBS inland

WeBS coastal

CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Balearic Shearwater

Bittern

Red-necked Grebe

Long-billed Dowitcher

Little Auk

Yellow-legged Gull

Iceland Gull

Glaucous Gull

Pallid Swift

Raven

Hawfinch

One past Snab Point on 21st.

Three noted at Gosforth Park and one at East Chevington.

Single N at St Mary's and Seaton Sluice on 22nd.

One at Cresswell Pond from 9th.

Peak count of 328 N on 21st at Seaton Sluice.

Second-winter on Tweed Estuary on 6th.

Single past Snab Point on 21st.

Juvenile at Seaton Sluice and St Mary's on 21st.

One over Tynemouth on 1st for 15 minutes.

Unusual sighting of one on Holy Island on 8th.

Another migrant on Holy Island on 7th.

INDOOR MEETINGS

NTBC indoor meetings are held at Northern Rugby Club, McCracken Park, Great North Road, Newcastle, NE3 2DT starting at 7.00pm and generally finish between 9.00pm-9.30pm. The next meeting of the 2015-2016 season is;

February 11th 2016

Geoff Sample – 'Sites and Sounds'

20 years of recording birds in Northumberland from the perspective of wildlife sound recording. Sounds will include memorable scarcer species and vagrants. Many well-known birdy sites are noisy places so Geoff has found habitat that offers species and soundscapes in a quieter setting. He will talk about experiences over the years and what the future holds.

A popular sight at St.Mary's

One of the Short-eared
Owls hunting by Alan Jack

20th November



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 2013 page 233.

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.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Peak counts involved 114 at QEII CP Lake on 20th (CDH), 103 at Capheaton on 20th (STE), 21-33 at Big Waters (SPP), Killingworth Lake (DM) and the Tweed Estuary (MHu), and 16 at Warkworth (MSH). Three to six were also at Bothal Pond, Bywell Haughs, Castle Island, Hauxley Reserve, Ladyburn Lake and Newcastle Leazes Park.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

A total of 154 flew S at Seaton Sluice during the month, including a flock of 70 on 15th (SSWT) when 66 flew in off the sea at Hauxley (PH), 32 (six juveniles) flew S at East Chevington (PH), 29 S at Druridge Pools (TRD/JD/ADMc) before landing at Cresswell Pond (IRD), 22 S at Tynemouth (SPP) and 13 S at Cambois (STH). A total of 36 moved S at Boulmer on 14th (RB/MB), 34 S at Tynemouth (DRW) and 14 S at Newbiggin (ADMc) on 1st, 25 S at Cresswell Pond on 19th (MSH), 12 S at Gosforth Park NR on 2nd (NSHN), and 21 (two juveniles) flew W at Alnwick Moor on 17th (MH/AA). A group of 47 flew through Swallow Pond on 20th (GPK/SPP) when 38 were at QEII CP Lake (CDH), 35 (four juveniles) were at Goswick on 24th (BWG), 20 (two juveniles) at Warkworth (MSH), and 11-19 at Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Gosforth Park NR, Holy Island, Newham Bog and Widdrington Moor Lake on several further dates. Five to nine were also at/over Arcot Pond, Branton GP, Cullercoats, Derwent Reservoir, Ellington, Hauxley Reserve, Prestwick Carr, St Mary's and West Ord, and one to three at Bell's Pond, Castle Island, Druridge Bay CP, Fenham Flats, Seghill-Backworth, Shield on the Wall and Tynemouth.



Two views of Whoopers at Cresswell. Above: by Eddie Douglas and below: flying by Colin Bradshaw



Bean Goose *Anser fabalis*

October bulletin addition Five were at Budle Bay on 10th (ASJ).

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Many reports involved mobile flocks. A total of 2,060 flew N at Berwick on 11th (MHu), the monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 30 N and 1,278 S including 498 S on 20th (SSWT), 1,000 flew W at East Ord on 18th (MHu), 500-600 S at High Heaton on 20th (SPP) and 376 S at East Chevington on 19th (MH). A total of 4,400 flew over Holy Island causeway at dawn on 14th (ADM), 2,000+ were at Druridge on 26th (MSH), 1,000 over Berwick on 16th (BWG), 1,000 at Holywell Dene on 28th (RJP), 700-1,000 near Cresswell Pond on 23rd (IF), 600 at Holywell Pond on 17th (SPP), 202-350 at/over East Chevington, Elwick, Longhorsley, Newbiggin and Newton Point, and 100-146 at/over (various directions) Carterways Heads, Cramlington, East Ord, Longhorsley Moor, Middle Ord, Rothbury and St Mary's. Groups of 27-90 were at/over Bell's Pond, Cramlington, Hexham, Letah Wood, Melkridge, Morpeth, Prestwick Carr, Scremerston and Woodhorn Flashes.

White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*

Five Greenland *flavirostris* race birds were at Grindon Lough on 17th (MRS) and 22nd (SJH), while four adults were at Kimmer Lough on 17th (MH/AA), and an adult probably of this race was with Whooper Swans at Hauxley on 15th (PH). Two adults of the Eurasian *albifrons* race were at East Chevington north pool on 15th (PH). Single un-raced birds flew S at North Blyth on 10th (STH), and Cambois (STH) and Tynemouth (SPP) on 15th.

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

20 flew N at Cocklawburn on 3rd (MHu). Peak counts were 300 at Derwent Reservoir on 11th (IFo), 250 at Alnwick on 5th (JMA), 200 at Big Waters on 1st (GB), 200 at Hauxley Reserve on 4th (HRS), 23-27 at Bywell Haughs and, and 13-15 at Grindon Lough and Woodhorn Flashes. One to seven also visited Bothal Pond and West Ord.



Grey Lags at Branton GP by Tim Dean on 20th November

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Grindon Lough held a peak of 384 on 22nd (SJH) and 119-274 on various other dates (PRM/AJR/MRS), 127 were at Killingworth Lake on 14th (LJM), 80 at Haughton Strother GP on 1st (PRM), 52-65 at Berwick, Bothal Pond, QEII CP Lake and West Ord, and 23-34 at Big Waters and Ellington and Newcastle Leazes Park. Nine to 17 were at/over Hauxley Reserve, Shiremoor and the Tweed Estuary.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

600 were at Budle Bay on 25th (TRD), and eight to nine Grindon Lough on 12th and 17th (SJH/MRS).

October bulletin addition 193 were at Elwick on 31st (ASJ).

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

Pale-bellied *hrota* race birds involved about 3,000 at Lindisfarne NNR all month (IK), and 26 N at Seaton Sluice (SSWT), 13 N at Newbiggin (TF/JFa) and Tynemouth (DRW) on 21st and a single at Hartley Bay. Records of dark-bellied *bernicla* race birds include about 300 regularly at Lindisfarne NNR (IK), three N at Newbiggin (GB/TF/JFa) and Seaton Sluice (SSWT). Four to six un-raced birds flew N at Cullercoats (CGK/GPK) and Newbiggin (CDB) on 21st.

October bulletin addition 2,900 were at Holy Island on 3rd (ASJ).

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

A total of 17 flew N at Seaton Sluice on 22nd-23rd (SSWT), 13 flew N at Newbiggin on 22nd (GB/AIB) and one S at Lynemouth on 6th (PRM). Fenham Flats held 280 on 8th (MJC) and 200 were at Holy Island causeway on 17th (JMA).

October bulletin addition 533 were at Budle Bay on 31st (ASJ).

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 378 N and 11 S, including 339 N on 21st-22nd (SSWT), 161 flew N at Tynemouth (DRW) and 21-68 N at Cullercoats, Newbiggin and St Mary's on 21st, and 76-92 N at Newbiggin, St Mary's and Tynemouth on 22nd. The Fenham Flats section of Lindisfarne NNR held 2,450 on 8th (MJC), 545 were at Grindon Lough on 22nd (SJH), 430 at Cresswell Pond on 17th (IF), 347 at Derwent Reservoir on 15th (IFo), 110-200 at Bell's and Bothal Ponds, Big Waters, Druridge Pools and Gosforth Park NR, 49-50 at the Coquet Estuary and QEII CP Lake, and 14 at Hauxley Reserve.



Two views of Wigeon by Tim Dene, Druridge Pools 22nd October

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Good numbers at Swallow Pond included a peak of 105 at 12th (GPK), 40 were at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN), 39 at Caistron on 16th (JD), 25 at Big Waters (GB), and 15-16 at Druridge Pools (CDB) and QEII CP Lake (CDH). Six to seven were also at Bothal Pond and St Mary's Wetland, and two at the Blyth Estuary, Lynemouth Flash and Marden Quarry.

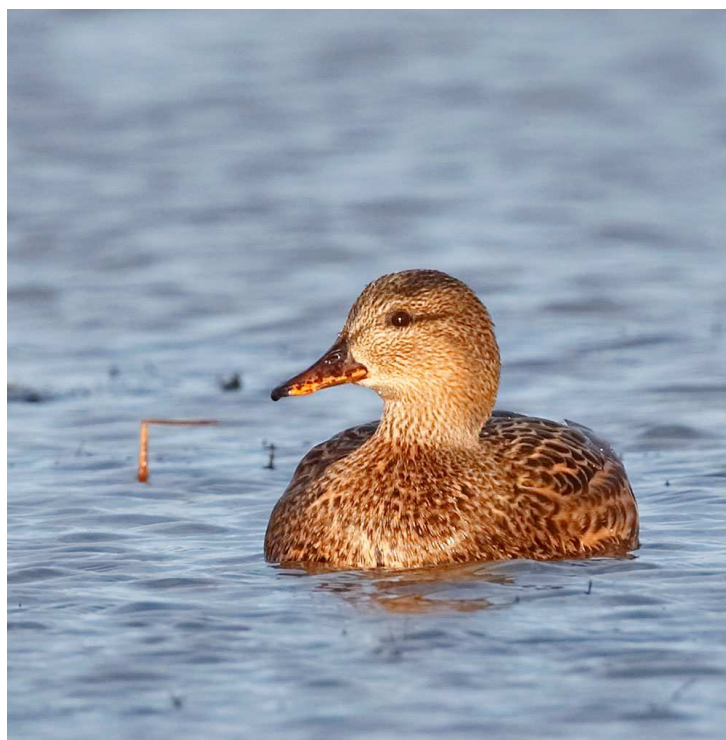
A female Gadwall at St. Mary's by Colin Bradshaw

Teal *Anas crecca*

A total of 98 moved N and six S during the month, including 70 N on 22nd (SSWT) when 70 flew N at Newbiggin (GB/AIB). Peak concentrations were 600 at Grindon Lough on 22nd (SJH), 164 at Derwent Reservoir on 22nd (IFo), 150-153 at Cresswell Pond (IF) and Druridge Pools (MSH), and 100-115 at Holy Island Lough (TD) and Swallow Pond (GPK). Counts of 52-98 came from Arcot and Bothal Ponds, Big Waters, the Blyth Estuary, Druridge Pools, Gosforth Park NR, Lynemouth Flash, St Mary's Wetland and Widdrington Moor Lake, and 23-40 from Backworth, Castle Island, Hauxley Reserve and West Ord.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

A total of 79 flew N and four S at Seaton Sluice between 20th-23rd (SSWT) and 26 flew N at Newbiggin on 21st-22nd (GB/AIB/TF/JFa). Peak counts were 142 at Derwent Reservoir on 10th (IFo), 108 were at the Tweed Estuary on 12th (MHu), 52-70 at Budle Bay (JMA), Cresswell Pond (IF) and Grindon Lough (SJH), 30-45 at Airy Holm Reservoir, the Blyth and Coquet Estuaries, Bothal Pond, Byker, Chirton Dene Park (North Shields), Killingworth Lake, Lynemouth Flash, Marden Quarry, Newcastle Leazes Park and Warkworth. Groups of 18-26 were also at Arcot, Cocklawburn and Linton Ponds, Dilston, Hauxley Reserve, Prudhoe, QEII CP Lake, Riding Mill, St Mary's Wetland, Stocksfield, Tynemouth and Wark.



Pintail *Anas acuta*

Northerly movement involved singles at Snab Point (JL) and Tynemouth on 21st (DRW), two at Seaton Sluice on 21st-22nd (SSWT), and six at Hauxley (NFO) and two at St Mary's on 22nd (JBU *et al.*). Two were at Druridge Pools on 14th (CDB) and singles visited Arcot Pond on 15th (STH) and Big Waters on 12th (SPP).



Two ducks from Druridge Pools by Chris Barlow, top: Pintails and bottom: a Shoveller.

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

The largest gatherings were 24 at Swallow Pond on 1st (GPK *et al.*), 21 at East Chevington north pool on 6th (IFo), 21 at Gosforth Park NR on 23rd (GPK), and 12-13 at Bothal Pond (TF/JFa) and Holy Island Lough (TD). Three were also at Linton Ponds, and one to two at Arcot and Linton Ponds, Big Waters, Capheaton and QEII CP Lakes, and Druridge Pools. More unusual was a drake at Derwent Reservoir between 7th-11th (IFo).

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Ten at Swallow Pond on 18th (GPK) and nine at Widdrington Moor Lake on 23rd (MSH) were the largest counts. Seven were at Derwent Reservoir (IFo), four to five at Druridge Pools (TRD/D) and Ladyburn Lake (IFo), and one to two at Bothal Pond and QEII CP Lake.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Five flew N at Newbiggin on 22nd (GB/AIB) and one N at Seaton Sluice on 20th (SSWT). Peak concentrations were 80 at Killingworth Lake on 14th (LJM), 62 at QEII CP Lake on 20th (CDH), 31-38 at Cocklawburn Pond (MHu), Ladyburn Lake (IFo) and Newcastle Leazes Park (DM), 21-28 at Bothal Pond (TD), Castle Island (DM/STH) and Newcastle Exhibition Park (GB), and 12-14 at Big Waters, Linton Ponds and Tynemouth Park. One to four were also at Derwent Reservoir, Grindon Lough, Hauxley Reserve and Jesmond Dene.

Scaup *Aythya marila*

The only report was of five N at Tynemouth on 21st (DRW).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

A monthly total of 69 N was considered extremely low in a month that is typically good for passage (SSWT), and 27-30 flew N at Newbiggin on 21st-22nd (GB/AIB/TF/JFa) and St Mary's (MSH). Largest gatherings involved 52 at Blyth Harbour on 7th (STH), 17-18 at Newbiggin (PRM) and Stag Rocks (JMA), and nine to 12 at Berwick North Shore, Meadow Haven, St Mary's and the Tweed Estuary. Two were also at Amble weir and Seahouses.

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

An above-average 38 flew N at Seaton Sluice between 20th-23rd (SSWT). On 21st, northerly movement involved 23 at Newbiggin (TF/JFa), nine to 14 at Holy Island (IK), Snab Point (JL) and Tynemouth (SPP/DRW), and two to four at Cullercoats (CGK/GPK) and Hauxley (NFO); on 22nd, ten flew N at St Mary's (JBU *et al.*) and three to five N at Hauxley (NFO), Newbiggin (GB), St Mary's (MSH) and Tynemouth (DRW). Six were at Stag Rocks on 25th (TRD) and singles at Berwick pier and Cresswell Pond (drake). The long-staying drake remained at Derwent Reservoir all month (IFo).



A drake Long-tailed duck at Cresswell by Chris Barlow

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

A well below average 243 moved N and 60 S at Seaton Sluice during the month (a total of 48 logged), including 70 N on 22nd (SSWT), and 50-79 flew N at Newbiggin (GB/TF/JFa), St Mary's (MSH) and Tynemouth (DRW) on 21st-22nd. The only other reports were of 13 at Stag Rocks on 14th (ADM) and two on 25th (TRD).

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

A below-average 11 flew N and one S at Seaton Sluice on 21st-22nd (SSWT). On 21st, three to four moved N at Cullercoats (CGK/GPK), Newbiggin (TF/JFa), Snab Point (JL) and Tynemouth (DRW) and one to two N at Hauxley (NFO) and Holy Island (IK); on 22nd, five+ flew N at St Mary's (JBU/MSH *et al.*) and singles N at Hauxley (NFO) and Berwick pier (MHu). Three flew N at Snab Point on 8th (JL). Two were at Newbiggin on 20th (JSB/EC) and two at Seaton Sluice on 3rd (LJM) but much more unusual was a drake at the River Blyth-Sleekburn confluence (Blyth Estuary) on 30th (LJM).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

A total of 217 flew N and 24 S at Seaton Sluice during the month, including 210 N between 20th-22nd (SSWT). Northerly passage on 21st included 45 at Tynemouth (DRW), 25-28 at Newbiggin (TF/JFa/CDB) and Snab Point (JL); on 22nd, 22 passed Newbiggin (GB) and 15 at St Mary's (MSH). Peak counts were 124 at the Tweed Estuary on 12th (MHu), 55 at East Chevington on 24th (MH/AA), 38 at New Water Haugh on 8th (MHu), 26-29 at Derwent Reservoir (IFo) and East Chevington (IFo), and 12-19 at Castle Island, Cocklawburn, QEII CP Lake and Widdrington Moor Lake. Five to nine were also at Branton GP, Cresswell and Swallow Ponds, Druridge Pools, Gosforth Park NR, Grindon Lough, Hauxley Reserve and West Ord, and one to three at ten further sites.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

At Seaton Sluice the monthly total was 18 N and three S, including ten N and one S on 21st (SSWT) when three to five flew N at Newbiggin (CDB/TF/JFa) and St Mary's (MSH), while six moved N at St Mary's (MSH) and Tynemouth (DRW) and three N at Newbiggin (GB) on 22nd. A total of 30 at Holy Island on 21st included 23 off St Cuthbert's Island (ADM) and 20 there on 22nd included six displaying (IK). Eight to nine were at the Blyth Estuary on 26th (LJM) and East Chevington on 20th (PCF), and four to five at Druridge Bay CP-Hadston Carrs (TF/JFa/MSH). One to two were also at Amble weir, Berwick, Castle Island, Football Hole and Hauxley.

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

Seven flew N at Seaton Sluice on 21st-22nd (SSWT), two moved N at Newbiggin on 21st-22nd (CDB/GB/TF/JFa) and Tynemouth on 21st (DRW). Peak counts were 14 at Wylam on 28th (JMA), six at the Tweed Estuary on 12th (MHu), five at Tyne Green (Hexham) on 20th (AJR), and three at Derwent Reservoir (IFo), Killingworth Lake (DM) and Newcastle Exhibition Park (GB). One to two were also at Arcot Pond, Branton GP, Felton, Gosforth Park NR, Hadston Carrs, Ingram, Jesmond Dene, Ladyburn and QEII CP Lakes, Rothbury and Wark.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

40 were present at Carey Burn (Harthope Valley) on 12th (AB/LB) and 16 were at Hartley West Farm (Holywell Dene) on 9th (RJP). Five were noted regularly at Backworth during the month (CGK/GPK) and three at Hexham on 16th.

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

The only record was of four on Blanchland Moor on 5th (lfo).

September bulletin addition 100 were on the Simonsides on 12th (ASJ).

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

The peak counts were 12 at Bothal Pond on 28th (IRD), 11 at Beal on 8th (MJC), nine S of Cresswell on 13th (EC), eight at East Holywell on 15th (MNC) and seven at Stamfordham on 21st. One to six were noted at Brenkley, Felton, Fenham Flats and Mill Hartley West Farm (Holywell Dene), Ord Moor (Berwick) and Prestwick Carr.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

On Alnwick Moor 47 were present on 22nd (JR), seven were at Prestwick Carr on 4th (PCF) and up to six were present throughout the month at Hartley West Farm (Holywell Dene).

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

At Seaton Sluice a high monthly total count of 86 N and 240 S in 48 hours of sea-watching was well above the November average (SSWT). At Tynemouth 30 flew N in two hours on 22nd (DRW) and at Newbiggin 14 flew N in three hours on 21st (TF/JFa), where nine flew N and one flew S on 22nd (GB). At St Mary's Island six flew N in 1 hour 45 minutes on 21st and in two hours on 22nd (MSH). One flew S at Newbiggin on 6th. Six were noted at Cocklawburn on 16th (MHu) and four at Low Newton on 24th (TRD/JD). One to four were noted at Berwick North Shore, Blyth South Harbour, Cresswell, Druridge, Holy Island and Stag Rocks.,

Black-throated Northern Diver *Gavia arctica*

At Newbiggin four flew N on 22nd (ADMc/SMcE/GB). At Seaton Sluice two flew N and two S during the month (SSWT). Singles flew N at Tynemouth and St Mary's Island on 22nd (DRW/MSH) and Newbiggin on 23rd (ADMc). Singles were noted in the Blyth Estuary on 27th (STH) and on East Chevington North Pool on 27th/28th (ADMc).

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

At Seaton Sluice there was a record count for the month with 15 N and eight singles during this period. Ten N on 22nd was also a new day record total (SSWT). At Newbiggin 11 flew N on 22nd (ADMc/SMcE/GB), when six flew N at St Mary's Island (JBU/MSH *et al.*) and four flew N at Tynemouth (DRW). Three flew N at Snab Point on 21st and one S (ADMc/JL). Two flew N at Stag Rocks on 25th. Singles flew S at Hadston Carrs and Tynemouth on 8th and into Spittal Bay on 9th with a single flying N at Newbiggin on 21st. A single was also seen feeding off Berwick Pier on 15th.

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

The only record was of three flying N at Seaton Sluice on 22nd (SSWT).

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

Only singles were noted during the month with one N at Snab Point on 8th (JL) and one noted flying N at Tynemouth, St Mary's Island and Seaton Sluice on 22nd ((DRW/JBU/MSH *et al.*/SSWT).

***Balearic Shearwater** *Puffinus mauretanicus*

One flew N at Snab Point on 21st (JL).

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

At Seaton Sluice 261 flew N and 344 S during the month with a peak count of 105 N and 180 S on 6th; of note here 40 followed a trawler on 25th (SSWT). Eight flew N at Cullercoats on 21st (CGK/GPK) when six flew N at Newbiggin in three hours (TF/JFa). A single flew N on 21st at St Mary's Island. Offshore counts were 15+ at Lynemouth Power Station on 6th (PRM), eight at Newton Point on 24th and a single at Stag Rocks on 25th.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

At Seaton Sluice the only hint of passage was 40 S in three hours on 20th and on 21st at St Mary's Island 13 flew N and three S (MSH). At Shiremoor six flew W on 20th and one flew N at Wark on 22nd. The peak counts were 71 at Blyth Harbour on 7th (STH), 35 at Berwick Pier on 5th (JMA), 34 at North Shields Fish Quay on 11th (MSH), 26 at Berwick North Shore on 11th (MHu), 18 at Meadow Haven (Berwick) (MHu), 13 at Derwent Reservoir on 8th (IFo) and in the Tweed Estuary on 12th (MHu) and 11 during the month at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN). Eight were at Big Waters NR on 8th and one to five at Amble Weir, Arcot Pond, Berwick Tweed Dock, Castle Island, Hauxley NR, Killingworth Lake, Ladyburn Lake, Lynemouth, Newcastle Quayside, QEII Lake, St Mary's Island, Tyne Estuary, Tyne Green CP (Hexham) and Wark.,

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

At Seaton Sluice 12 flew N and 32 S during the month with seven N and 22 S on 22nd/23rd reflecting some passage (SSWT). On Holy Island 60/hour flew N into gales on 21st (IK). At Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) on 22nd at least 100 were feeding offshore at St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island). These may have been incomers following the gales of the previous day (IK). In the Berwick area 30 roosted at Meadow Haven on 18th 30 were at North Shore on 11th and one in the Tweed Estuary on 12th (MHu). 15 were at Stag Rocks on 25th (TRD).

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

Up to three birds were noted at Gosforth Park NR during the month (NHSN *et al.*). Singles were seen at East Chevington on 8th (TF/JFa) and 12th/19th (ADMc).



Two of our larger waders

Left: a Grey Heron at Howdon Wetland by Colin Bradshaw
and right: a Bittern in characteristic pose at Gosforth NR by Mike Carr

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Numbers were much lower this month with peak counts of three at Lindisfarne NNR on 10th (MH/AA), Blyth Estuary on 26th and Boghouses (Cramlington) on 28th (LJM). Two were noted in Budle Bay on 11th (DHH) and in the Coquet Estuary on 17th (JMA). Singles were noted at Lindisfarne NNR on five further dates and at Bell's Pond (Cresswell), Castle Island, East Chevington, Hauxley NR, Holywell Dene, Lemington Gut, Warkworth Gut and West Ord.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

The peak counts were 10 at North Blyth Staithes on 5th/23rd (LJM/STH) and Tweed Estuary on 12th (MHu). Four were at Derwent Reservoir on 7th (IFo) and three at Newbiggin on 6th (PRM). One to two were noted at Arcot Pond, Berwick North Shore and Old Bridge, Boulmer, Brierdene, Castle Island, Gosforth Park NR, Hauxley NR, Holywell Dene, Ingram, Leazes Park (Newcastle), QEII Lake, St Mary's Island and fields, Wark and Warkworth Bridge.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

The peak counts were 18 at Hauxley NR on 17th (HRS), eight at Castle Island on 14th (DM/STH) and six at Ladyburn Lake on 12th (IFo) and throughout the month at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN). Five were at East Chevington on 6th (IFo) and four at Big Waters on 14th (GB) and Airey Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield) on 15th (IFo). One to three were noted at Blyth Estuary, Bothal Pond, Boulmer, Caistron, Druridge Pools, Marden Quarry, QEII Lake, and Swallow Pond.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps Grisegena*

Only singles were noted during the month at Derwent Reservoir on 3rd/20th/30th (TRD/JD/IFo), Sandon Bay (Holy Island) on 10th/14th (MH/AA/ADM) Widdrington Moor Lake on 15th (MSH) and offshore at Fenham Mill and King Edward's Bay (Tynemouth) on 25th (TRD/SPP).

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

One flew N at St Mary's Island and Seaton Sluice on 22nd (JBu/SSWT). Two adults, still showing rusty lower breasts, were at Stag Rocks on 11th (DHH).

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

Three were at St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) on 22nd (IK). Singles were at Fenham-le-Moor (MH/AA) and on the sea at North Blyth on 10th (STH), Holy Island Sound on 14th (ADM) and the long-staying bird was at Widdrington Moor Lake from 8th-25th (LJM/TRD/JD/MSH).

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Single birds were reported from Derwent Reservoir on 1st and from Whittonstall on 21st (IFo), while a bird was soaring low over fields on the north side of the A69 East of Haydon Bridge on 27th (SJH).

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Sightings this month involved a juvenile and a female from East Chevington on several dates (ADM/TF/JFa *et al.*) and at Cresswell Pond on 16th (MSH). A single bird flew S at Gosforth Park NR on an unspecified day (NHSN).

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

Ringtails were noted at four confidential sites and a 2cy/2w male was at another confidential site.

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

A juvenile was mobbed by *Corvids* over a moor before flying into forestry on 10th (MH/AA) and a bird was seen at Prestwick Carr on 22nd (PCF).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Two birds were together at Derwent Reservoir on 10th (IFo) and two were also noted on Holy Island on 10th and 21st (ADM) and at Prestwick Carr on 21st (PCF). Single birds were noted at Cramlington, Druridge Pools, Hauxley NWT, Holywell Dene, Northumberland Park (N Shields), St Mary's Island and at Walkerville (Newcastle).

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Ten birds were up simultaneously at Hulne Park/ Aln Valley on 1st (MH). Three were at Alnwick on 26th (MJC) and two were at Woodhorn on 1st (ADM). Singles were at 16 other sites.



A Buzzard at Elwick by Tim Dean on 25th November

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Three were at North Pool (E. Chevington) on 9th and at Cresswell Pond on 24th (ADM), with two seen at both sites on several dates (ADM/IFo/ *et al.*). Two birds were also at Alnmouth, Big Waters NWT and at Gosforth Park NR. Single birds were also heard or seen at Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Prestwick Carr and at River Blyth Estuary.

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

13 birds were at Chirton Dene Park (N. Shields) on 15th (MSH) and at Hauxley NWT on 17th (HRS), 11 were at Druridge Bay CP on 19th (MSH) and nine at Castle Island on 14th (DM/STH). One to seven birds were at Arcot Pond, Jesmond Dene, Killingworth Lake, Leazes Park (Newcastle), QEII CP and at St Mary's Island.

Coot *Fulica atra*

152 at QEII CP on 20th (CDH), 116 at Swallow Pond on 7th (SPP) and 79 at East Chevington on 10th (DHH) were the highest counts followed by 56 at East Chevington on 6th (IFo). 23 birds were at Killingworth Lake on 25th (LJM). 15 were at Gosforth Park NR throughout the month (NHSN) and 14 were at Bothal Pond on 14th (TD). One to nine birds were at Big Waters, Gosforth Park NR, Hauxley NWT, Killingworth Lake and Leazes Park (Newcastle).

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

The WeBS count at Berwick North Shore totalled 167 on 11th (MHu) and 122 were counted on Berwick GC on 6th (BWG). The high tide total for the R. Blyth area numbered 97 on 23rd (STH) whilst elsewhere 55+ were at Newbiggin on 6th (PRM), 48 were in the high-tide roost at Snab Point on 6th (IFo) and 47 were in front of the clubhouse at Magdalene GC (Berwick) also on 6th (BWG). Cresswell Pond held 35 on 24th (MSH), 18-25 were logged at Amble Links, Boulmer, St Mary's Island and the R. Tweed Estuary (JMA/MHu) and single-figure counts were noted at Hauxley NWT, Hauxley shore and Whitley Bay.

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

Well reported this month though in reducing numbers from October's autumn peaks. Holy Island held the monthly high with 1,350 on 21st involving 400 on the Straight Lonnen and 950 on Crooked Lonnen (ADM). Counts at Grindon Lough included ca.1,100 on 6th and ca.1,200 on 12th (SJH) and 620 on 28th (PRM). The R. Blyth Estuary also held good numbers with 900 noted on 27th (STH). The high-tide roost at Alnmouth (Marden Rocks) held ca.850 on 26th (AB/LB), 700 were at Warkworth Gut on 1st (ADM), 500 were at Derwent Reservoir on 7th (IFo). 126-300 were also seen at Cresswell Pond, East Ord, Newbiggin, Prestwick Carr, St Mary's Island and Widdrington Moor Lake. 50-80 were also noted at Bothal Pond, Cocklawburn, Hauxley, Hazlerigg and Low Newton; 42 were at Plenmeller Common on 10th and two were heard over Wark at 21.50h on 4th.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Away from Lindisfarne NNR the species is relatively scarce; the peaks this month were 15 at Berwick North Shore on 11th and five at Berwick Little Beach on 6th (MHu). Two were reported from the R. Blyth Estuary, Newbiggin and Stag Rocks, whilst singles appeared at Hadston Carrs and at inland Derwent Reservoir with Golden Plovers on 5th (IFo).

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

High numbers were present at Grindon Lough throughout the month, with ca.1,000 on 12th (SJH) and 790+ on 28th (PRM) peaks in each half of the month. Similarly, 800 were noted at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd and 25th (IFo). Good-sized flocks elsewhere included 400+ at Druridge Pools on 26th (MSH), 382 at Bothal Pond on 15th (IRD), ca.350 at Boulmer on 26th (AB/LB), 300 on the R. Coquet Estuary on 24th (JMA), 288 on the R. Blyth Estuary on 27th (STH), 250 at Hauxley NWT on 7th (HRS) with 200 at Cresswell Pond and Monks' House Pool and 100-164 at Boulmer, Brenkley, St Mary's fields, Seahouses and the R. Tweed Estuary. Passage at Seaton Sluice involved 160 S between 9th-18th (SSWT). Smaller counts of 26-75 came in from a further seven sites.

October bulletin addition 1500 were at Budle Bay on 31st (ASJ).

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Some 65 were recorded at Newbiggin on 6th (PRM) and 57 were counted roosting on Ferguson's roof (Blyth Harbour) on 7th (STH). Nearby, 38 were in the R. Blyth Estuary on 27th (STH) and 20+ were at St Mary's Island on 1st (PRM). Berwick North Shore held 12 birds on 11th (MHu), five were noted at Newbiggin and Whitley Bay and a single was reported from Stag Rocks.

October bulletin addition 42 were at St Mary's Island on 11th (ASJ).

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

The high-tide total for the R. Blyth Estuary was 49 on 23rd (STH) and 48 were counted in the Bell's Farm area (Cresswell) on 14th (DM/STH). Further up the coast, 31 were at Hauxley NWT on 17th (HRS), 30 at Northfield (Warkworth) on 24th (JMA), 27 on the R. Tweed Estuary on 12th (MHu) and 25 at Druridge on 22nd (JR). 24-25 were also noted at Cocklawburn and St Mary's Island/Wetland, 21-22 at Berwick North Shore and Tynemouth, with one to ten logged at five more locations.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

A single on the R. Blyth Estuary on 15th was the only report (LJM).



A Curlew lands at St. Mary's by Alan Jack

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Low single-figure reports only, with five at both Berwick North Shore on 11th (MHu) and St Mary's Island on 2nd (JMA), four at Berwick Little Beach on 6th (MHu) and two at the R. Blyth Estuary on 23rd, Newbiggin on 22nd (flew N) and St Mary's Island on 21st (flew N) (STH/GB/MSH).

October bulletin addition 1000 were at Holy Island on 10th (ASJ).

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

The south-east saw peaks of 83 at Newbiggin on 6th (PRM), 80+ at St Mary's Island on 1st (PRM) and an area high-tide total of 74 at the R. Blyth Estuary on 23rd (STH). Elsewhere, 46 were counted at Berwick North Shore on 11th (MHu), 40 at Stag Rocks on 25th (TRD), 30 at Cresswell Pond on 12th (TD), 20 at Low Newton on 24th (TRD/JD) and 14 on the R. Tweed Estuary on 12th (MHu).

Knot *Calidris canutus*

Aside from WeBS counts, a single in Budle Bay on 25th was the only report (TRD).

October bulletin addition 850 were at Holy island on 10th (ASJ).

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

Single birds were noted at Cresswell Pond (IRD) and Grindon Lough, both on 28th (PRM).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Some good counts included 124 at Newbiggin on 6th (PRM), 107 at Boulmer on 26th (AB/LB) and 100 on Hauxley shore on 19th (JMA). Totals of 65 were achieved at Amble dunes on 6th (IFo) and Hadston (Druridge Bay) on 3rd (MH/AA), 43 were at St Mary's Island on 1st (PRM), 26-28 at two Berwick sites, ten at Low Newton and four at Whitley Bay.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

An obvious movement saw 334 N at Seaton Sluice between 21st/22nd (SSWT) and counts of 50 N also occurred at Cullercoats and Tynemouth on 21st and again at Tynemouth on 22nd (CGK/GPK/DRW). Nearby, 172 were counted at the R. Blyth Estuary on 27th and 40 were roosting on a factory roof in Blyth harbour on 7th (STH). Cresswell Pond held a high of 16 on 6th (IFo), 14 were noted at two different Berwick sites on 6th/11th and three to six were at five further coastal spots. A few inland records included birds at Grindon Lough (one on 25th and seven on 28th), five on flash pools at Prestwick Carr on 22nd (GB) and two at Derwent Reservoir on 5th (IFo).

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

Stag Rocks held the majority with 97 counted on 11th (DHH) and 210 on 25th (TRD). Low Newton held 24th (TRD/JD), 30 was the maximum at Berwick Pier on 13th (BWG), 13 were at Tynemouth on 1st (DRW) and ten roosted at Snab Point over high tide on 6th (IFo). Seven was the peak count at both Newbiggin and Seaton Sluice during the month, and two to three were noted at Berwick North Shore and Cullercoats.



A Purple Sandpiper at a favoured location - Stag Rocks by Tim Dean on 20th October

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

One was present at St Mary's Island on 1st (PRM).

Redshank *Tringa tetanus*

The high-tide area total for the R. Blyth area reached 283 on 23rd (STH), 250 were on Cresswell Pond on 12th (TD) and 216 were counted on the R. Tweed Estuary also on 12th (MHu). In the south east, 110+ were at St Mary's Island (PRM) and 70 at nearby Cullercoats (KWY) both on 1st and 58+ were at Newbiggin on 6th (PRM). Berwick North Shore held 42 on 11th (MHu), 16 were at Bell's Farm pond (Cresswell) on 15th (PRM) and one to five were seen at Bothal Pond, Hauxley NWT and Newburn.



A Redshank
Alnmouth
12th November
Mike Carr

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyptes minimus*

Single birds were logged at Beanley Moor on 21st (MH) and Backworth on 29th (GPK).

Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus*

A first-winter bird found at Cresswell Pond on 9th proved popular and remained to the end of the month at least (ADMc). The bird made occasional visits to other sites close by and was seen very well at Bell's Farm pond on 14th (CGK/GPK).

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Four arrived in off the sea at Seaton Sluice between 20th-23rd (SSWT) and another did the same at Newbiggin (Church Point) on 20th (JSB/EC). Reports from Holy Island were few, involving two on 7th and singles on 21st and 22nd (ADM/IK). Further coastal/near-coastal singles included birds at Berwick, the R. Blyth Estuary, Hauxley NWT, Holywell Dene, North Shields (Northumberland Park), St Mary's and Whitley Bay (Brier Dene Farm). Additional sightings of single birds were made at Alnwick, Chapel House estate (Newcastle), Cramlington (Valley Park – roadside victim), Dukes Pond (Wallsend), Longhorsley Moor, Swallow Pond and flying over Welbeck Road School (Walker, Newcastle).

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

The monthly maximum was 20 at Cresswell Pond on 6th (IFo), whilst elsewhere 16 were seen at Eshott on 4th (MSH), 12 at Prestwick Carr on 21st (PCF) and ten at Hauxley NWT on 7th (HRS). Four to eight were at Boulmer, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Gosforth Park and Longhorsley Moor, and singles were present at Big Waters and Bothal Pond.

Skua *sp.*

One flew N at St Mary's Island between 07.50-09.50h on 22nd (MSH).

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

Reports of birds moving N included two adults at Tynemouth on 21st (DRW) and singles at Tynemouth on 8th (juvenile – DRW), and at High Hauxley (adult – NFO), Newbiggin (adult – GB), and Seaton Sluice (sub-adult – SSWT) all on 22nd.

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

An adult flew N at Druridge Pools on 8th (TF/JFa) and another moved N at Seaton Sluice on 21st (SSWT).

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

At Tynemouth, one moved N on 8th and two headed S on 21st (DRW).

Razorbill *Alca torda*

A single record only of one at Bamburgh, Stag Rocks on 11th (DHH).

Little Auk *Alle alle*

A short-lived northerly blow on 20th-21st brought good numbers into the North Sea and the species was widely reported along the coast. At Seaton Sluice, a total of 350 moved N from 20-23rd with a peak of 328 in seven hours on 21st (SSWT) and also on 21st, 243 moved N in one hour at Cresswell, Snab Point (JL), 206 in three hours at Newbiggin (CDB/TF/JFa) and 50/h at Emmanuel Head, Holy Island (IK). N movement noted elsewhere during the period 20th-23rd included 53 at Tynemouth (SPP/DRW) with smaller numbers of up to 35 reported from Berwick, Cullercoats, High Hauxley, Holy Island Harbour and St Mary's Island (PCF/NFO/CGK/GPK/JBu/MSH/MHu *et al.*). Stragglers continued to be seen during the subsequent few days up to 28th and exhausted or dead birds were noted from Holy Island and Tynemouth.



Two characteristic autumn sightings of Little Auks.

Top: a group heads N at Newbiggin by Chris Barlow and bottom: a casualty found dead on 28th November at Tynemouth by Duncan Watson.

Guillemot *Uria aalge*

During strong northerly winds on 21st passage movement N was evident when 18 were seen passing Newbiggin in three hours (TF/JFa) and five at Holy Island (ADM); on the 22nd at Berwick Pier 12 passed in a half-hour (MHu). One to two were recorded from Bamburgh (Stag Rocks), Blyth Harbour, Druridge and Newton Point on a number of dates throughout the month (TRD/JD/DHH/STH).

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

Single birds were seen from Seaton Sluice on 2nd (SSWT), Lynemouth Power Station on 6th (PRM) and on 21st singles were at two localities, Cresswell (Snab Point) (JL) and Newbiggin (CDB/TF/JFa).

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

The seabird passage of 20th-22nd included 90 N in seven hours at Seaton Sluice (SSWT), at least 70 N at Cullercoats in 1.5h (CGK/GPK) and 23 N at Berwick Pier (MHu). Elsewhere, 25 fed offshore at Lynemouth Power Station on 6th (PRM) and a single was at North Shields on 30th (CGK).

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

The largest concentration of 966 was recorded from a WeBS survey on 12th in the River Tweed Estuary (MHu) with smaller flocks of 200-300 at QEII CP Lake on 20th (CDH) and in Jesmond Dene on 15th (MJCo). On many other dates throughout the month, 100-200 were at Amble Shore, Killingworth Lake, Leazes Park and St Mary's Island (JMA/DM), 50-150 at Arcot Pond, Bothal Pond, the Coquet Estuary, Druridge Bay CP, Earsdon, Hauxley Shore and Newcastle Town Moor (JMA/TD/DM) and 10-50 at Berwick (North Shore), Castle Island, Hauxley NWT, Newbiggin and Tynemouth. A colour-ringed adult, white J3N3, at the QE II CP Lake on 12th (IFo) was marked at Oslo, Norway in May 2011 and a second Norwegian-ringed bird returned to Chirton Dene Park (North Shields) on 15th for the third consecutive winter (MSH).

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

Three adults fed offshore at Lynemouth Power Station on 6th (PRM) and on 8th two sightings, possibly of the same individual, came from Snab Point (JL) and Hadston Carrs (TF/JFa). An adult was at the Druridge Bay CP on 19th (MSH).

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

At Seaton Sluice six records came from 20th-22nd, involving five adults, 4N, 2S (possible duplication) and an immature (SSWT); six flew N at Newbiggin in three hours on 21st (TF/JFa). At Newbiggin, on the Grace Darling College playing fields, 12 and nine were present on 23rd and 6th respectively (ADMc) and also on 6th three adults were offshore at Lynemouth Power Station (PRM). One or two were recorded at other localities, Blyth Harbour, Bothal Pond, Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Lynemouth Flash, Maiden's Hall Lake, Swallow Pond, Tynemouth and Widdrington Moor Lake. An adult Danish-ringed bird, white ZNV, first ringed at Copenhagen in April 2009 was at Swallow Pond on 18th, previously seen in the county in 2010 and 2011 (GPK *et al.*).

Common Gull *Larus canus*

At least 40/h moved N on 21st at St Mary's Island within the significant seabird passage that day (MSH). WeBS surveys in the River Tweed Estuary recorded 360 on 12th and 15 on 11th (MHu) with small numbers of up to 17 present elsewhere at Arcot Pond, Beacon Hill (Cramlington), Castle Island, Jesmond Dene, Killingworth Lake and Newbiggin (DM/MJCo/CDB).

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

Three adults frequented Swallow Pond on 5th (SPP/GPK), two were in the River Tweed Estuary on 12th (MHu) with single adults elsewhere at Derwent Reservoir (IFo), Cramlington (DM) and Woodhorn (DM/STH).

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

A WeBS survey in the River Tweed Estuary recorded an impressive 2,940 on 12th (MHu) and 200-250 were counted at Amble Shore on 19th (JMA), the QE II CP Lake on 20th (CDH) and on Tynemouth Park Boating Lake on 2nd (MSH). Counts of 40-150 came from Berwick North Shore (MHu) and from Boulmer, Earsdon, Elwick, Hampeth, Little Moor, Prudhoe, Seahouses, Shilbottle Town Moor and St Mary's Island (all JMA). Gatherings of up to 30 were noted at the Black Middens, Castle Island, Killingworth Lake, Jesmond Dene, Leazes Park Lake, Monks' House Pool, Newbiggin and Tynemouth.

***Yellow-legged Gull** *Larus michahellis*

A 2nd-winter bird in the River Tweed Estuary was present on 6th (MHu/BWG).

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucooides*

A 1st-winter individual moved N at Snab Point on 21st (JL).

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

A 1st-winter flew N at Seaton Sluice on 21st (SSWT) and either the same or perhaps another 1st-winter bird, seen briefly on the rocks at St Mary's on 22nd, also flew off N (JBU).

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

Budle Bay held 30 on 17th (JMA), the River Tweed Estuary 22 on 12th (MHu) and 14 were at Castle Island on 14th (DM/STH). One to ten were at eight other localities namely Berwick (North Shore), the Coquet Estuary, Newbiggin, Grindon Lough, Holy Island Causeway, QE II CP Lake, St Mary's Island and the River Tyne at Elswick Wharf (JMA/DM/CDB/CDH/SJH).

Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

Just the one large count of 75 at Blyth Harbour on 27th (STH) and present in Jesmond Dene during the month.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Five at Hemscott Hill (Cresswell) on 15th (PRM), up to three in an Old Hartley garden during the month (RJP), three at Cresswell Pond on 14th (STH/DM), two at Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 3rd and singles at Holywell Dene and Jesmond Dene.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

Two flocks consisting 850 birds flew west at East Ord (Berwick) on 11th (MHu), 400 at Derwent Reservoir on 4th (IFo), 130 east in three flocks at Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 8th (KWY), 100 at Arcot Pond on the same date (STH) and nine in Jesmond Dene on 1st (MJCo).

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

A pre-roost gathering of 34 at Callerton Village on 12th (MH), 12 at Wark (N.Tyne) on 30th and two at Hauxley on 4th (HRS).

October bulletin addition 29 were at Elwick on 31st (ASJ).

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

The resident pair was at Holy Island all month (IK) with one at Crooked Lonnen on 7th and Rocket field on 21st (ADM). Singles were at Hawkhill (Alnwick) on 4th, Monks' House Dunes on 5th, Woden (nr Hipsburn) on 7th, Humshaugh on 12th, Cresswell Pond on 14th, Grindon Lough on 16th, Smiley Lonnen (Alnwick) and Mowden Hall on 17th, Plenmeller Common on 19th and 22nd and Ingram on 22nd.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Two were noted regularly during the month at Shiremoor (CGK), one at Derwent Reservoir on 10th and several dates thereafter (IFo) and at Hemscott Hill Links (Cresswell) on 23rd (MSH).

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Just one report of a single at a Stamfordham garden nest box throughout the month (EC).

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Two were in the St Mary's Island / Old Hartley area on 1st and 2nd (PRM/JBu/GMi/MNC), in off the sea at Tynemouth Haven on 2nd (MSH), at Prestwick Carr on 14th and 21st (PCF), around the ramparts at Berwick Harbour on 21st (AB/LB), Straight Lonnen (Holy Island) on 22nd and Old Hartley on 27th (MNC). Singles were at all the aforementioned locations regularly for the rest of the month and at Cocklawburn Dunes and Holywell Pond on 3rd, Swallow Pond on 6th, East Chevington on 12th, Dunstanburgh Castle and Boulmer on 14th, Druridge Pools on 15th, Backworth on 17th, Beanley Moor on 21st, Plenmeller Common on 22nd.

A Short-eared Owl

St. Mary's

Colin Bradshaw

Pallid Swift *Apus pallidus*

On 1st one was watched over Grand Hotel / Boating Lake (Tynemouth) for 15mins from 10.40 hours and last seen heading N toward Cullercoats (DRW/AC/MGK).

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

At Seaton Sluice on 2nd two were in a territorial dispute on the rocks (SSWT), two at Gosforth Park NR during the month (NHSN) and at Corbridge on 18th (AJH). Singles were noted regularly at Gosforth Park, Jesmond Dene, Swallow Pond, Seaton Sluice from 18th and Tynemouth. Late in the month singles were noted daily at Furnace Bridge (Bedlington), Tyne Green (Hexham), Church Point (Newbiggin) and six other different locations during the month.



Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

No reports this month



A Green Woodpecker in a Rothbury garden by Tim Dean on 2nd October.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

High counts of five at Gosforth Park NR during the month and Wooler on 24th (NHSN/MJC), four at Alnwick on 26th (MJC) with two in an Old Hartley garden and nearby Holywell Dene (RJP), Valley Park (Cramlington) on 6th (DM), Hauxley Ringing Station on 7th (HRS) and Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 20th (MNC). Singles were at five further widespread localities.

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Five birds were noted at Prestwick Carr on 28th (MH), three were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 12th (MSH) and two were at Harthope Valley, Holy Island and St Mary's Island. Singles were also recorded at 13 sites.

A Kestrel

Fenham-le-Moor

Tim Dean

25th November



Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Two birds, a juvenile male and a female, were present on Holy Island (IK) throughout the month and single birds were noted there on 7th and 14th (ADM). Other singles were in the Cresswell area on several dates and at St Mary's Island on 6th (SPP). A female was at a confidential inland site on 10th (SJH).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Single birds were recorded from Belsay, Berwick Little Beach, Budle Bay, Cocklaw, Derwent Reservoir, Holywell Pond, Jesmond Dene, Rothbury, Seaton Sluice, St Mary's Island, Swallow Pond, Tynemouth and Widdrington Moor Lake.

Magpie *Pica pica*

Just two reports of seven at Jesmond Dene (Newcastle) on 15th (MJCo) and four at St Mary's Island on 21st (CDB).

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Six reported regularly from Gosforth Park NR (NHSN/MJC), five at Holywell Pond on 3rd (SPP) with two at Prestwick Carr on 1st, East Cramlington LNR on 1st and 20th, Valley Park (Cramlington) on 6th and Linton Ponds on 20th. Singles were at eight other inland locations.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

Evening gatherings numbered around 2,000 at Gosforth Park NR and over Seghill in 29th (NHSN/IF), 300 at Big Waters NWT on 28th (PCF), 250+ at Lynemouth Flash on 19th (MSH) and Gosforth Park NR on 22nd (MJC) with 100 at Corbridge on 20th (JMA). 50 were at Hemscott Hill (Cresswell), Elwick, Hampeth, Town Moor (Newcastle) and Wooperton with 11 in Jesmond Dene.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

800 moved SW over Seghill on 29th (IF), 140 at Gosforth Park NR on 22nd (MJC), 100 at Chatton and Wooperton on 13th, Corbridge on 20th and Prudhoe on 28th (JMA). Four to 50 were at Alnwick, Hemscott Hill and Elwick.

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

On 15th 63 were at the Sleekburn confluence (R.Blyth) (LJM), 40 at Hauxley beach on 7th (HRS) and 25 at Beaconhill (Cramlington) on 1st (STH) with two to 20 at six other locations.

Hooded Crow *Corvus corone cornix*

One circled Collingwood Monument (Tynemouth) before landing in sea buckthorn and rocks on 2nd (SPP) and one was next to the ruined pill box at Hemscott Hill (Cresswell) on 21st (CDB).

Raven *Corvus corax*

Two reports of singles at Chare End dunes (Holy Island) on 8th (IK) and Holystone on 22nd (TRD/JD).

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

More than 15 were at Wark (N.Tyne) on 10th with 10+ there on 4th (PRM), 4+ at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) on 3rd (MSH) with two at Valley Park (Cramlington), East Chevington, Hauxley and Prestwick Carr. Singles were at four other localities.

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

On 29th 13 were at Humford (JR) and a single at Jesmond Dene on 1st (MJCo).

Great Tit *Parus major*

There were 17 at Humford on 29th (JR) and three at Jesmond Dene on 8th (MJCo).

A bird controlled at Bamburgh in October had been ringed as a juvenile at Selkirk in August a movement of 68km (BRS).

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

Nine were at Humford on 29th (JR), five the peak count in an Old Hartley garden during the month (RJP), 4+ at Bamburgh on 5th (BRS), three around Holywell Dene and at Wark (N.Tyne) on 10th (RJP/PRM). Two were at Jesmond Dene on 1st and Weetslade Colliery CP on 14th.



A Coal Tit at Howdon Wetland by Colin Bradshaw

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

At Derwent Reservoir three were present on 14th with singles on five other dates during the month (IFo). Two were at Prestwick Carr on 14th (PCF), near the Golf course (Alnwick) on 26th (MJC) and in an Old Hartley garden (RJP) with singles at Holywell Dene, Linden Hall (Longhorsley), Swallow Pond and Brierdene (Whitley Bay).

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

Two at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 22nd (NFO) with one there on 21st and 28th and singles on garden feeders at Rothbury on 18th (TRD/JD) and at New Mills Wood (Berwick) on 22nd (BWG).

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

At Goswick Farm on 24th 38 were found on the 108ha site (BWG), 27 passage birds W over Whiteadder Point (Berwick) in small groups on 11th (BWG), 23 S over Gosforth Park NR on 1st (MJC), 12 at Druridge on 26th (MSH), 11 at Beacon Hill (Cramlington) on 1st (STH) with one to eight at Alnwick, Amble, Big Waters NWT, Arcot and Valley Park (Cramlington) and Hauxley.

House Martin *Delichon urbicum*

October bulletin addition A pair plus three young left a Whitley Bay nest on 1st and three were at St. Mary's island on 2nd (ASJ).

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*

October bulletin addition A Yellow-browed warbler was found in an observer's garden in Marden Estate on 4th and 26th (ASJ).



A Yellow-browed Warbler with a fly
at Newton 8th October by Tim Dean

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

The Holy Island flock reported last month numbered up to 20 and remained in the area much longer than usual, being last reported on 22nd (IK *et al.*). Other sizeable gatherings included 19 at Wark (North Tyne) on 22nd (PRM) and 16 at Northumberland Park (North Shields) and at Prestwick Carr, with 13 trapped and ringed at Bamburgh. Counts of seven to nine came from Berwick, Berwick GC, East Chevington, Holywell Dene, Jesmond Dene, Lower Ouseburn and Tweedmouth and five to six were noted at Cramlington (Alexandra Park), Hexham (Tyne Green), Low Newton and Whitley Bay Cemetery.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Up to four were noted on Holy Island on five dates to 21st, with a peak on 7th (ADM *et al.*). Four were at Alnmouth on 20th (MJC), two at Brierdene, Hauxley and Berwick on 3rd, 7th and 19th respectively and singles at Bamburgh, Big Waters, Marden Quarry and Tynemouth.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Singles were at Holy Island on 1st (ADM), Hauxley on 7th (HRS), High Brunton (Chollerford) on 23rd (JWP) and Holywell Dene on 24th (RJP).

Barred Warbler *Sylvia nisoria*

October bulletin addition One at St. Mary's on 2nd was in sub-song (ASJ).



A Barred Warbler on Holy Island by Tim Dean on 20th October

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

October bulletin addition One was at Holy Island on 3rd and another at St. Mary's on 9th (ASJ).

Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus*

A flock of 11 was noted at Ashington (Woodhorn Motors) on 29th (TF/JFa).

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Singles were noted at three sites in Jesmond Dene on 15th (MJCo). Elsewhere, further singles were reported from Derwent Reservoir, Holywell Dene, Holywell Pond, Rothbury and Wark (North Tyne).

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Five were at Gosforth Park NR on 1st and four at Berwick on 13th. Elsewhere two were seen together at Hexham (Tyne Green) and singles were noted at Derwent Reservoir, Jesmond Dene, Hauxley, Heddon-on-the-Wall, Holystone, Jesmond Dene and Wark (North Tyne).

October bulletin addition A single was found on Holy Island on 3rd (ASJ).

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

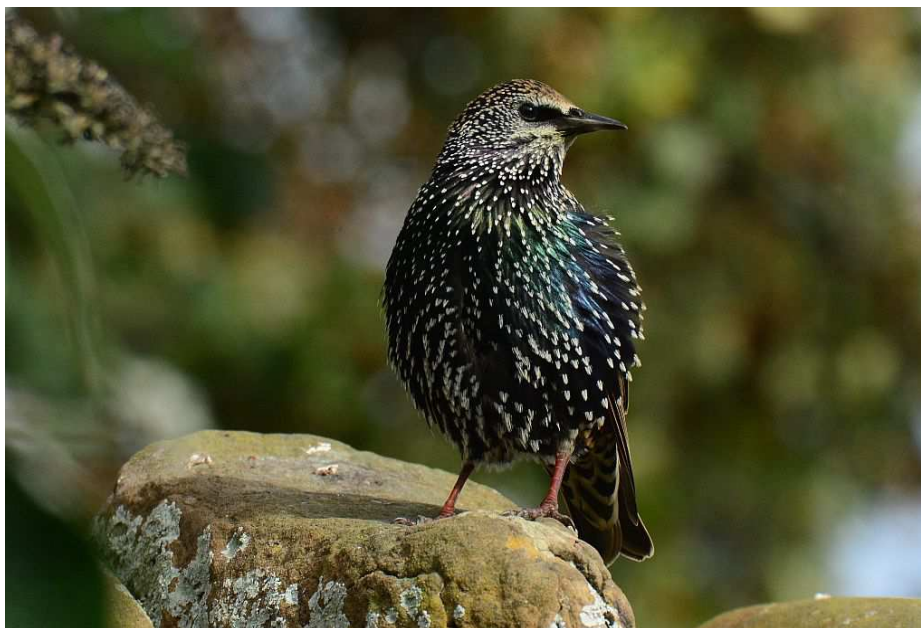
Counts from Holy Island included 11 on 1st, 17 on 7th, four on 10th and 14 on 14th (ADM). Another 14 were noted at Stag Rocks-Budle Point on 14th (ADM), ten were at Longhorsley Moor on 1st (AB/LB), nine at Prestwick Carr on 8th and six at Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 20th and at Holywell Dene on 23rd. Four were at Hauxley on 4th and two at Jesmond Dene on 1st.

A Wren at Howdon Wetland by Colin Bradshaw



Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

Counts of roosting birds included ca12,000 at East Chevington on 6th (PRM) and 5,000+ at Big Waters on 27th-28th (PCF). Some 2,500 were noted at Brownieside on 5th (JMA), while flocks passing over Prestwick Carr at dusk numbered 850-1,200 on 8th, 14th and 22nd (PCF). Counts of 200-400 came from Airy Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield), Alnwick Moor and Cresswell Pond; 100-150 were noted at Elwick, Grindon Lough and Hemscott Hill and lower numbers at a further six Localities.



A Starling at Holy Island on 9th October by Tim Dean

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

Counts of two came from Bedlington (Furnace Bridge), Carey Burn, Hexham (Tyne Green), Ingram, Warden and Wooler, while singles were noted on the Ouseburn (Jesmond Dene) on eight dates (DHWB/MJCo) and at Blakehopeburnhaugh, Holywell Dene and Morpeth (Fulbeck).

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

A late individual flew SE at Cramlington (Beaconhill) on 1st (STH).

October bulletin addition Three were at St. Mary's on 8th and a single on Holy Island on 10th (ASJ).

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Further immigration was noted during the month with 40 at Hauxley on 7th (HRS), 25 at Dunstanburgh on 20th (MJC), eight in off the sea at Newbiggin on 20th and four at St Mary's Island on 21st; small numbers were also noted 'in-off' at Seaton Sluice on 5th and 20th. A count of 20 at Alnwick on 26th may also have been migrants and 11 were at Bedlington on 29th.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

The largest gatherings were 180 at Berwick on 13th (MJC), 170 at Prestwick Carr on 8th (PCF), 150 near Stamfordham on 4th (EC), 120 at Gainslaw on 15th, 110 at Hemscott Hill on 15th and 100 moving W in small groups at Melkridge on 4th. Flocks of 50-90 were also noted at Derwent Reservoir, Dunstanburgh, Eshott, Low Cocklaw and Norham, 42 were at West Ord, 40 at Alnwick and smaller numbers at a further 13 localities.



A Fieldfare

Howdon Wetland

Colin Bradshaw

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Four to six, presumably migrants were noted at Hauxley on 7th, Dunstanburgh on 20th and Cocklawburn on 26th. A single was also noted at Jesmond Dene.

October bulletin addition 55 were at Holy Island on 10th (ASJ).

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

Flocks of 60 were reported from Arcot Pond on 28th (STH) and Gainslaw on 15th (MHu) and 50 at Berwick on 13th, Derwent Reservoir on 11th and near Stamfordham on 4th; 30-45 were also noted from Big Waters, Norham, Wark (North Tyne) and Whitley Bay Cemetery. Lower numbers at a further 13 localities included 12 feeding throughout the month on Yew berries in a Stamfordham garden, eight in a South Gosforth garden on 23rd and small numbers in off the sea at Seaton Sluice on 5th and 20th.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Six were noted at Eshott on 4th (MSH) and four at Jesmond Dene on 8th (MJCo). One to two were also reported from Big Waters, Lynemouth and Wark (North Tyne).

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Counts from Holy Island were seven on 1st, 16 on 7th, nine on 10th, 12 on 14th and 21 on 21st (ADM). Seven were at Stag Rocks-Budle Point on 14th (ADM), four in Jesmond Dene on 1st and one at St Mary's Island on 21st.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

Two individuals were located during the month. The first was at Hauxley beach on 7th (HRS) and another was at Tynemouth (King Edward's Bay) on 25th (GPK/SPP).

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

October bulletin addition One was on Holy Island on 7th (ASJ).

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

Highest site totals reported during the month were five at Holy Island, four at Low Newton, three at East Chevington and two at Bamburgh, Cocklawburn, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Eglington Moor, Hauxley, Newbiggin, Prestwick Carr, West Chevington and St Mary's Island. In addition singles were noted at Amble dunes, Boulmer, Monks' House, Tynemouth and West Hartford.

October bulletin The Stonechat photograph was from Seaton Sluice.

Wheatear *Oenanthe Oenanthe*

Singles were at Holy Island on 1st (ADM) and at Alnmouth on 12th (MJC).



A Wheatear gives Mike Carr the eye
Alnmouth on 12th November

Duncock *Prunella modularis*

Only four reports this month, including a pair in a Marden garden all month and a single retrapped at Hauxley RS.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Up to 40 frequented a Marden Estate garden all month. 60 + were at Cullercoats on 10th. 29 at Killingworth village (ASJ). A single was retrapped at Hauxley.

October bulletin addition 100 were at Elwick on 31st(ASJ).



A ringed cock House Sparrow on Holy Island
20th October
by Tim Dean

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

A large gathering of 80+ noted at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 4th with around 50 dispersing in the area by 16th (BWG). 25 flew west at Tynemouth on 1st (DW). 17 seen at QE 11 CP on 17th (LJM). Up to eight attracted to garden feeders at Linden Hall throughout the month (NFO). Six were seen at QE 11 C.P. on 20th and up to five fed in an Old Hartley garden during the month. Up to five also seen for the first time in the observer's garden at Northburn (Cramlington). One to three were noted at four other sites.

October bulletin addition 50-60 were at Fenham le Moor on 31st (ASJ).

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Six were noted at Holywell Dene during the month, three at the estuary and three near Crowhall Farm (RJP). Five were seen along a 1-km stretch of the Horton Burn (Cramlington) on 1st (LJM). One to two were at eight further sites including town centres of Newcastle, Whitley Bay and North Shields (ASJ).

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

11 present on 8th increased to 17 at Prestwick Carr on 21st (PCF). 13 at Gosforth Park throughout the month. Three noted at Druridge Bay on 3rd and over Chapel House on 7th (MH/AA).

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Several wintering groups noted this month with 25 at Blagdon on 14th and 22 at Prestwick Carr on 8th (GB/PCF). 12 at St Mary's and a single at Shiremoor on 30th (ASJ). 11 at West Hartford on 22nd and ten at East Cramlington on 1st (STH/LJM).

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

At Holy Island a count of 12 on 1st increased to 22 by 14th (ADM). 12+ were at Whitley Bay beach/St Mary's on 17th (ASJ/MHS), with two at nearby Rockcliffe during the month. 11 at Newbiggin on 6th (PRM) and eight at Low Newton on 24th (TRD/JD). One to five were at four further sites.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

Few reported this month. Two were at Alnwick Moor on 17th and two at Tynemouth Haven on 26th with singles at five further sites.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

One in gardens near Chare Ends (Holy Island) on 7th was the sole record of this scarce county species (ADM).

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Six at Prestwick Carr 14th on and six at Gosforth Park on 1st were the month's high counts. Five+ noted at Wark, five at Arcot, Old Hartley, Beaconhill, Cramlington, and Derwent Reservoir. Four at Beacon Lane, Prestwick Carr and Bamburgh during the month, with three seen at Arcot, Gosforth Park and Druridge Pools. One - two at four other locations.

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

Ten seen at Hauxley and a single inland at Derwent reservoir on 4th were the only reports. Rosehip bushes at Tynemouth holding up to 200 birds last month were cut low by council, resulting in no birds remaining into November.



A Greenfinch
Tynemouth
Alan Jack

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

130 at Goswick on 24th was the largest flock seen this month (BWG). 100+ noted at St Mary's on several dates (MHS/ASJ). 45 were at Fenham Flats on 8th (MJC) and 22 at Newbiggin on 6th. Five at Blagdon on 14th.

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*

35 at Goswick Farm on 24th (BWG). Five present at Fenham Flats on 8th (MJC), three+ at Hemscott Hill on same date and a single with finches on Holy Island, at Sandon Bay on 14th.

October bulletin additions 50 were at holy Island on 31st (ASJ). The Twite photograph was from Holy Island.

Redpoll sp. *Carduelis cabaret/flammea*

12 noted at Hauxley on 7th and one at Linden Hall the following day.

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis cabaret*

Three at Gosforth Park on 1st (MJC), Alnwick and Prestwick Carr, 26th and 28th, with two at Bamburgh on 25th.

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

20 seen at Blakehopeburnhaugh (Kielder) on 25th (JD). Two flew S at Gosforth Park on 1st, single migrants were at Holy Island on 7th and 8th, Alnmouth on 12th and Arcot on 15th. A single at Thrunton on 30th.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

120 feeding on thistles at Arcot on 15th was the month's largest count (STH). 80+ reported at this site on same day (LJM). Other flocks involved 25-55 at three Berwick sites, St Mary's and Cresswell (MHu/BWG/ASJ/MHS/PRM). One to 19 were noted at nine further sites during the month.



A greenfinch at Branton GP on 20th November by Tim Dean

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

Around 50 were feeding in stream-side Alders at Kimmer Lough on 17th (MH/AA). On 22nd 20+ noted at Wark (PRM). At Cullercoats on 1st, 12 were observed flying S/SW with three likewise at St Mary's (KWY/MHS). Three to five were at five further inland sites.

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Only three reports during the last week of the month. Four were at Blyth Harbour, two at Goswick Farm and one at Druridge Pools.



Snow Buntings at Cresswell Beach on 15th November by Eddie Douglas



A Snow Bunting at Cresswell Beach on 15th November by Eddie Douglas

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

27 at Bockenfield (Felton) on 22nd was the only large group reported (JR). Elsewhere, one to four were at Brenkley, Weetslade, Derwent Reservoir and Beaconhill (Cramlington).

October bulletin addition 20 were at Budle Bay and 22 at Elwick on 31st (ASJ).

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

13+ at St Mary's on 1st, with 12 here on several other dates in the month (MHS/ASJ). Eight were at Cocklawburn Pond on 3rd (Mhu), with five noted at Derwent Reservoir the previous day (IFo). Four seen at Prestwick Carr on 8th and at East Cramlington LNR on 20th. Single birds were seen at Cresswell Pond, Hemscott Hill and Newbiggin during the month.

ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN

Escapes

Bar-headed Goose *Anser indicus*

One bird remained from last month at Derwent Reservoir from 2nd to 11th (IFo).

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Bamburgh Ringing Society, Berwick Wildlife Group, Natural History Society of Northumbria, North Northumberland Bird Club, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION

This bulletin was compiled by Graeme Bowman (Mute Swan to Ruddy Duck), Lindsay McDougall (Red Grouse to Black-necked Grebe), Trevor Blake (Honey-buzzard to Crane), Steve Holliday (Avocet to Godwit), Steve Holliday (Turnstone to Skua), Eddie Crabtree (Puffin to Great Black-backed Gull), Tim Dean (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), Alan Jack (Dunnock to Corn Bunting), Kathy Evans (WeBS Coastal Counts) and Steve Holliday (WeBS Inland Counts).

Thanks to David Sanders of NNBC for providing data. Proof reading was by Mike Smith. Mail distribution by Paul Stewart.

Edited by Steve Barrett NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com

RECORD SUBMISSION

Please email ntbcorg@gmail.com for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and grid references: The use of standard location names and the include grid references as this 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.

Could club members ensure they to submit records direct to NTBC rather than just Birdtrack. There may be an assumption by some members this happens automatically. We do not want to miss records.

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

It is preferable if you re-size your photos before sending and a suggested size is 640 x 480 pixels. Please ensure you include the following information with your submissions: name, species, date taken, locality.

Photographs will not be used elsewhere without the photographer's permission.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual membership costs £10 for a junior, £30 for an individual, and £32 for a family.

For membership enquiries please contact ntbc@jobentley.plus.com

Membership subscriptions were due at the beginning of October. If you internet bank you can pay online: please include your name in the ref. It is helpful if you email me to let me know when you've made the transfer ntbc@jobentley.plus.com

If you decide to set up a standing order please date the first payment at least a fortnight from your posting date to allow time to process with the bank. You can also set up your standing order directly with your bank if you wish; just let me know.

Finally, if you know anyone who might like to join NTBC please pass on the club information - new members are always welcome.

Jo Bentley - Hon Treasurer



One of the popular Short-eared Owls at St. Mary's by Jack Bucknall on 1st November

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. Please submit any new content for the website to the main club email address.

NTBC SIGHTINGS PAGE

The Sightings Page contains current reports by members. Access is from the NTBC website and an email notification is available for new postings. Members need to submit a request to be added to the website, specifying the email address they wish to post from before they can submit sightings to ntbcorg@gmail.com

COASTAL WeBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND

November

2015

Site	TOTAL	Berwick North Shore (including Little Beach)	Tweed Estuary	Tweed: At By Pass to Galslaw House	Spittal - Cocklawburn	(Including Budle Bay)	Seahouses - Beadnell	Seahouses - Seahouses	Budle Pt. - Seahouses	KAE	MLC	AB	TAC	Aln Estuary	Alnmouth South	Coquet Estuary	Amble - Chevington	Chevington - Cresswell	Cresswell - Newbiggin	Newbiggin - Cambois	Blyth Estuary	KVB	SP	MK	DMT	DMT	PF	PF
Counter		MFHu	MFHu	TB	MFHu	AC	AC	AC	AC	24	WD	26	21	RP	RP	16	16	29	14	15	15	13	19	13	26	26	15	15
Date		11	12	17	16	15	15	15	15	6		1		2		1	7				3							
Red-throated Diver	28	1								1																		
Great Northern Diver	1											1																
Black-throated Diver	1											1	8			1					2							
Little Grebe	13																											
Great Crested Grebe	8																											
Red-necked Grebe	1																											
Slavonian Grebe	9																											
Cormorant	340	26	13	9	8	42				9	15	8	6	12	21	4	2	12	53	21	4	55	12	4	4	4		
Shag	41	30	1		2	3				2	2									1								
Grey Heron	63	2	10	3	1	7				2	8	6						5	2	10		1	4	2				
Mute Swan	64	1	27	4	5	1				2	2	4		14									2	4	1			
Whooper Swan	3												1															
Pink-footed Goose	83											75																
Greylag Goose	104						1	100	100				3															
Canada Goose	184												175															
Barnacle Goose	6																											
Dark-bellied Brent Goose	328											3		1														
Light-bellied Brent Goose	3,201																			1				6				
Shelduck	1,058																											
Wigeon	11,501												2	310	16						2							
Gadwall	13																											
Teal	646			7		283	250						195	88														
Mallard	557	108	30	36	171	150						87		52	2											2	10	18
Pintail	96				96																							2
Shoveler	12				12																							
Tufted Duck	40				30	9																						
Eider	902	12	12		32	468				77	115	48	4	8	26	2	15	9		1								
Long-tailed Duck	7					6				1																		
Common Scoter	136				24	2				22				86		2												
Goldeneye	181	124	13	15	18											10									1			
Red-breasted Merganser	56				41					8		3	4															
Goosander	25	6	7		11														1									
Moorhen	13					3							6															
Coot	2					2																						
Oystercatcher	2,240	167	18		64	1050	50			68	142	92	46	7	12	63	20	170	35		37	12	85	93	59			
Ringed Plover	288	12			12	96				9	28	22	2			22		24			26		25	2	8			
Golden Plover	5,898				58	2591						850						35	1		353		2010					
Grey Plover	311	15					150				6	21		2		1		8										
Lapwing	3,549	164			48	2124	10			16	75	367	125		124	35				99		317				55		
Knot	137													21									1					
Sanderling	544	28				57						108				147	22	114				35	33					
Curlew Sandpiper	8																											
Purple Sandpiper	257	2								167	19	58	17	11	86	46		35			2	2	30	2	10			
Dunlin	910	14			2	521							5					89										
Black-tailed Godwit	6																											
Bar-tailed Godwit	834	5				818						11																
Curlew	1,178	22	27	14	72	573	40			1	2	63	135		17	12	9	54			19		125	25	4	2	2	
Redshank	1,829	46	216	1	16	634	175			18	10	38	46	2	94	74	10	133	26		44	59	155	104	4	43	42	14
Turnstone	807	42	14		4	42				175	114	58		6	111	7	88				3	68	67	8				
Black-headed Gull	3,298	34	966		83	874	300			172	33	150		2	215					60			218	107	301	52	31	
Common Gull	678	15	360	4	12	180	100			63		20											4					
Lesser Black-backed Gull	32		2		30	30																						
Herring Gull	4,002	42	2940		26	374	70			51	100		75	3	37						137			66	88	63		
Great Black-backed Gull	1,196	7	22	1	3	47	20			4	9		975		20			5			18		2	10	71	6	3	
Mediterranean Gull	8																											
Sandwich Tern	1									1																		
Arctic Tern	1																						1					
Kingfisher	1												1															
ADDITIONAL SPECIES																												
Little Egret	11					8									1					1								1
Water Rail																												
TOTALS - WILDFOWL	19,723	72	310	75	155	16,770	1,681			127	136	79	845	96	505	54	26	16	15	15	26	152	12	66	26	38	7	
- WADERS	18,796	353	439	15	276	8,879	425			454	396	1,688	49	333	49	333	103	716	61	61	76	2,853	334	45	99	14		
- GULLS & TERNS	9,216	98	4,290	5	124	1,505	520			292	142	0	1,220	5	0	292	0	5	0	215	0	2	299	266	301	121	34	

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[illegible]

NOTE - no counts possible at Longhirst Flash from July 2015 onwards due to the site being drained and re-landscaped

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2015 No 12

MONTHLY SUMMARY DECEMBER 2015

2nd February 2016



CONTENTS

WeBS inland

WeBS coastal

CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Bewick's Swan	Two at both Widdrington Moor lake and Grindon Lough.
Greenland White-fronted Geese	Two at Cresswell / Druridge.
Green-winged Teal	Drake at Howdon Wetland on 29th.
Bittern	At least one noted at Gosforth Park.
Red-necked Grebe	One off Holy Island on 31st.
Red Kite	Unusual sighting of one at Holywell Dene on 20th.
Marsh Harrier	First ever continuously wintering bird in county, a female at East Chevington.
Grey Phalarope	One at Meadow Haven, Berwick on 6th was notable.
Long-billed Dowitcher	The first-winter remained at Cresswell Pond all month.
Great Skua	Unusual for month with five seen off Seaton Sluice & one landed briefly at Snab Pt.
Glaucous Gull	Juvenile on Tynemouth Boating Lake on 20th.
Short-eared Owl	Notable influx in comparison to recent years.
Black Redstart	Singles at Holy Island, St Mary's and Tynemouth.
Water Pipit	Up to three in Druridge / East Chevington area, notable influx.
Lapland Bunting	One at East Chevington on 17th.



The Long-billed Dowitcher at Cresswell Pond
by Chris Barlow on 30th December

INDOOR MEETINGS

NTBC indoor meetings are held at Northern Rugby Club, McCracken Park, Great North Road, Newcastle, NE3 2DT starting at 7.00pm and generally finish between 9.00pm-9.30pm. The next meeting of the 2015-2016 season is:-

February 11th 2016

Geoff Sample – 'Sites and Sounds'

20 years of recording birds in Northumberland from the perspective of wildlife sound recording. Sounds will include memorable scarcer species and vagrants. Many well-known birdy sites are noisy places so Geoff has found habitat that offers species and soundscapes in a quieter setting. He will talk about experiences over the years and what the future holds.

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 2013 page 233.

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.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Peak counts were 126 at QEII CP Lake on 13th (CDH), 42 at the Tweed Estuary on 11th (MHu), 26-28 at Big Waters (GB), Horncliffe (MHu) and Killingworth Lake (LJM), and 11-13 at East Chevington and Howdon. Five to six were also at Amble, Arcot Pond, Ashington, Hauxley Reserve, Hedgeley GP and Ladyburn Lake, and one to four at 12 further sites.

Bewick's Swan *Cygnus columbianus*

Two were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 30th (CDB/TB) and two adults at Grindon Lough on 31st (PRM).



The Widdrington Moor Bewick's Swans by Chris Barlow on 30th December

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

13 flew S at East Chevington on 12th (JL) and six E at Humshaugh on 30th (TWi). Moderate numbers included 28 (25 adults) at Shortridge Hall (near Warkworth) on 13th (JMA), 26 at Fenham Mill (Lindisfarne NNR) on 29th (MSH), 18 in a kale field at Loanend (Horncliffe) on 27th (MHu), seven at Cresswell Pond and Ellington caravan park, and one to three at Gosforth Park NR, Grindon Lough, Ladyburn Lake, Prestwick Carr and West Ord.

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Southerly movement involved 700 at West Stobswood on 7th (TRD), 500 at Widdrington Moor Lake on 3rd (TRD), and 19-56 at Berwick and Seaton Sluice, while parties of 36-38 flew W at Berwick and Prestwick Carr, and north at Swallow Pond. Large gatherings in Druridge Bay involved 4,000 at Cresswell Pond on 28th (TF/JFa), 2,755 at Druridge on 19th (IRD), 1,500 at Bell's Pond on 6th (TF/JFa), and 500 at East Chevington on 16th (TRD). No large counts were received from the north of the county except for 370 at Cheswick on 29th (MHu) but further south 600 were at Seaton Sluice on 29th (CDH) and 418 at nearby Gloucester Lodge (Blyth) on 20th (MSH), 511 at Crow Hall Farm (Holywell Dene) on 10th (MSH) and 350-360 at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay; STH) and Holywell Pond (GPK). A silver-neck-collared bird 'PCB' was at Druridge Pools on 19th (TF/JFa).

White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*

Adults of the Greenland *flavirostris* race involved two at Hemscott Hill (Druridge Bay) on 6th (TF/JFa), two at Grindon Lough on 8th (JSB/EC) and the Druridge Pools area on 19th (IRD/TF/JFa).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

80 flew E at Prestwick Carr on 31st (PCF), 33 S at East Ord on 13th (MHu) and 30 E at Cramlington on 13th (DM). Peak concentrations were 275 at Budle Bay on 17th (CGK), 237 at Big Waters on 13th (GB), 200 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 6th (SR), 170 at Hedgeley GP on 6th (JMA), and 110 at Holywell Pond on 3rd (GPK). Counts of 30-45 came from East Chevington and the Tweed Estuary, and 14-17 were at Cocklawburn and Hauxley Reserve. One to four were also at Beacon Hill (Cramlington), Bothal and Cresswell Ponds, and Grindon Lough.

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Grindon Lough attracted 337 on 31st (PRM), 132 were at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd (IFo), 119 at Killingworth Lake on 9th (LJM), 95 at Bothal Pond on 29th (TF/JFa), 54-75 at Big Waters (GB) and QEII CP Lake (CDH), and 20 at Newcastle Leazes Park. Nine to 11 were also at Hauxley Reserve and the Tweed Estuary, and one to three at Cresswell Pond and Widdrington Moor Lake.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

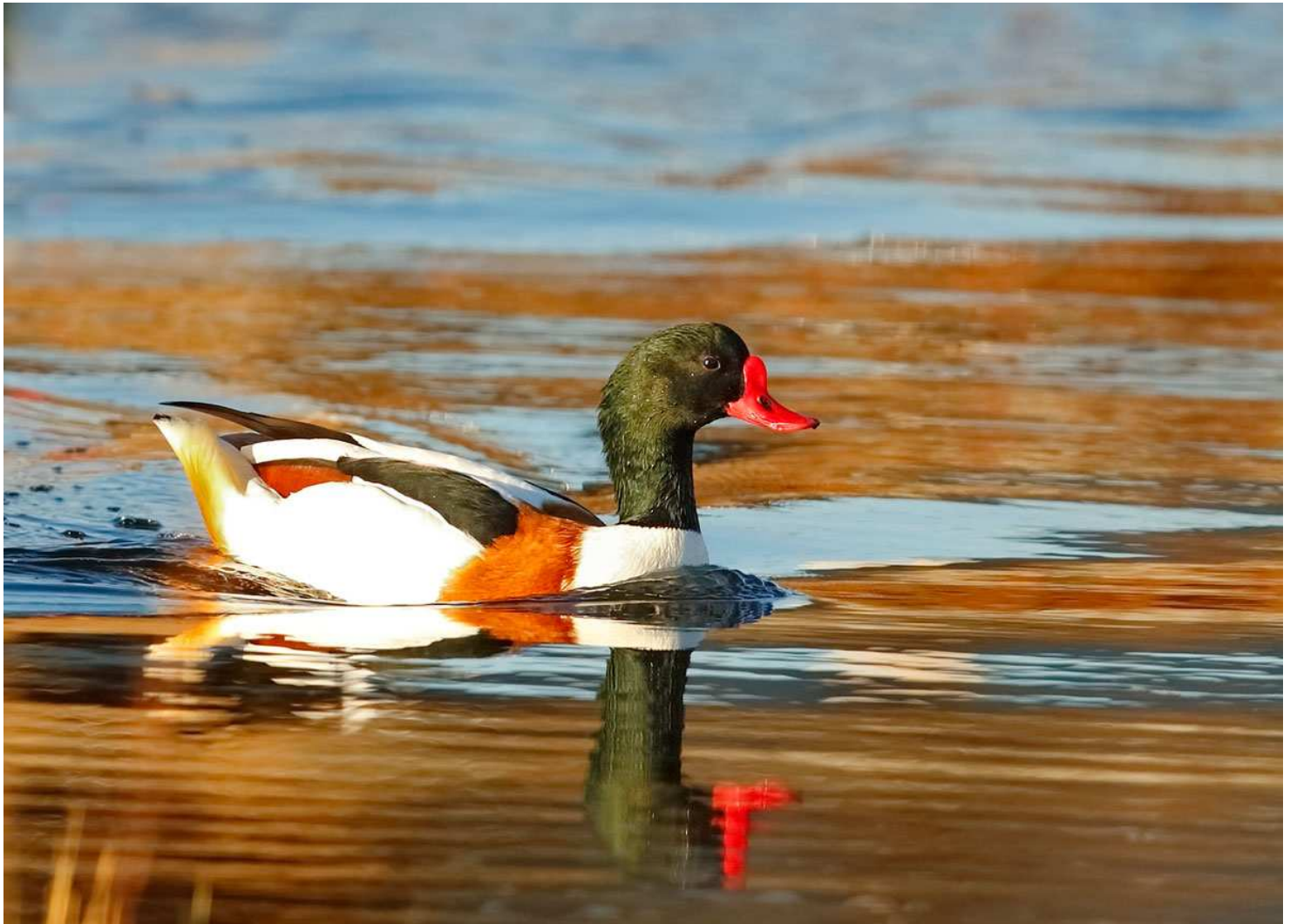
A total of 1,350 came in to roost at Budle Bay on 17th (CGK) and 400-500 were at Harper's Heugh-Budle Bay on several other dates between 3rd-29th (MSH). The only other reports were of two at Druridge on 2nd (MSH) and two at nearby Hemscott Hill on 6th (TF/JFa).

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

Pale-bellied *hrota* race birds included 450 at Fenham Flats on 14th (STH), 152 at Budle Bay on 29th (MSH), and 60 at Harper's Heugh (near Budle Bay) on 21st (MSH). A group of 242 at the Crooked Lonnen (Holy Island) on 31st contained 50% *hrota* race birds and 50% of the dark-bellied *bernicla* race (AJR). A 'handful' of *bernicla* race birds were at Budle Bay on 17th (CGK), 82 fed on a *Zostera* bed at St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) on 20th (IK) and one was at Fenham Flats.

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

A total of seven flew N and eight S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). A total of 260 was counted on either side of Holy Island causeway on 4th (JMA), Budle Bay held 192 on 29th (MSH) and 170 on 17th (CGK), 15 were at Howdon on 27th (CB), five at the Blyth Estuary (IF/LJM) and one at Druridge Pools. Four at Prestwick Carr on 27th increased to eight on 29th (PCF) and one was at Bothal Pond. Further inland, three were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 29th (SR).



A Shelduck
Howdon Wetlands
Colin Bradshaw

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

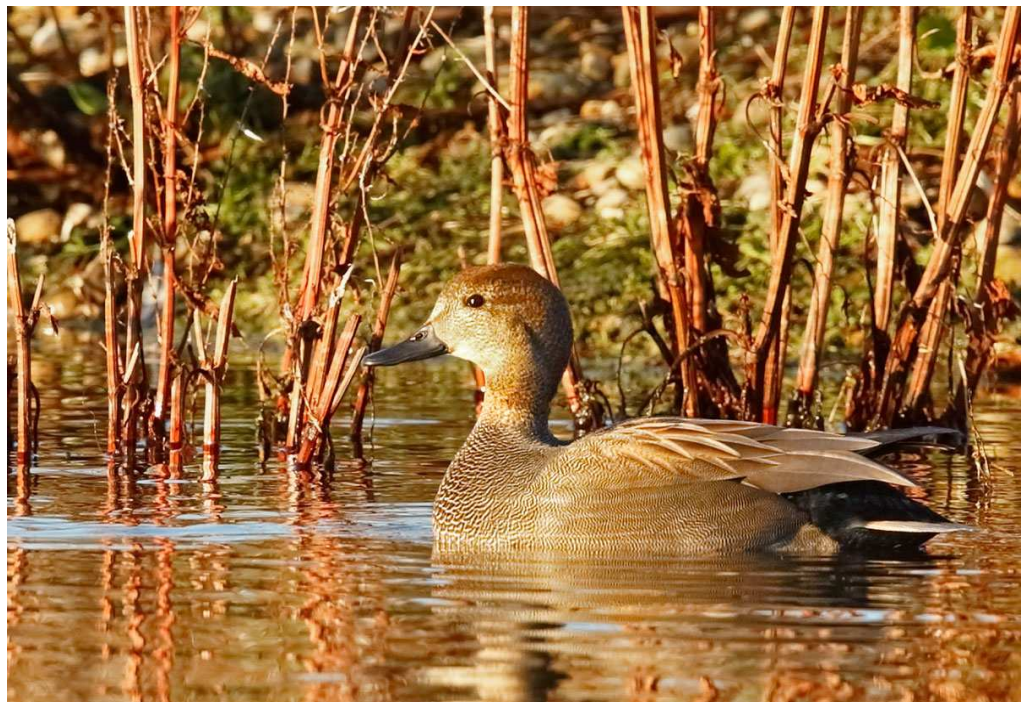
A total of 26 flew N and 15 S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). The largest gatherings involved 600 at Cresswell Pond on 30th (CDB), 467 at Big Waters on 13th (GB), 420 at Budle Bay on 17th (CGK), 410 at Grindon Lough on 31st (PRM), 280 at Druridge Pools (PRM), and 105-176 at Bothal Pond, Derwent and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, and Gosforth Park NR. Counts of 50-93 came from Hauxley Reserve, Warkworth and Widdrington Moor Lake, and 17-44 at Amble, Low Newton and QEII CP Lake.



A Wigeon stretches its wings at Howdon Wetland by Colin Bradshaw

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Peak counts were 34 at Swallow Pond on 13th (GPK/SPP *et al.*), 30 at Arcot Pond on 22nd (LJM), about 30 at Druridge Pools on 11th (PRM), 25 at Bothal Pond (TF/JFa) and Holywell Pond (GPK), ten to 16 at Caistron, Gosforth Park NR, Holywell Pond and QEII CP Lake. Five to nine visited the Blyth Estuary, Castle Island, St Mary's Wetland and Swallow Pond, three were at East Chevington and Widdrington Moor Lake, and one to two at Cresswell Pond, Howdon and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.



A Gadwall
Howdon Wetland
by Colin Bradshaw

Teal *Anas crecca*

Eight flew N and ten S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). At Holy Island, 650 were centred on flood water at Chare Ends, the Lough and 'the rocket field' during the month (IK). Other peak counts were 520 at Budle Bay on 17th (CGK), 400 at Cresswell Pond on 4th (MSH), 330-331 at Grindon Lough (PRM) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs (SR), 238-240 at Druridge Pools (PRM) and Howdon (CB), and 100-164 at Arcot Pond, Big Waters, the Blyth Estuary, Derwent Reservoir and Prestwick Carr. Counts of 57-82 came from Bothal Pond and Dunstanburgh, and 12-35 were at Castle Island, Gosforth Park NR, Middle Ord and Swallow Ponds, and St Mary's Wetland.



A drake Teal at Howdon Wetland by Colin Bradshaw

Green-winged Teal *Anas carolinensis*

A drake was at Howdon Wetland on 29th (JBu).



The Howdon Green-winged Teal swimming with local cousins
by Jack Bucknall

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Derwent Reservoir held a peak of 192 on 2nd (IFo), 176 were at Big Waters on 13th (GB), 158 at the Tweed Estuary on 11th (MHu), 110 at Druridge Pools on 11th (PRM), 50-87 at Budle Bay, Castle Island, Cocklawburn and Linton Ponds, Dunstanburgh, Marden Quarry and Merryshields GP, and 20-45 at Amble, Arcot, Bothal, Cresswell and Linkham (Longhorsley) Ponds, the Blyth and Coquet Estuaries, Fieldhead (Longhorsley), Lynemouth, Newcastle Leazes Park and QEII CP Lake. Counts of 12-18 also came from Derwent Reservoir, Haughton Castle, Hauxley Reserve, Newcastle Exhibition Park and the Wansbeck Estuary.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

Peak counts at Fenham Flats were 93 on 22nd (MH/AA), 88 on 14th (STH) and 60+ on 31st (JL). Smaller numbers elsewhere included six (five drakes) at Druridge Pools on 31st (IRD/TF/JFa) and one to three there regularly between 6th-23rd (TD/TRD/JD *et al.*), four at Budle Bay on 17th (CGK), and singles at Big Waters, Cresswell Pond, Heugh Shiel (River Tweed) and Yarrow Slake. In addition a single at Bolam Lake on 26th may be this first at the site since 1988 (*per* CDB).

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

41 at Swallow Pond on 20th (GPK), 17 at Bothal Pond on 21st (TF/JFa), and ten at Druridge Pools on 7th (TRD) were the largest reported gatherings. Six to eight were at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN) and Linton Ponds (JMA), and singles at Big Waters and Cresswell Pond.

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Widdrington Moor Lake held a peak of 16 on 8th (LJM) and eight to nine on several further dates (TRD/MSH *et al.*), 14 were at Druridge Pools on 31st (CDB) and one to nine on various dates between 7th-23rd (TD/TRD/JD), six at Swallow Pond on 15th (GPK), and one to two at Big Waters and Bothal Pond.



A drake Pochard by Tim Dean

Druridge Pools on 23rd December

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

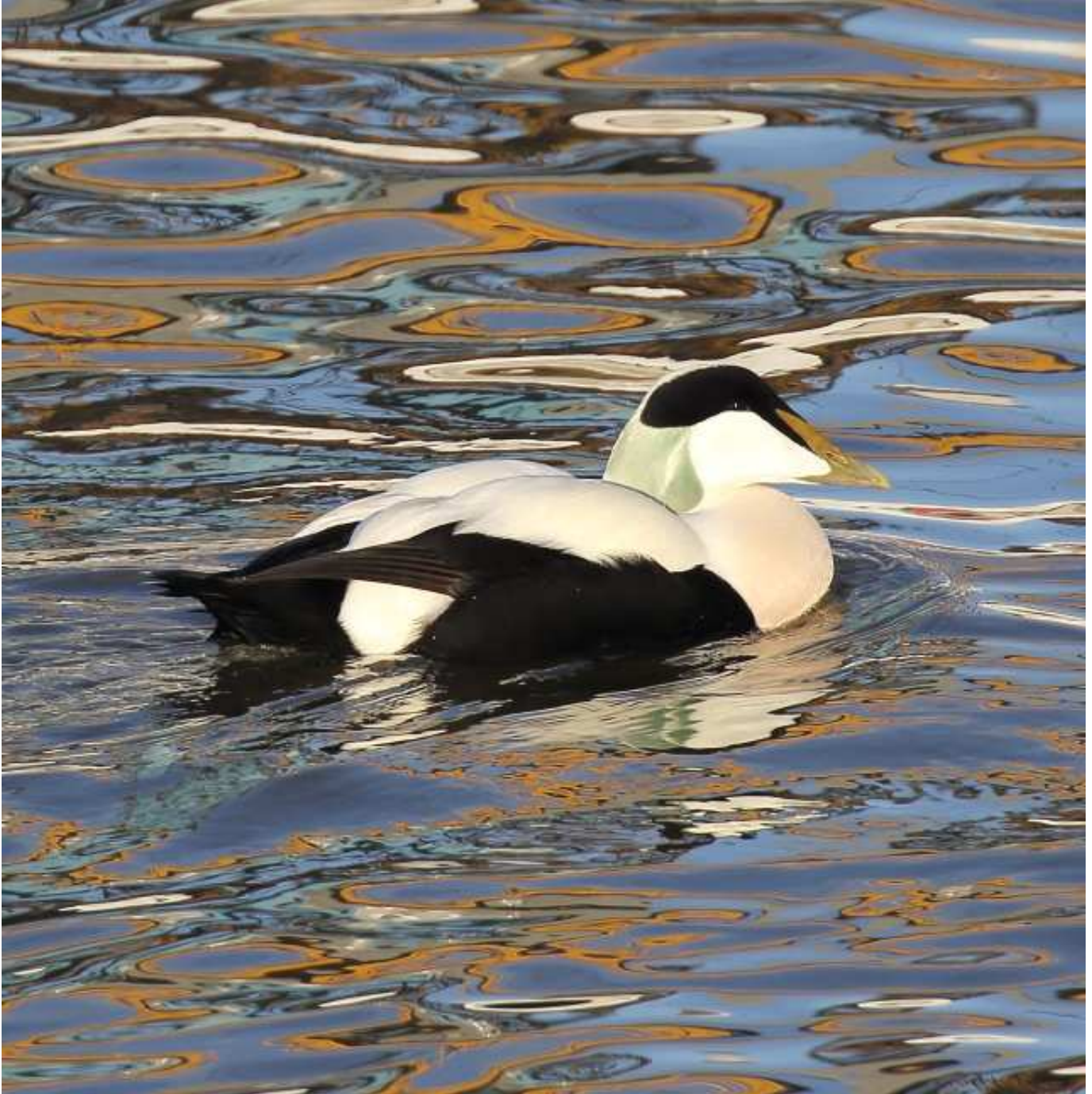
Peak counts were 65 at Killingworth Lake on 8th (GPK), 45 at QEII CP Lake on 13th (CDH), 32-36 at Bothal Pond (TF/JFa), Grindon Lough (PRM), Newcastle Exhibition Park (GB) and Widdrington Moor Lake (DM/LJM), 20-27 at Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Merryshields GP and Newcastle Leazes Park, and ten to 14 at Cocklawburn, Linton and Swallow Ponds. Six to eight were also at Arcot and Holywell Ponds and Jesmond Dene while one to four were at seven further sites.

Scaup *Aythya marila*

Single drakes were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 2nd (MSH) and Druridge Pools on 31st (CDB), and a duck at Cresswell Pond on 28th (GB/LAR/TF/JFa). One was at Howdon on 24th (CB).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

295 at Fenham Flats on 14th (STH) was the sole three-figure count. Other peaks were 49 at Seahouses on 29th (ADM), 37 at Blyth Harbour (STH), 37 at North Blyth (STH), 34 at Cocklawburn (MHu), and 12 to 25 off Hauxley, Howick-Dunstanburgh, Low Newton, Meadow Haven (Berwick) and the Tweed Estuary. Six to nine were also at Amble weir and Hadston Carrs.



A Handsome drake Eider by Alan Jack
Blyth Harbour

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

40 at Holy Island Harbour on 13th included many pairs displaying in fine conditions (IK), 30+ were off Ross Back Sands on 28th (JL), 16 at Stag Rocks on 8th (MH/AA), and two at Cocklawburn and Fenham Flats. The long-staying drake at Derwent Reservoir was noted on 1st (IFo).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

A total of 12 flew N and 25 S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). A group of 300 was off Cresswell on 6th (IRD), 56 were off Cocklawburn on 29th (BWG), 29 at Stag Rocks on 21st (BRS), 18 off East Chevington (GB/LAR), and one to three off Druridge and Low Newton.

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

Two moved S at Seaton Sluice on 15th (SSWT). A drake was at the Blyth Estuary on 9th (STH) and one was at Holy Island on 14th (SR).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

East Chevington north pool was attractive for the species, holding a peak of 78 on 27th (TB). Other peak counts were 56 at the Tweed Estuary on 11th (MHu), 54 on the River Tweed on 31st (MHu), 30-32 at Castle Island (DM/STH) and Yarrow Slake (JD), and 20-25 at Grindon Lough (PRM) and Widdrington Moor Lake (TRD). Ten to 13 were found at Big Waters, Killingworth and QEII CP Lake, and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, six to seven at Amble, Bothal Pond, Caistron, Druridge Pools, Fenham Flats, Gosforth Park NR and Low Newton, and one to three at Arcot and Linton Ponds, the Blyth Estuary, Budle Bay, Hauxley Reserve and Holy Island.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

14 were at Fenham Flats on 14th (STH), ten at Ladyburn Lake on 4th (JSB/EC), nine off Druridge Pools on 11th (PRM), and seven to eight at the Blyth Estuary (DM/LJM), Budle Bay (CGK), Spittal Point (BWG) and Stag Rocks (where display was noted; MH/AA). Three to five were also at Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Howick-Dunstanburgh, Newbiggin, off Ross Back Sands and the Tweed Estuary, and one to two at Amble, Druridge Pools, Hadston Carrs, the Wansbeck Estuary and Widdrington Moor Lake, while one was on the River Tweed at Paxton House on 17th (BWG).

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

One flew S at Tynemouth on 20th (DRW). Moderate counts included ten at Wylam bridge on 18th (AA), five to six at Close House (JMA), Newcastle Leazes Park (DM), Ridley Stokoe (PRM) and West Ord (MHu), and three to four at Airy Holm Reservoir, Branton GP, Derwent Reservoir, Newcastle Exhibition Park and the Tweed Estuary. One to two were also at Cresswell and Duke's Ponds, Jesmond Dene and Wark. More unusual was one at Backworth on 28th (CGK).

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

Three were at Alnwick Moor on 3rd (JMA).

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

Two males were near Yont the Cleugh (Coanwood) and also near Dykes Farm (Coanwood) on 8th (EC/JSB) with a single also in the Coanwood area on 27th.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

16 were at Backworth on 28th (CGK). Chare Ends (Holy Island) regularly held up to 13 throughout the month (IK) and 12 were at Holy Island causeway on 4th (JMA). Eight were seen at Druridge Hamlet on 31st (IRD) and one to five were at several other localities.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

A large count of 25 males and five females was made at Whitfield (JMA), four males were at Plenmeller on 16th and one to two were at Eachwick and Holywell Dene.

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

The total for the month at Seaton Sluice was 15 N and 15 S in 17 hours of sea-watching (SSWT). 12 were offshore in Druridge Bay on 11th (PRM), five were in Holy Island Harbour on 13th (IK) and four were found during a BTO NEWS count from Howick-Dunstanburgh on 9th (MJC). Four were also off North Blyth on 11th (PRM) and one to three birds were at many other coastal localities, including two river sightings – Blyth Harbour on 9th (STH) and the River Tyne (Low Lights) on 13th (DRW).

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*

Singles were at East Chevington North Pool on 3rd and 4th (ADM/AB/LB/TRD), just offshore at North Blyth on 11th (PRM) and in Holy Island Harbour on 13th (IK).

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

Two flew S past Castle Point (Holy Island) on 6th (IK) and one flew S past Seaton Sluice on 28th (SSWT). At least five were present at Ross Back Sands (four on the sea and one flying S) on 28th (JL), two were at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 8th (MH/AA) and a single gave great views at close range off East Chevington on 6th (TF/JFa). Singles were also at Holy Island (SR) on 14th and, unusually, inland at Widdrington Lane (IRD) and Widdrington Moor Lake (CBD/TF/JFa) on 30th-31st.

The Widdrington Moor Lake
Great Northern Diver

Chris Barlow

30th December



Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

At Seaton Sluice the maximum count was 45 S on 30th, with single-figure numbers of local birds on other days (SSWT). Birds returning to their nesting cliffs, mainly during fine weather, included 25 at Snab Point (Cresswell) on 29th (GB), 20 at Coves Bay (Holy Island) on 31st (IK) and 14 at Tynemouth Priory on 13th (DRW). Ten were recorded during a BTO NEWS Count from Howick-Dunstanburgh on 9th (MJC) and one to two were at Bamburgh Castle Crags, East Chevington and Stag Rocks.

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

The peak counts at Seaton Sluice were 27 N and 31 S between 28th-30th with very few recorded on other dates (SSWT). 20 were feeding offshore at Castle Point (Holy Island) on 6th with four also there on 20th (IK). Two immatures were feeding just off the pier at Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 6th (MHu) and two flew N past East Chevington on 28th (GB).

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

The largest count was 69 on staithes at North Shields Low Lights on 20th (DRW), followed by a peak of 67 in Blyth Harbour on 23rd (STH). Other good-sized groups were 47 at North Shields Fish Quay on 14th (SPP), 22 during a WeBS count at Berwick North Shore on 9th (MHu) and 21 in Amble Harbour on 16th (IF). Whittle Dene Reservoirs held 12 birds on 13th (SR) and ten were at Big Waters NWT on 5th (GB). One to eight were at many other localities. Two birds of the continental *sinensis* race were at North Shields Fish Quay on 14th (SPP) and a single was at Holywell Pond on 10th (STH).

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Seaton Sluice Watch Tower recorded single-figure movement on most days with a peak of three N and 14 S on 29th (SSWT). At least 100 were at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 3rd (BRS), the peak for the month at that location, and over 40 were offshore at Ross Back Sands on 28th (JL). A BTO NEWS Count found 19 between Howick-Dunstanburgh on 9th MJC), seven were at Spittal Bay (Berwick) on 1st (MHu) and one to six were at several other locations. A single bird in Blyth Harbour was the first seen there by the observer for almost three years and, being colour-ringed Green NRB, was confirmed ringed as a chick on Inner Farne in summer 2015 (STH).

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

Possibly up to three individuals were suspected to be present at Gosforth Park throughout the month. However no more than one was seen at any time (NHSN/GPK/MH).



An alert Bittern at Gosforth NR by Mike Potts on 6th December

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Eight were in a field adjacent to the Horton Burn at Boghouses (Cramlington) on 6th (LJM). Elsewhere only low numbers recorded with one to two birds at Budle Bay, Castle Island, Cocklawburn, Fenham-le-Moor, Lindisfarne NNR, the Wansbeck Estuary and Widdrington Moor Lake. A single on a flooded field at Abbey Mill (Morpeth) on 7th was colour-ringed – red left leg, yellow right leg (ADMc).

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Howdon Wetland peaked at 17 on 4th (CB) and 13 were at the Tweed Estuary during a WeBS count on 11th (MHu). Seven were on staithes at North Blyth on 7th (STH) and five at Druridge Pools on 11th (PRM). One to four were at many other localities.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

The peak at East Chevington was five on 17th (STH) with five also at Cresswell Pond NWT on 31st (CDB). Four were at Castle Island (River Wansbeck) on 13th and one to three birds were at several other typical localities.



A Little Grebe at Druridge Pools
by Chris Barlow on 31st December

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Passage at Seaton Sluice included one S on 7th and one S on 16th (SSWT). Whittle Dene Reservoirs held a peak of three birds on 6th (SR) and a single was at still present at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd, unusual for the site at this time of year (IFo).

Red-Necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

A single was at Holy Island on 31st (AJR).

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

Five were in Holy Island Harbour on 27th (SR) and two at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 8th (MH/AA). Singles were at Budle Bay, East Chevington, Ross Back Sands and Widdrington Moor Lake.

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Only one record this month with a bird circling fields south of Delaval Hall from Holywell Dene on 20th (RJP)

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Sightings of a female came from East Chevington on 6th, 27th and 28th (TF/JFa/MSH)

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

On the 19th a ringtail male was noted at a confidential site (MH) and an adult male was hunting at The Snook (Holy Island) (IK).

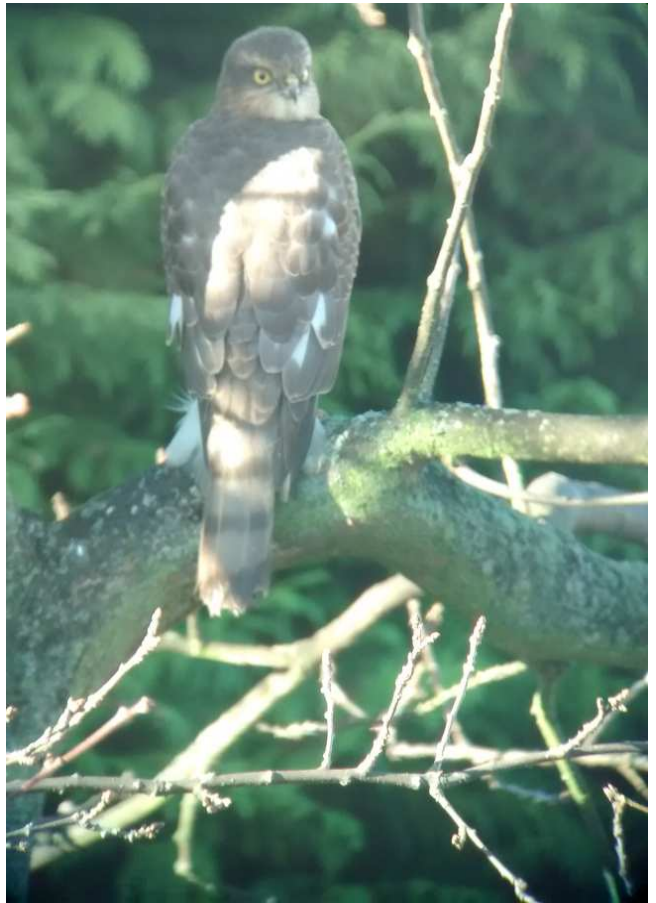
Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

A juvenile was hunting around Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa* pens on a moor on 22nd (MH/AA).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Two birds were at Howdon on 6th (CB), Holy Island and Ellington on 20th (ADM/TB) a single bird was noted at Backworth on several dates (CGK) and other single birds were noted at 18 further sites.

A Sparrowhawk in a Kenton Garden
31st December
Mike Smith

**Common Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*

Four birds were at Prestwick Carr on 2nd (IK) and two birds were at Happy Valley (Wooler) on 27th (MJC) and at Whemley (Longhorsley) on 29th (AB/LB). Singles were at Bothal Pond, Choppington, Corbridge, Grindon Lough, Harpers Heugh (nr Budle Bay), Linton, Newcastle (Chapel House) and West Chevington.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Four plus birds were at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN) and two plus were at Swallow Pond (Wallsend) (CGK/GPK *et al.*) throughout the month. Two birds were also noted at Howdon on 6th (CB), Cresswell Pond on 7th & 10th (MSH/DM/LJM) and Holywell Pond also on 10th (STH). Single birds were also heard or seen at Big Waters, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Howdon, and Prestwick Carr and at River Blyth Estuary.

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

The highest count was 24 birds at Druridge Bay CP on 8th (LJM) with 15 birds there on 13th (JMA), 14 birds were at Hauxley NWT on 16th (HRS). Nine birds were at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) and at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 15th (DM) and at QEII CP eight birds were noted on 13th (CDH). One to seven birds were also at Castle Island, Dunstanburgh, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Jesmond Dene, Leazes Park (Newcastle), QEII CP and Rothbury.

Coot *Fulica atra*

At QEII CP on 13th 332 birds were counted (CDH). 42 birds were seen at Big Waters NWT on 13th (GB) and 29 were at QEII CP on 3rd (JMA), 20 were at Bothal Pond on 27th (TD) and 14 were at Gosforth Park NR throughout the month (NHSN). 12 birds were at Exhibition Park on 4th (GB) and 15th & 21st (DM). One to eight birds were at Big Waters, Cocklawburn Pond, Druridge Bay CP, East Chevington, Leazes Park (Newcastle), Linton, QEII CP & St Mary's Wetland.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Two counts in the Berwick area recorded 153 at both sites (North Shore and Magdalene Fields GC) on the same day i.e. 9th (MHu/BWG). Further good coastal counts included 140 at St Mary's on 27th (CGK) and 130 between Howick-Dunstanburgh on 9th (MJC). The peak on the R. Blyth Estuary was 76 on 20th (LJM) and further gatherings included 70 at Cresswell Pond on 30th (CDB), 68 at Cocklawburn on 23rd (MHu), 50 from Holy Island causeway on 4th (JMA), 46 at Stag Rocks on 21st (BRS), 35 at Amble Links on 13th (JMA), 29 between Snook Point-Newton Haven (Low Newton) on 31st (TD), 25 on the R. Tweed Estuary on 11th (MHu) and one to ten at five further coastal spots.

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

Low Newton attracted the largest group this month, with ca.1,500 in the Flash and fields area on 31st (TD). Further flocks included 500 at Amble harbour on 16th (IF) and 400 at the R. Blyth Estuary on 10th (LJM), Corbridge on 13th (AJH) and Prestwick Carr on 29th (PCF); 250 were seen at both Laverock Hall (Blyth) on 9th (TB) and Hauxley NWT on 16th (HRS). Elsewhere, 60-85 were noted at Bothal Pond, Boulmer and East Chevington and one to 16 at Big Waters, Cresswell Pond, Grindon Lough, Howick-Dunstanburgh and Linden Hall.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

A total of 18 at Boulmer was considered a high count at this site on 29th (TRD/JD) and 16 were seen in Budle Bay on 17th (CGK). The Berwick area held nine at the North Shore on 9th (MHu/BWG) and four at Little Beach on 3rd (BWG). The R. Blyth Estuary held a maximum of four on 13th (STH/DM) and a single was logged at Tynemouth on 29th (GPK).

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

Some large wintering flocks were reported this month, the highest being 680 at Cresswell Pond on 21st (IRD), closely followed by 600+ in Budle Bay on 17th/29th (CGK/MSH). Counts of 500 came from a ploughed field at Brunton Bridge (Gosforth) on 15th (IK) and Prestwick Carr on 27th/29th (PCF). Totals of 100-210 were also reached at Alnmouth, Big Waters, Bothal Pond, the R. Coquet Estuary, Druridge Pools, High Hauxley, Howdon, New Water Haugh (R. Tweed), QEII CP, the R. Tweed Estuary, R. Tyne (Lemington) and St Mary's Island, and 111 moved S at Seaton Sluice between 15th-29th. Reports of ten to 85 came in from a further eleven sites.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

The R. Blyth Estuary held 38 on 13th (STH/DM) and 35 were seen at East Chevington on 23rd (TRD/JD). Further coastal totals included 26 at Cocklawburn on 3rd (MHu), 18 at St Mary's on 27th (CGK) and 11-12 at Berwick Little Beach, Chevington Burn Mouth and between Howick-Dunstanburgh.

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Some 206 birds were seen feeding in fields from the Harper's Heugh (near Budle Bay) pull-in on 29th (MSH) and 165 was a good total at St Mary's on 27th (CGK). Hauxley NWT held 120 on 16th (HRS) and 25-66 were seen at Berwick North Shore, Cocklawburn, Cresswell Pond, Elwick, Gloucester Lodge (Blyth), Howick-Dunstanburgh, the R. Blyth and R. Tweed Estuaries and Warkworth (Northfield). Some three to ten were reported from six more locales.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

The R. Blyth Estuary continues to hold birds with three noted on 10th/20th (LJM/DM). Cresswell Pond also hosted three on 6th, one on 15th and two on 20th (ADMc).

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Some 100 were noted from Holy Island causeway on 4th (JMA) and a count in Budle Bay numbered 32 on 17th (CGK). The Hauxley NR held 30 on 13th (JMA) and the R. Blyth Estuary attracted a maximum of six on 29th (GB).

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Berwick North Shore held 43 on 9th (MHu) and Tynemouth 42 on 8th (PCF). BTO coastal counts revealed 38 in four sections between Howick and Dunstanburgh on 9th (MJC) and 22 from Snook Point to Newton Haven on 31st (TD). Elsewhere 30 were at Brier Dene on 14th (JMA) and 27 at North Blyth staithes on 7th (STH). At Hadston Carrs 14 were noted on 17th and small numbers appeared in the Cocklawburn area, R. Tweed Estuary and Whitley Bay.



A Turnstone at Craster
by Mike Carr on 9th December

Knot *Calidris canutus*

One at Cresswell Pond on 23rd (TF/JFa) and 28th (GB) are the only reports.

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

Singles were noted at Cresswell Pond on 6th to 8th, 20th, 28th and 30th (ADMc/MJC/MSH *et al.*).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

A flock at Chevington Burn mouth numbered 80 on 4th (AB/LB) and 60 on 28th (MJCo) and at Holy Island 70 were in Sandham Bay on 10th (IK). The peak at St Mary's was 45 on 27th, up to 20-30 were in the Berwick/R Tweed Estuary areas and at Whitley Bay and six at Hadston Carrs.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

The Blyth area held the most: 220 in R Blyth Estuary on 13th (STH/DM) and 133 roosted on the staithes on 7th (STH). Early in the month Cresswell Pond attracted 46-60 on 7th (MSH/TRD) and 30 were at Berwick on 3rd. At Tynemouth, 25 on the Spanish Battery Rocks on 18th included one in full breeding plumage (SPP). Small numbers appeared at Cocklawburn and St Mary's.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

The top count at Stag Rocks reached 109 on 8th (MH/AA) and 70+ were there on 21st (BRS); 24 were counted at Newton Haven at high water on 21st and 16 were seen between Howick and Dunstanburgh on 9th. Nine or fewer occupied, mostly regular, stations at Berwick, Cocklawburn, Holy Island, North Blyth, Seaton Sluice and St Mary's.



A Purple Sandpiper at Craster
by Mike Carr on 9th December

Grey Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius*

One was feeding off the pier at Berwick Meadow Haven on 6th (MHu/BWG).

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Three were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 21st (SR) and one at Big Waters on 13th (GB).

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

At least 300 were in Budle Bay on 29th (CGK), whilst 287 and 288 were counted at Howdon on 13th and 27th respectively (CB) and 278 roosted on the staithes at North Blyth on 7th (STH). The WeBS at R Tweed Estuary resulted in 83 on 11th and the peak at Cresswell Pond was 81 on 4th. Fewer than 26 occurred at another 13 locations, including one inland at Grindon Lough on 31st.

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyrtus minimus*

One was seen regularly throughout at Backworth (CGK/GPK). Other singletons appeared at West Hartford on 7th (STH), Howdon on 16th sunning on the edge of a flooded reedbed (CB) and at Callerton Pond on 17th (MHu).

Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus*

The first-winter found in November remained in Druridge Bay all month, mostly at Cresswell Pond but also at Druridge Pools on 6th and 31st (ADMc *et al.*).

The Long-billed Dowitcher
Cresswell Pond
Tim Dean
7th December



Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

The only record concerns one flushed near Seaton Sluice Watch Tower in the early morning of 16th.

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

A total of 87 were on three flashes near Callerton Pond on 17th (MH) and the most at Cresswell Pond was 54 on 7th (TRD). Other peak counts were of 25+ at St Mary's Wetland on 10th, 16 at Backworth on 23rd, 13 sunning on the edge of a flooded reedbed at Howdon on 13th, ten at Prestwick Carr on 29th, nine at Big Waters on 12th and eight at Longhorsley Moor on 6th. One to two recorded at another nine sites.

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

A total of five flew N at Seaton Sluice on 28th/29th (SSWT). Also on 29th one landed on the outer rocks at Snab Point then flew S (GB/LAR).

Auk *sp*

Only small numbers were recorded from the Seaton Sluice watch point (SSWT).

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

On 28th, two flew S at Seaton Sluice (SSWT).

Razorbill *Alca torda*

Six flew N in one hour at Castle Point (Holy Island) on 6th (IK) and 14 were counted on 9th during a BTO NEWS (Non-estuarine Waterbirds Survey) on four sections from Howick-Dunstanburgh (MJC). Elsewhere one-two were at Bamburgh, Stag Rocks (BRS).

Little Auk *Alle alle*

One flew S at Seaton Sluice on 7th (SSWT) and one was found during the NEWS from Howick-Dunstanburgh on 9th (MJC).

Guillemot *Uria aalge*

The NEWS count on 9th from Howick-Dunstanburgh recorded 23 (MJC) and 20+ and 10 were at Bamburgh Stag Rocks on 3rd (BRS) and 17th (CGK) and respectively. One-seven were noted at Berwick (Meadow Haven), Blyth Harbour, Druridge Bay, Low Newton, North Blyth and Tynemouth (TD/PCF/STH/MHu/PRM) on dates throughout the month.

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

At Seaton Sluice, 23 moved S from 28th-30th but otherwise few were recorded there (SSWT) and on 6th, 26 fed off the pier at Berwick Meadow Haven (MHu) and ten were feeding offshore at Castle Point (Holy Island) on the same day (IK). A single bird moved S at Boulmer on 29th (TRD/JD).

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Well reported with maximum counts of 874 from a WeBS survey in the River Tweed Estuary on 11th (MHu) and a similar number, 850, at Budle Point on 17th (CGK). Five other localities, Jesmond Dene, Prestwick Carr, QE II CP Lake, the River Tyne (Elswick Wharf-Newcastle Business Park) and Widdrington held concentrations of 100-300 (JMA/MJCo/PCF/CDH/DM) and 25-100 were widespread elsewhere at Berwick (North Shore), Bothal Pond, Caistron, Castle Island, Druridge Pools, Elwick, Exhibition Park, Howick-Dunstanburgh, Kiln Pit Hill, Leazes Park, Milfield and Sandy Bay.

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

Three adults passed S at Seaton Sluice on 30th (SSWT) and three adults were noted offshore earlier in the month on 6th at East Chevington (TF/JFa).

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

The numbers recorded were much reduced this month and at Seaton Sluice only four adults, heading S at dusk to roost, were noted (SSWT). Two adults, one of which was the Danish-ringed bird, white ZNV reported last month, were seen throughout at Swallow Pond (GPK/SPP *et al.*) but elsewhere only single adult birds were noted from Big Waters, Cresswell Pond, Holy Island, Newbiggin and St Mary's Island.

Common Gull *Larus canus*

The gull roost at Budle Point held an impressive 6,700+ on 17th (CGK) but numbers elsewhere were similar to previous December totals; 50-150 were counted in the Fontburn area, Milfield, Otterburn Mill, the River Tweed Estuary and Widdrington (JMA/TD/MHu) with up to 20 at six other widespread localities.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

One near-adult moved S at Seaton Sluice on 19th (SSWT) and the wintering adult was again seen at Cramlington, Northumberland Business Park on 28th (DM). Singles were also near North Seaton and on the Tyne at Elswick Wharf (DM).

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argentatus*

A WeBS survey in the River Tweed Estuary on 11th recorded 680 (MHu) with elsewhere, gatherings of 200 at Hebron on 17th (JMA), 190 (90% immatures) at the QE II CP Lake on 13th (CDH), 150+ in the Budle Point roost on 17th (CGK), 80+ on the River Tyne from Elswick Wharf-Business Park (DM), 56 at Berwick, North Shore on 9th (MHu), 40 at Druridge Pools on 31st (CDB) and 33 at Cramlington on 28th (DM). The NEWS count from Howick-Dunstanburgh recorded 31 on the 9th (MJC) and up to 30 were at six other localities.

Northern race birds, *argentatus*, numbered 12 adults at Druridge Bay CP Ladyburn Lake on 17th and a single adult at North Blyth on 11th (PRM).

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoideus*

An adult moved N at Seaton Sluice on 23rd (SSWT) and a first-winter (?) bird was in the Bell's Farm/Hemscott Hill area on 28th (TRD/JD/TF/JFa).

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

A first-winter roosted on the pier wall at Tynemouth on 19th (SPP) and on the following day it was seen again, firstly on the Tynemouth Boating Lake and later at the pier (DRW).

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

At the Seaton watch tower 165 flew S in two hours on 19th (SSWT) and at Big Waters on 27th, 41 moved over SW/W during the morning, none stopping on the reserve (GB). The largest counts elsewhere were 79 recorded during the BTO NEWS survey from Howick-Dunstanburgh on 9th (MJC), 31 from the WEBS survey in the River Tweed Estuary on 11th (MHu), 30 at Druridge Bay CP on 17th (JMA) and 25 at Budle Point on 17th (CGK). Up to 10 were at eight other sites.

Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

Blyth Harbour held 89 on 28th (STH).

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

54 at Howdon on 27th with 40 there on 24th (CB), 20 at Big Waters NWT on 5th (GB), seven at West Ord (Berwick) on 17th & 20th with one to four at Arcot Hall (Cramlington), Holywell Dene, Lynemouth and Jesmond Dene.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

Large flocks of 2000 at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 20th (TB), 1000+ at Crow Hall Farm (Holywell Dene) on 19th with 200 there on 10th (MSH), 600+ at Bamburgh on 21st (BRS), 400 at West Hartford on 7th (STH), 360 at Berrington on 10th (MHu), 250 at Haredean (Longhorsley) on 6th (AB/LB), 100 at Close House (Wylam) on 9th (JMA). Four to 75 were at Amble, Gosforth and Jesmond Dene.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

A count of 13 at Wark (N.Tyne) on 15th increased to 15 on 29th (PRM) and six in an Alnwick garden on 10th increased to ten on 15th (JMA) with two at Eachwick on 26th (CDB).

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Two at Fieldhead (Longhorsley) on 6th (AB/LB) and roosting together in a garden at Holy Island on 12th (IK). Singles were at Brunton Bridge on 2nd, Kimmer Lough on 6th, Humshaugh on 10th, Wark Common on 13th, Alnwick on 21st, Middleton Hall, Newcastle Airport, Park End (N.Tyne) on 27th, Cresswell, Carrawbrough Farm, Hauxley on 28th, Cresswell Pond and Grindstone Law on 30th. The A1 claimed its final casualty of the year at Seven Mile House (Seaton Burn) on 3rd (TB).



A Barn Owl approaches Mike Carr
Middleton on 27th December

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Two present all month at Shiremoor calling from 6th (CGK) and one at Derwent Reservoir on 1st and 2nd (IFo).

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Seen daily in a Stamfordham garden with a pair sitting together in a nest box there on 3rd (EC). One called intermittently throughout the month in the observer's garden at Fulbeck Morpeth (TD) and one was at Druridge Bay CP on 16th (MJC).



A Tawny Owl in Eddie Crabtree's Stamfordham garden

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

Two or more birds used a North Tyneside roost in hawthorn from 27th till 31st (CGK/GPK).

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Peak counts of four at Holy Island on 4th (IK), three at Prestwick Carr on 13th (PCF) with two there regularly during the month, three at Swallow Pond on 13th (SPP), at East Chevington North Pool on 27th (TB), two at Bamburgh on 8th (MH/AA), Callerton Pond on 17th (MH) and Holy Island on 27th (SR). Singles were at Cresswell and Little Beach (Berwick) regularly and 12 other widespread locations. A first-winter bird was found dead on the tide line at Holy Island on 19th (IK) but at least four others remained.

One of the popular Short-eared Owls
St. Mary's
by Alan Jack on 29th December

**Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis*

Two were found at Jesmond Dene on 15th (MJCo) with singles there regularly (with both male and female noted DHWB) and at Holywell Dene and Gosforth Park NR (CGK/GPK/NHSN). Singles were also at Branton GP on 2nd, Cresswell Pond NWT and Alnmouth on 4th, Wark (N.Tyne) on 6th, Swallow Pond on 18th, Newton Pool on 21st and East Chevington on 23rd.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

On 15th two were at Jesmond Dene (MJCo), in a Tynemouth garden on 20th (CB) with singles in an Old Hartley garden during the month and nearby Holywell Dene on 10th (RJP). Single were also at Alexandra Park (Cramlington) and West Chevington on 6th, Valley Park (Cramlington) on 10th & 14th, Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 15th, Cresswell Pond NWT on 16th, Matfen Hall on 19th Southfield Green (Cramlington) and Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 20th and Eachwick on 26th.

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Four were on Holy Island on 20th (ADM). Two birds were displaying at Low Horton (Blyth) on 23rd (LJM) and two birds were also seen at Happy Valley (Wooler) on 27th (MJC) and at Tyne Riverside CP (Prudhoe) on 28th (PRM). Singles were also recorded at 23 sites.



A kestrel hovers at St. Mary's
Alan Jack

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Three birds were noted in different areas on Holy Island on 7th (IK) and two were in Budle Bay on 17th (CGK). Singles were at Chapel House (Newcastle), Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Fenham Mill, Hemscott Hill (Cresswell), Kirknewton, River Tweed Estuary, Tyne Riverside CP (Prudhoe) and at Wooperton.



A Merlin at Hemscott Hill
by Chris Barlow on 13th December

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

At Harpers Heugh (near Budle Bay) a pair were chasing Feral Pigeons *Columbia livia* on 22nd (MH/AA). All other sightings involved single birds at Big Waters NWT, Bothal Pond, Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond, Fenham-le-Moor, Fontburn, Howdon, Kingston Park (Newcastle), Plessey Woods CP, River Blyth Estuary, Ross Back Sands and Swallow Pond (Wallsend).

Magpie *Pica pica*

A high count of 22 at Beaconhill (Cramlington) on 23rd (STH), 14 at Mickley Square on 19th (DLe), five at Jesmond Dene on 6th, four at Gosforth on 23rd and a pair at Rothbury on 9th.

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Gosforth Park NR had a peak of four during the month (NHSN), with two at Arcot Hall GC, Eschott, Haughton Castle, and Newburn Business Park all on 13th and two at Gosforth on 23rd. Singles were seen daily in a Stamfordham garden and at Arcot Lane, Big Waters, Ellington, Havannah NR, Jesmond Dene, Kielder Forest and Prudhoe.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

Some large pre-roost gatherings with 2,000 at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN), 1,500 at Eglington on 19th (MH), 1,200+ at Budle Bay on 17th (CGK), 1,000 at Big Waters on 5th (GB) and 892 (counted off a photograph) at Red House Farm on 21st (CDB). 100 to 500 were at Coanwood Common, Elwick, Grindon, Newbiggin and Warkworth with two to 75 at seven other widespread localities.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

500 were at Northfield (Warkworth) on 3rd (JMA), 250 at Budle Bay on 17th (CGK), and 100 at Elwick on 4th, Wooden & Chillingham on 6th, Grindon Lough on 16th and Hebron on 17th (JMA). 80 were at Fontburn on 23rd, 75 at Warkworth on 13th and 50 at Kiln Pit Hill on 15th.

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

A pre-roost gathering of 70 at Budle Bay on 17th (CGK), 34 at Fenham-le-Moor on 14th (STH), 10 at Longwitton on 17th (JMA) and seven at Jesmond Dene on 15th (MJCo).

Hooded Crow *Corvus corone cornix*

One was at Cresswell Pond NWT on 16th (MSH).

Raven *Corvus corax*

Two appear resident at Holy Island this month (IK) with one at Blakehopeburnhaugh (Kielder Forest) on 27th (TRD/JD) and Holburn on 29th (MJC).

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Two at Prestwick Carr on 13th (PCF), Jesmond Dene on 15th (MJCo), Gosforth on 23rd (CDB), Valley Park (Cramlington) on 25th (DM) and Tyne Riverside CP (Prudhoe) on 28th (PRM). Singles were also at Arcot Pond, R.Blyth Estuary and East Chevington.

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

A high count of six at Fawdon on 21st, five at Eachwick on 26th and three at Gosforth on 23rd (CDB) with one in Jesmond Dene on 15th (MJCo).



A Blue Tit at Howdon Wetland by Colin Bradshaw

Great Tit *Parus major*

Six at Jesmond Dene on 15th (MJCo) and Eachwick on 26th with four at Gosforth on 23rd (CDB). An unusual winter sighting was two regularly in gardens at Holy Island (IK) with two at Fawdon on 21st (CDB) and a singing male at Coldwell on 13th (SW).



A Great Tit at Howdon Wetland by Colin Bradshaw

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

An Old Hartley Garden held up to four during the month (RJP), two at Howdon on 13th (CB) and Jesmond Dene on 15th (MJCo) with singles at Eachwick and Gosforth.



A Coal Tit at Howdon Wetland by Colin Bradshaw

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

Two regularly at Prestwick Carr during the first half of the month (GB/PCF) and at Tyne Riverside CP (Newburn) on 22nd (SR), Linton Ponds on 23rd (TF/JFa) and Eshott on 31st (MSH). Singles were also at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 6th, Holywell Dene on 14th, at Big Waters feeding station on 27th having been ringed there (GB), Backworth on 28th and Prestwick Carr on 29th.

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

On 6th two were at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) and Thrum Mill (Rothbury) (NFO/TRD/JD) with singles at Spindlestone on 3rd, Rothbury on 22nd and Linden Hall on 24th.

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

A high count of 27 at Beacon Lane (Cramlington) on 13th (LJM), eight at St Mary's on 27th (CGK), three at Beacon Hill (Cramlington) on 13th (DM), two at Big Waters NWT on the same date and one at Snab Point (Cresswell) on 29th (GB).

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

Up to 15 were noted in a garden at Fulbeck (Morpeth) during the month (TD) and 15 were also at Leazes Park on 21st (DM). Counts of 11-12 came from Backworth, Cramlington (Southfield Green), Lynemouth Dene, Rothbury and Whitley Bay Metro and ten were at Alnwick, Exhibition Park and Humshaugh. Eight to nine were reported from Cramlington (Valley Park), East Ord (Berwick), Holywell Dene, Prestwick Carr and Tynemouth with five to seven were at East Chevington, Longbenton, Prudhoe and Tweedmouth. One to four were noted at a further five localities.



One of the families of Long-tailed Tits reported on 20th December
This attractive group were feeding in Tim Dene's Rothbury garden

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

A singing male was heard briefly at Prudhoe (Tyne Riverside CP) on 28th (PRM) and one was at Tynemouth on 29th (SPP).

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

A female/juvenile visited a garden in Morpeth on 19th (AB/LB) and a male was seen at Gosforth Garden Village on 26th and 28th (MJC).



A Blackcap at a Gosforth feeder
by Mike Carr on 31st December

Waxwing *Bombus garrulous*

The flock reported in November at Ashington (Woodhorn Motors) numbered nine on 1st (MJC), ten on 2nd (PRM) and peaked at 12 on 6th (TB); they were not seen subsequently (TB). Elsewhere, seven were at the Blyth Estuary (IF) and six, (probably the same) at Blyth Riverside Industrial Estate (AJ) on 24th, five were at Heaton on 12th (CB) and one at Wark (North Tyne) on 15th (PRM).



A Waxwing by Alan Janes
Blyth on 24th December

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Three were noted at Jesmond Dene and Wydon Eals, two at Arcot Hall GC, Eachwick and Holywell Dene and singles at Coldwell (North Tyne), Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Rothbury and Spindleston.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Up to five were noted at Gosforth Park NR during the month (NHSN). Two were reported from Backworth, Druridge Bay CP, Havannah NR and Jesmond Dene and singles from Big Waters, Ellington and Rothbury.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Six were noted at Callerton Pond on 17th (MH), while singles were reported from Eachwick, Gosforth and Jesmond Dene.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

The evening roost at East Chevington numbered c.4,300 on 17th (PRM). Some 2,000 roosted at Big Waters on 5th (GB) and 1,000 flew from SE over Chapel House at dawn on 27th (MH). Elsewhere, counts included 500+ at Druridge on 2nd, 300-307 at Cresswell Pond, Fawdon and Prestwick Carr, 200 at QEII CP and 150 at Elwick; 20-80 were reported from a further six localities.

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

Six were at Middleton (Wooler) on 27th (MJC) and three in Jesmond Dene on 15th (MJCo). Up to two were reported from Holywell Dene and singles at Bywell, Park Burnfoot (South Tyne) and Prudhoe.

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

The only reports were 12 at Howdon on 13th (CB), eight in an Alnwick garden, three males at Eachwick on 26th and two at Jesmond Dene on 6th.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

Larger gatherings were 320 at Fenham-le-Moor on 14th (STH) and 110 at West Ord (Berwick) on 17th-20th (BWG/MHu). Elsewhere the species was scarce with 30-35 at Bellasis Bridge, Cheeseburn and Swallow Pond, 20-25 at Gosforth Park NR and Hebron, 15 at Dilston (Corbridge) and 13 at Arcot Pond. In addition four were noted at Widehope and singles at Berwick and Corbridge.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

One to two (some in full song) were reported from Brandling Park (Newcastle), Brunswick Village, Corbridge, Cramlington, Howdon, Jesmond Dene, Leazes Park and Tynemouth (Prior Park).

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

120 at Corbridge Common on 19th was the largest gathering (DLe); 60 were at West Ord (Berwick) on 17th (MHu) and 50+ at Arcot Pond on 13th (LJM). Counts of 20 came from Cheeseburn, Haughton Mains and Longhirst, 12 were at Corbridge, three at Gosforth, two at Jesmond Dene and a single at Howdon.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

A total of eight were in Jesmond Dene on 6th (MJCo). On 27th, seven were noted at Low Horton (Blyth), four singing males were at Happy Valley (Wooler), three were at Big Waters and two at Leazes Park. Two were also noted at Ashington, Corbridge, Exhibition Park and Gosforth, with singles at Kielder Water, Prudhoe, Shiremoor and Stamfordham.



A Mistle Thrush at Gosforth by Chris Barlow

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Six were on Holy Island on 20th (ADM) and four at Jesmond Dene on 15th. Three were singing after dark under Bamburgh's Xmas lights on 17th (CGK) and one was a Eachwick on 26th.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

A male was at Holy Island (Castle Point) on 6th (IK), while other singles were reported from St Mary's Island on 12th (DRW) and Tynemouth Pier from 13th-29th (DRW/GPK/KWY/SPP). A female/first-winter was at Holy Island (east shore) on 20th (ADM).



A Black Redstart at Tynemouth
by Mike Potts
16th December

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

Peak counts were five from Budle Bay-Bamburgh on 17th (CGK), three at Cocklawburn on 15th (BWG/MHu) and at East Chevington on 16th-17th (TRD/PRM), two at Berwick (Little Beach) on 7th, Cresswell Pond on 10th, Druridge Pools on 28th, Hauxley on 16th and Prestwick Carr on 2nd, and singles at Hepburn Moor, Lynemouth, Seaton Sluice and Tynemouth.

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

One to two attended gardens through the month at Old Hartley and Marden. One was at Eachwick on 26th.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

60 was the peak count this month at Whittle Dene on 6th (SR), with 50 noted at feeders in gardens at Beaconhill, (Cramlington) on 9th and at Whitley Bay sea front on 14th (STH/JMA). Up to 40 in a Marden Estate garden during the month (ASJ). 21 was the monthly peak in an Eachwick garden, with ten in a Gosforth Village Garden. 20 at Pier Head, Berwick. Three on feeders in Tynemouth.

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

Berwick on 9th held two encouraging large flocks of around 140 and 120 at High and Low Cocklaw (BWG). 40 noted at Fieldhead (Longhorsley) on 6th and 30+ at Eshott on 31st (AB/LB/MHS). 25+ were at Ladyburn Lake on 8th (LJM). 13 at garden feeders at Linden Hall on 5th, increased to 16 by 26th (NFO). One to 12 were seen at 14 further sites.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Two birds at Big Waters and Wark in the month and singles observed at 12 other sites.

A Grey Wagtail
Tynemouth
Mike Potts
16th December

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

A notable count was made at Prestwick Carr on 16th of 31 birds (PCF). 15 noted feeding in a sheep field at Shipley (Alnwick) on 6th (MH). Ten were feeding at East Chevington burn mouth on 28th (GB), with eight + at Gosforth Park during December. One to four were noted at five further sites.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

37 feeding in a Kale/sheep field at Shipley (Alnwick) on 6th was the month's peak count (MH). 26 were at Prestwick Carr on 13th (PCF) and 20 in stubble at Big Waters on 13th (GB). One to ten at six other lowland sites during the month.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

A count from Howick to Dunstanburgh revealed 18 birds present on 9th (MJC). Seven seen at Low Newton on 31st (TD). Elsewhere, three were at St Mary's, Blyth South Harbour and Tynemouth during the month, with two at North Blyth and a single at Fenham le Moor.



A Rock Pipit at Tynemouth by Chris Barlow

Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta*

A bird was found at East Chevington beach pool on 13th (CBD) and one was at nearby Druridge Links on 15th (DE), with this or another at a pool along the old coal road in this area on 23rd (TFa/JFa). On 16th and 17th, two birds were present together in this area, also observed at the two sites above (TRD/PRM/STH).

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

A flock of at least 50, possibly as many as 70, was watched at Middleton Hall on 27th (MJC). Elsewhere, singles were seen at four further sites.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

100 were at Longwitton on 17th, with 25 at Elsdon that day and ten at Alnwick Moor on 3rd (JMA). At Haughton Castle, 50 were feeding in stubble on 13th (SW). 24 on feeders at East Ord (Berwick) that day (MHu). One to twelve were noted at five further sites.



A cock Chaffinch at Howdon Wetlands by Colin Bradshaw

Bullfinch *Pyrrula pyrrula*

Eleven were at Tyne Riverside C.P. (Newburn) on 22nd (SR). Ten were seen at North Seaton (Ashington) on 13th (DM). Up to seven birds visited an Old Hartley garden during the month (RJP). One to seven were noted at a further 22 widespread sites in the month, including several at garden feeders.

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

15 was the peak count attending a Gosforth Garden Village garden during December (MJC). One to seven were at six other sites.

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

110 were found at Boulmer on 29th (TRD/JD) and 75 at Stag Rocks on 17th (CGK). On 27th 40 were noted at Brenkley Drift (Blagdon)(GB) with 37 at Tynemouth on 8th (PCF). 29-34 at St Mary's on several dates and 25 at Fenham le Moor on 14th and at Hemscott Hill on 19th (ASJ/STH) and 12 at Druridge Pools on 31st.

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*

50 seen at Fenham le Moor on 14th was the peak count made during the month (STH). 44 were noted on the beach at East Chevington burn mouth on 18th was the highest of several counts here with 23 seen here on 17th and 16 also on 18th, 12 on 19th and eight on 13th (JSB/EC/RM/AB/LB *et al.*). 40 were just north of Druridge Pools on 31st (CBD). 19 at Fenham Mill on 13th and 25 at Fenham Flats on 14th, were possibly the same flock (IK/MH/AA). Six were drinking from puddles at Beal shore car park on 9th (IK).



A Twite at Druridge Pools by Chris Barlow

Redpoll sp. *Carduelis caberet/flammæa*

Three were at Ellington on 13th and two at Morpeth on 29th (TB).

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis caberet*

19 must have been a fine sight at garden feeders at Mickley Square on 19th (DLe). Ten were noted at Ladyburn Lake on 8th (LJM). One to six were at a further five sites.

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

30 at Widehope on 3rd was the month's peak count, with 12 seen at Dipton Wood on 18th (JD/DLe). One to five were at five other sites, including a male at Linden Hall on two dates.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

200 on 20th near Druridge Pools increased to 293 (counted from photograph) by 31st (TD/CDB). A flock at East Chevington was variously counted as 50 - 150 + on several dates. 66 were at Tweedmouth on 10th (BWG) and 48 was the peak at Prestwick Carr on 14th (PCF). 47 were at Cresswell on 19th (ASJ). 35 - 40 at Arcot on 4th and 13th (STH/DM). One to 22 were seen at a further nine sites.



293 Goldfinches fly over Druridge Pools (plus a single Greenfinch!)
by Chris Barlow

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

25 at Wooler on 4th and 22 at Marden Quarry on 20th were the month's high counts (MJC/KWY). Flocks of 20 were seen at West Hartford on 7th, Stag Rocks on 8th and Chevington burnmouth on 17th (STH/MH/AA/PRM). One to ten were at eight further locations.

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Eleven were found on Holy Island on 14th (SR). Singles were seen at Stag Rocks, Druridge Bay C.P. and at Warkworth Gut during the month.

Lapland bunting *Calcarius lapponicus*

One was flushed from the dunes at Chevington burn mouth on 17th (PRM) and two probables flew overhead at Holy Island causeway on 31st (AJR).

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

The largest flock found this winter was thought to contain 100-120 birds feeding with Chaffinches in stubble at New Mousen (Belford) on 22nd (MH/AA). 30 were noted at Football Hole on 31st (TD). 20+ seen at Eshott on 13th (MHS). 14 birds were found at Haughton Castle on 13th (SW). 12 were noted at Longhorsely on 6th and Fenham le Moor on 14th (AB/LB/STH). One to five were at five further sites during the month.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

15 were with Yellowhammers at Football Hole on 31st (TD). Seven at Gosforth Park and five - six at St Mary's throughout the month (NHSN/ASJ). Six noted at Druridge Pools on 31st (CDB). Three seen at Blyth Estuary on 10th (DM/LJM). Singles present at Howdon, Druridge Bay C.P. and East Chevington.

ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN**Escapes****Harris's Hawk** *Parabuteo unicinctus*

One was noted again, this time at Jesmond Dene on 2nd (DHWB)

Hybrids

Aythya hybrid *Aythya sp*

A putative hybrid was seen at Howdon Wetland on 29th (Jbu). The most common of these is Tufted Duck x Pochard but other species are sometimes involved.

One bird remained from last month at Derwent Reservoir from 2nd to 11th (IFo).

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Bamburgh Ringing Society, Berwick Wildlife Group, Natural History Society of Northumbria, North Northumberland Bird Club, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

Apologies for any accidental omissions

BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION

This bulletin was compiled by Graeme Bowman (Mute Swan to Ruddy Duck), Steve Laing (Red Grouse to Black-necked Grebe), Trevor Blake (Honey-buzzard to Crane), Steve Holliday (Avocet to Godwit), Ian Forsyth (Turnstone to Skua), Eddie Crabtree (Puffin to Great Black-backed Gull), Tim Dean (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), Alan Jack (Dunnock to Corn Bunting), Kathy Evans (WeBS Coastal Counts) and Steve Holliday (WeBS Inland Counts).

Thanks to David Sanders of NNBC for providing data.

Proof reading was by Mike Smith. Mail distribution by Paul Stewart.

Edited by Steve Barrett NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com

RECORD SUBMISSION

Please email ntbcorg@gmail.com for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and grid references: The use of standard location names and the include grid references as this 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.

Could club members ensure they submit records direct to NTBC rather than just Birdtrack. There may be an assumption by some members that this happens automatically. We do not want to miss records.

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

It is preferable if you re-size your photos before sending and a suggested size is 640 x 480 pixels. Please ensure you include the following information with your submissions: name, species, date taken, locality.

Photographs will not be used elsewhere without the photographer's permission.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual membership costs £10 for a junior, £30 for an individual, and £32 for a family.

For membership enquiries please contact ntbc@jobentley.plus.com

Membership subscriptions were due at the beginning of October. If you internet bank you can pay online: please include your name in the ref. It is helpful if you email me to let me know when you've made the transfer ntbc@jobentley.plus.com

If you decide to set up a standing order please date the first payment at least a fortnight from your posting date to allow time to process with the bank. You can also set up your standing order directly with your bank if you wish; just let me know.

Finally, if you know anyone who might like to join NTBC please pass on the club information - new members are always welcome.

Jo Bentley - Hon Treasurer

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. Please submit any new content for the website to the main club email address.

NTBC SIGHTINGS PAGE

The Sightings Page contains current reports by members. Access is from the NTBC website and an email notification is available for new postings. Members need to submit a request to be added to the website, specifying the email address they wish to post from before they can submit sightings to ntbcorg@gmail.com



A Stonechat at Seaton Sluice by Alan Jack

COASTAL WEBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND

December 2015

Site	Counter	Date	Berwick North Shore (including Little Beach)		Berwick Little Beach		Tweed Estuary		Tweed: At By Pass to Gainsaw House		Lindisfarne NNR (including Budle Bay)		Budle Pt. - Seahouses		Seahouses - Beadnell		Beadnell - Howick		Howick - Boulmer		Boulmer - Alnmouth		Aln Estuary		Cresswell - Newbiggin		Newbiggin - Cambois		Blyth Estuary		Blyth Estuary - Seaton		St Mary's Island		Whitley Bay - Tynemouth		Tyne North Pier - Fish Quay		East Howdon, (north bank only)		Redbrough - Scotswood Bridge (north bank)		Scotswood - Newbrough Bridge																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																														
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