

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2018 No 1

MONTHLY SUMMARY JANUARY 2018

4th March 2018



CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Tundra Bean Goose	One was found at Budle Bay on 13th plus an un-raced bird at East Chevington on 5th.
American Wigeon	The returning male was again noted at Grindon Lough all month.
Red-crested Pochard	A fine male was present at Leazes Park on 30th.
Black Scoter	The returning drake was again located off Goswick and still present on 25th.
White-billed Diver	One moving N on 6th was seen off eight watch points!
Bittern	Two at Gosforth Park and one at Branton GP.
Rough-legged Buzzard	One was located at Plenmeller Common on 9th and 10th.
Whimbrel	One at Boulmer on 5th represents the first wintering record for the county.
Little Stint	The wintering individual stayed all month at Fenham Flats.
Spotted Redshank	The wintering bird at Budle Bay was seen all month.
Great Grey Shrike	The wintering bird was present at Prestwick Carr all month.
Waxwing	Singles only at East Chevington, Tynemouth and Longhoughton.
Siberian Chiffchaff	One at Northumberland Park, N Shields on 1st.
Firecrest	One still wintering at Northumberland Park, N Shields.
Water Pipit	Up to two at Druridge Pools all month. Also single at Long Nanny estuary on 1st.
Hawfinch	Continued sightings of up to five at Morpeth.
Common Redpoll	Single at Fenham le Moor on 4th.
Lapland Bunting	Five at Beal Point on 21st, a known locality for species.

CONTENTS

Request for BIN 2017 photographs

Notice of new BOU Order information. Note that this bulletin is in this order.

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 is on Thursday 8th March 2018.

David Horsley A sheepish story from the Spanish Steppes

The plains of Castile, Leon and Extremadura are great places for birding, with eagles and vultures coming down from the mountains to feed.



A Red Grouse evades Alan Jack at Brizlee on 20th January

FIELD TRIPS

Contact Steve Anderson seaswan@btinternet.com

April 22nd	Langholm harriers	Steve Anderson	seaswan@btinternet.com
May 20th	Breamish valley upland species	Trevor Blake	trevor1958@live.co.uk
June 16th	Nightjars	Steve Anderson,	seaswan@btinternet.com
August	Waders Alnmouth	to be confirmed	
Sept 23rd	Musselburgh	Steve Anderson	seaswan@btinternet.com
October	Holy island	Trevor Blake	trevor1958@live.co.uk

CLASSIFIED LIST

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

Pale-bellied *hrota* race birds included 200-400 at Beal Point, Lindisfarne NNR on 7th and 13th (TRD/Phi/SSc), 70 N at Ross-Guile Point on 7th (MJC), and 15 at Budle Bay on 13th (PHi/SSc), while 71 dark-bellied *bernicla* race birds were at Holy Island on 14th (MJC).

Red-breasted Goose *Branta ruficollis*

An adult, of unknown origin, was with Greylag Geese at East Chevington on 29th-30th (TD/PHi/CHI).

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

At East Ord, 82 flew S on 8th and 42 S on 14th (MHu). Peak counts were 321 at Grindon Lough on 26th (PRM), 183 at Derwent Reservoir on 5th (IFo), 180 at Big Waters on 21st (GB), 118-137 at the Aln Estuary (MKi) and Hartburn Reservoir (MNC), 54-75 at Castle Island and East Chevington, 23-35 at Branton GP and QEII CP Lake, and 15-16 at Killingworth Lake and Newcastle Leazes Park. Only one was at Bothal Pond (TD).

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Numbers in the Budle Bay-Harper's Heugh varied from 800+ on 1st (MSH), 700 on 8th (CH) to 1,400-1,450 between 12th-19th and 1,150+ on 29th (DF). Four were also at Mousen and singles at East Chevington and QEII CP Lake. Two leucistic birds were at Budle Bay on 8th (DF).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

70 flew N at East Ord on 25th (MHu). 600 were at West Minsteracres on 5th (IFo), 400 at Budle Bay on 19th (DF), 350 at Castron on 20th (JD), 320 at Allerdean on 11th (MHu), 240 at East Holywell (MNC), and 133-136 at Hoppen Kiln and Woodhorn Flashes. Counts of 72-95 came from Cocklawburn, East Chevington and Merryshield Farm (Stocksfield), 23-43 were at Branton GP, Castle Island and Mousen, and two to 11 at Grindon Lough, Plenmeller Common, QEII CP Lake, the Tweed Estuary and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. A neck-collared bird (orange collar NH1) was at West Minsteracres on 11th (IFo) and had been ringed at Blönduós, Iceland on 18th July 2016. On 22nd March 2017 it was noted at Derwent Reservoir and was back in Iceland on 16th May 2017 (IFo).

Taiga Bean Goose/Tundra Bean Goose *Anser fabalis/serrirostris*

One flew N over East Chevington north pool on 5th (JBu).

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

About 1,300, in three skeins, flew N at East Ord on 1st plus a further 440 N on 26th and 160 N on 30th (MHu), 300 moved S and 50 W at Ellington on 20th (TB), 200 NW at Blyth on 21st (BS), 200 NW at Cheswick on 29th (MSH), and 150 W at Boulmer on 1st (TRD). The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 80 N and 46 S (SSWT), and 35-68 were noted over (in various directions) Bothal Pond, Callerton, Earsdon, Little Mill, Marden Quarry, Morpeth and Wark. An estimated 3,500 were at Budle Bay on 29th (DF) and 2,500 at nearby Waren Mill on 12th (DF), 3,000 were at Doddington on 27th (JD), 3,000 at Ellington on 16th (TB), 2,000 at Blyth Links on 2nd (TB), 2,000 at Embleton on 20th (BS), 1,200-1,500 at Cheswick (TRD) and Longhirst Flash (EC/JSB), and 292-500 at Cresswell and Mousen. Groups of 87-90 were also at East Holywell and Hoppen Kiln Flash, and ten to 28 at East Chevington and West Minsteracres. A leucistic bird was at Budle Bay on 8th (DF), and a bird with orange legs was noted at Cresswell on 17th (perhaps the same individual noted at Snab Point last winter; MSH).

Tundra Bean Goose *Anser serrirostris*

One was in a mixed flock of Greylag, Pink-footed and Brent Geese at Budle Bay on 13th (PHi/SSc).

White-fronted Goose *Anser flavirostris*

All records were of birds of the Eurasian *albifrons* race and involved 12 at Embleton on 20th (BS) and ten (perhaps part of the former group) at High Newton on 25th (BS); 11 (adults) at Gloucester Lodge, Blyth on 18th (MSH) and eight there on 21st (DM/PJA); seven at East Holywell on 23rd (MNC), seven at Woodhorn* on 28th (TF/JFa); three at Warkworth on 29th (TRD), and one to two at Backworth (GPK) and the Blyth Estuary (STH).

*including one bearing a black neck collar (1V9) which had been ringed at Arkhangelsk, Russia on 10th August 2017 and also noted at Friesland, Netherlands on 20th November 2017 and 6th January 2018 (TF/JFa).



A Eurasian White-fronted Goose
Gloucester Lodge by Mike Hodgson on 19th January

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

QEII CP Lake held 65 on 21st (CDH) when 33 were at Big Waters (GB). Other peak counts were 32 at Killingworth Lake on 6th (DM), 20-28 at East Chevington (DM/PJA), Hartburn Reservoir (SW) and the Tweed Estuary (MHu), and 13-14 at Newcastle Exhibition Park and West Ord. Five to six were also at Bothal Pond, Branton GP and Newcastle Leazes Park.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

45 (35 adults, ten immatures) were noted on the 'coal road' between Druridge-East Chevington on 29th (TD) whilst a count of 44 there on 26th included 14 immature birds (TRD). Elsewhere, 16 (nine adults) were at Caistron on 20th (JD), 16 at Buston Links on 22nd (MKi), and seven to eight at Fenham Flats and Hartburn Reservoir.

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

13 flew N at Seaton Sluice on 6th (SSWT) and five N at Stag Rocks on 7th (MSH). About 400 were at Fenham Flats on 7th (TRD), 144 at Budle Bay on 7th (MSH), 34 at Howdon on 7th (CB), and 18 at the Blyth Estuary on 13th (MSH). Eight to nine were also at Boulmer and Druridge Pools, three to four at Elswick and Newburn Haugh, and one to two at Alnmouth, Castle Island and Cresswell Links. Inland, two were at Branton GP on 30th (MJC), and singles at Grindon Lough on 26th (PRM) and, more unusually, at Derwent Reservoir on 14th (IFo).

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

A drake was at Wydon Water, Hexham on 16th (AJH).

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Good numbers at Budle Bay included a site record count of 50 on 8th (DF), 20 were at Druridge Pools on 7th (SRB), 15 at East Chevington on 21st (DM/PJA), and one to two at Big Waters, Linton Ponds and Monks' House Pool.

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Caistron held 31 on 20th (JD), 18 were at Woodhorn Flashes on 3rd (GB), 15 at East Chevington on 18th (TRD/JD), 13 at Linton Ponds on 21st (CDH), five to nine at Arcot, Bothal and Swallow Ponds, the Blyth Estuary, Gosforth Park NR and QEII CP Lake, and three to four at Big Waters and St Mary's Wetland. One to two were also at Chirton Dene Park, Longhoughton Quarry Pond, Whittle Dene Reservoirs and Widdrington Moor Lake.

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

A total of 230 (in three flocks) flew S at Berwick Pier on 6th (MHu), and nine N at Seaton Sluice between 6th-11th (SSWT). Peak concentrations were 600 at Budle Bay on 14th (CGK/GPK), 580 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 21st (CGK/GPK/PS), 550 off the Long Nanny Estuary on 1st (TD), 507 at Big Waters on 21st (GB), 300-420 at Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir and Druridge Pools, and 250-280 at Branton GP, the Coquet Estuary and Grindon Lough. Counts of 115-160 came from the Aln Estuary, Caistron, East Chevington, Hoppen Kiln Flash and Linton Ponds, with 62-80 at Boulmer and Craggy Bog, and ten to 36 at Bothal Pond, Plenmeller Common, Prestwick Carr, QEII CP Lake and the Tweed Estuary.

American Wigeon *Anas americana*

A drake was reported from Grindon Lough regularly between 7th-29th (AA/CDB/STH *et al.*).

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

The largest counts involved 228 at the Tweed Estuary on 17th (MHu), 218 at Derwent Reservoir on 1st (IFo), 101-110 at Bothal Pond (TD) and Craggy Bog (MHu), 56-90 at Middle Ord Pond (MHu) and QEII CP Lake (CDH), and 21-45 at Airy Holm and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, Alnmouth, Big Waters, the Blyth Estuary, Boulmer, Branton GP, Castle Island, Chirton Dene Park, Linton Ponds, Newcastle Exhibition Park, Prestwick Carr, Spartylea and St Mary's Wetland.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

A single drake flew N at Seaton Sluice on 11th (SSWT). Peak counts from Fenham Flats, Lindisfarne NNR involved 215 on 4th (TF/JFa) and 245 on 29th (DF). Singles were at Big Waters, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Grindon Lough and Swallow Pond.

Teal *Anas crecca*

15 flew N at Ross-Guile Point on 7th (MJC). Peak counts were 359 at Big Waters on 21st (GB), 280 at Holy Island on 14th (MJC), 211-225 at Derwent Reservoir and Hoppen Kiln Flash, 110-150 at Bothal and Linton Ponds, Grindon Lough and Druridge Pools, and 75-84 at Branton GP and Craggy Bog. Counts of 31-45 came from Alnmouth, the Blyth and Coquet Estuaries, Elswick, Newburn Haugh, St Mary's Wetland and West Ord, and ten to 22 at Arcot, Howick Hall and Middle Ord Ponds, Prestwick Carr, the Tweed Estuary and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. More unusual was a flighty duck at Newcastle Exhibition Park on 12th (GB).



A drake Teal at Swallow Pond by Tim Dean on 28th January

Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina*

A drake was at Newcastle Leazes Park on 30th (GB *et al.*).



The drake Red-crested Pochard at Leazes Park on 30th January by Jack Bucknall

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Killingworth Lake attracted a peak of 21 on 23rd (MSH), 11 were at Swallow Pond on 24th (GPK), eight at East Chevington on 21st (DM/PJA), and one to two at Holywell Pond, and Ladyburn and Widdrington Moor Lakes.



A drake Pochard at Killingworth Lake on 20th January by Chris Barlow

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

186 at Killingworth Lake on 22nd fell to 78 the next day (MSH), 70 were at Castron on 20th (JD), 63-64 at Branton GP (MJC) and Ladyburn Lake (MSH), 25-39 at Bolam Lake, Grindon Lough, Marden Quarry and QEII CP Lake, and 12-17 at Chirton Dene Park and Newcastle Exhibition Park. Five to nine were also at Castle Island, Coanwood, Druridge Pools, Howdon and Newcastle Leazes Park.

Scaup *Aythya marila*

One flew N at Ross-Guile Point on 7th (MJC), and singles were at East Chevington on 26th-27th (IRD/TRD) and Ladyburn Lake on 30th (TB).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 22 N and 14 S (SSWT), 200 were at Ross-Guile Point on 7th (MJC), 56 at the Blyth Estuary on 23rd (ASJ), 22-26 at Cocklawburn, the Coquet Estuary and North Shields Fish Quay, and 15 at Boulmer and Cheswick. Three to five were also at Fenham Flats and the Tweed Estuary.

An Eider

North Shields Fish Quay

Jack Bucknall

15th January



Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

Four flew N at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), and three N at Hadston Carrs on 6th (TF/JFa). Four were at Stag Rocks on 4th (GB) and one there on 6th (JBU), and one was off East Chevington on 14th (TF/JFa).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

A total of 12 flew N and 14 S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). About 400 were at Cocklawburn on 7th (TRD), and 380 at nearby Cheswick-Beal Point on 21st (CH), 400 at Stag Rocks on 25th and 30th (BS/STH) and 70-200 there on 4th and 7th (TRD/TF/JFa), and 44 at Ross-Guile Point (MJC). Ten to 20 were also off Druridge-Chevington and Warkworth, and seven off Seaton Sluice.

Black Scoter *Melanitta americana*

A drake was at Cheswick Black Rocks-Beal Point on 21st (CH) and off Goswick on 25th (GPK/PS).

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

One flew N at Boulmer on 30th (BS). Numbers in the Stag Rocks-Budle Point area peaked at 34 on 8th (DF) and 27 off nearby Ross Back Sands on 3rd included 21 adult males (CH). One was at East Chevington north pool regularly between 1st-30th (TRD/PH/CHI *et al.*).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Five flew N at Seaton Sluice on 6th (SSWT). Peak concentrations were 105 at the Tweed Estuary on 31st (PRM), 44 at East Chevington on 28th (TF/JFa), 24 at Bolam Lake on 30th (AJR), 24 at Castle Island on 21st (DM/PJA), and ten to 17 at Castron, Football Hole, Grindon Lough, Howick, Killingworth and QEII CP Lakes and West Ord. Five to eight were also at Branton GP, Druridge Pools, Ladyburn Lake and Longhoughton Low Steads, and three to four at Big Waters, Boulmer, Hauxley, Holy Island, Ladyburn and Widdrington Moor Lakes, and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Display was noted at Killingworth Lake on 6th (DM/GB/LAR).

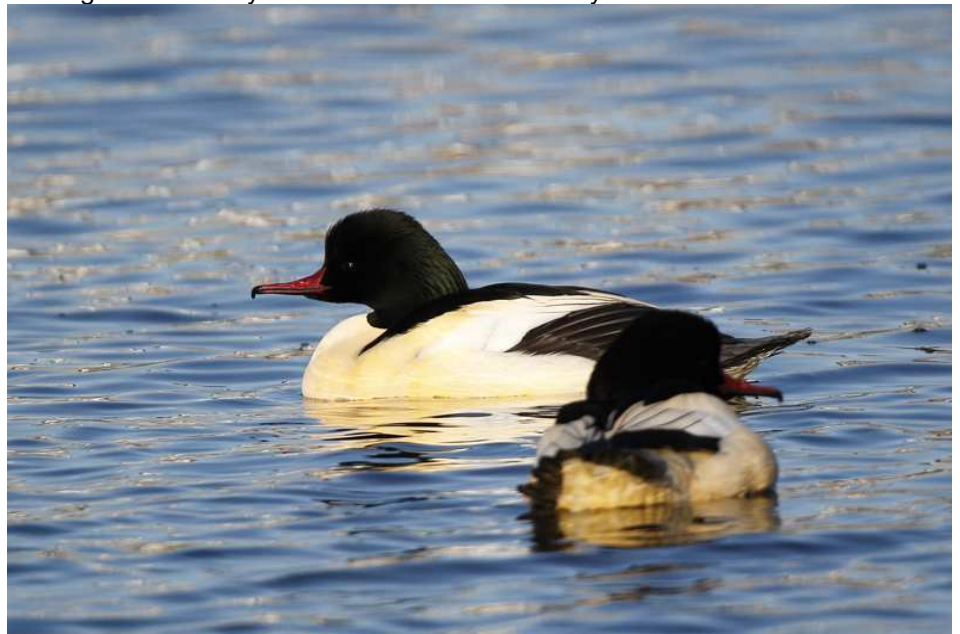


A Goldeneye at Killingworth Lake by Chris Barlow on 7th January

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

Eight were at Meadow Haven, Berwick on 21st (MHu), four to five at Branton GP (JD), Killingworth Lake (GB), Marden Quarry (KWY), the Tweed Estuary (PRM) and Tyne Green (AJH), and two to three at Airy Holm Reservoir, Alnmouth, Bolam Lake, Hedgeley GP, Morpeth, Newcastle Exhibition Park and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Goosanders
Killingworth lake
20th January
Chris Barlow



Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

26 were at Cheswick Black Rocks-Beal Point on 21st (CH), ten at Ladyburn Lake on 8th (MSH), five to seven at Cambois (MSH), East Chevington (TF/JFa) and the Tweed Estuary (MHu), and three to four at Druridge Pools and Stag Rocks. One to two were also at Blyth, Cresswell Pond, Monks' House (offshore) and Ross Back Sands.

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

Between two to 11 birds were at Spartylea all month (CT), seven were on Plenmeller Common on 13th (MJC) and a male was with three greyhens at a lek in Hexhamshire on 21st (CGK/GPK/PS). One to two were at five further localities.

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

The peak count was of at least 40 present on Dryburn Moor (Allendale) on 26th (PRM). 32 were at Plenmeller Common on 13th (MJC), 30 were at Brizlee on 20th (ASJ) and 21 at Hedgehope on 8th (IRD). A total of 16 at Blanchland Moor on 5th included, ironically, one standing on the wall of a shooting butt (IFo). One to eight were at Alnwick Moor, Bowden Doors (Belford), Cragside, Spartylea and Thrunton Woods.



A Red Grouse by Chris Barlow on 7th January

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

At least 30 released birds were at Shilbottle on 10th (BS) and one to two were at Alnwick Moor, Coanwood Common, East Chevington, Holburn and Langley Dam.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Nine at Big Waters NWT on 1st was the highest count this month (GB). The peak count at Boulmer was six on 10th (BS) and one to five birds were seen at nine other locations, but the overall paucity of records prompted one experienced observer to comment that the species is "declining badly now even in the coastal area" (TRD).

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

Between two to six were at Spartylea with a peak of nine on 1st (CT), a single male was with six females at Druridge Pools on 6th (DM) and one to two were at Castle Island, East Chevington and Holywell Pond.

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

The total for the month at Seaton Sluice was 112 (43 N and 68 S) in 21 hours which was above average for the time of year. The peak date was 1st with 3 N and 30 S in two hours (SSWT). On 7th a total of 32 were recorded between Ross-Guille Point including three on the sea, one flying S and 28 N (MJC). 30 accompanied a Scoter flock between Cheswick Black Rocks-Beal Point on 21st, often diving in unison with them (CH). 19 were off the burn mouth at East Chevington on 20th (TF/JFa) and 15 were off Cheswick on 29th (MSH). One to ten were at many other offshore localities, however a single on East Chevington North Pool was a rare non-marine find on 1st (TRD).

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*

Singles were reported from Goswick Sands, Lindisfarne, the River Tweed Estuary and Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

One was tracked flying N on 6th in the company of the White-billed Diver as detailed below. The single first-winter bird at Widdrington Moor Lake present from 1st was joined by another first-winter on 6th and both remained until the end of the month (NFO/DM/CDB/AJR *et al.*). Two were at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 25th (BS) and singles were widely reported from the whole of the coastal strip.

White-billed Diver *Gavia adamsii*

Having initially been tracked N from Whitburn on the morning of 6th an adult, constantly in the company of a nearby Great Northern Diver, was recorded at various points on its northerly progress, passing Longsands Bay (Tynemouth) at 10:55h (MK), Seaton Sluice Watch Tower (SSWT), South Beach (Blyth) at 11:10h (AC/MSH), Cambois (NFO), Hadston Carrs (Druridge Bay) at 11:58h (TF/JFa) and finally observed heading towards the Farne Islands from Beadnell at 11:55h (CDB). Remarkably a second bird, a juvenile, flew N close inshore at Beadnell at 11:43h just before the expected adult arrived.

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

Very poor passage was recorded at Seaton Sluice, apart from 6th when 180 N in four and half hours included two dark phase birds (SSWT). Six were back on breeding ledges at Old Hartley on 28th (TRD) and two to five were reported from elsewhere.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Castle Island peaked at 14 on 21st (DM), with 11 at East Chevington NR on the same date (MSH). Ten were present during a WeBS count at Caistron on 20th (JD), seven at Lilburn estate pond on 7th (DF) and one to three on various dates at Abbey Mill, Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Boulmer (unusually, on the sea), Coanwood, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Bay CP, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Hauxley, Howick Pool Field, Long Nanny, Marden Quarry, R Blyth Estuary, R Tweed Est.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

A group on the sea off Warkworth beach peaked at seven on 19th (CSa). Two were at Widdrington Moor Lake and singles were offshore at East Chevington and Alnmouth Bay.

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

As usual the northern end of the county proved most popular with numbers at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) peaking at seven feeding in a single flock on 9th (MH/AA), five at Budle Point on 14th (CGK/GPK) and singles at Cocklawburn and Harkness Rocks (Bamburgh).

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

Two individuals were confirmed at Gosforth Park on 22nd (MH) following sightings of individual birds from 18th. One was at Branton GP on 30th (MJC).

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

A total of 30 were in the River Tweed Estuary on 31st (PRM), following a count of 17 during a WeBS survey on 17th (MHu). 12 were in the heronry at Howdon on 7th (CB) and the peak at Druridge Pools was 11 on 26th (MSH). One to two were at several other usual locations.

Great White Egret *Ardea alba*

One was on Beal Sands on 13th (Phi/SSc).

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

One to two were at Backworth, Beal, Beal Sluice Ends, Bell's Farm (Cresswell), Bolam Lake, Chevington, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Fenham-le-Moor, Gosforth Park NR, Holy Island, Northumberlandia (Cramlington), the River Tweed Estuary, Shankhouse (Cramlington), Tynemouth, Wark (North Tyne) and West Ord (Berwick).

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

Very few reports with a monthly maximum of only 16 N at Seaton Sluice on 6th (SSWT). One to two were reported from two other locations.

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Seaton Sluice Watch Tower recorded a monthly total of six N and three S (SSWT). Numbers at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) fluctuated during the month with a healthy peak of at least 200 present on 4th (TF/JFa). Ten were at Howick on 20th and one to three were at Blyth Quayside, Blyth South Harbour, Cocklawburn, Holburn and the River Tweed Estuary.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

At Warkworth/Amble 183 were counted roosting on the old pier on 16th (MH/AA) with a similar number of 170 feeding in one large loose flock 1 km from Warkworth beach on 21st (CSa). Further south at Howdon, 122 were roosting on staithe on 28th (CB). North Shields Fish Quay peaked at 77 on 15th (MSH) and 42 were at Blyth South Harbour on 1st (DM). One to 17 were reported from other localities including two continental *sinensis* race birds at QE11 CP on 3rd.

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Three birds were in the air interacting over the North pool (East Chevington) on 21st (MSH). A 1st-winter female was seen most days at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin-by-the-Sea) throughout the month. Single birds were seen at over 20 sites including one which caught a House Mouse *Mus musculus* in a North Shields garden on 29th (DLo).

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

On 14th at a confidential site, a bird was seen gliding to a post and then it vanished (TRD).

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

Ringtail/females were noted at two confidential sites on 14th and 20th (MSH/ASJ), another ringtail was seen at another site on 29th (PRM) and a grey male was seen at another site on 23rd (MH/AA).

Red Kite *Milvus Milvus*

Two birds were at Crooked Oak (near Derwent Reservoir) on 5th (IFo) and two were also at Derwent Gorge on 31st (AJH). Single birds were seen at Broomley on 3rd (AJR), Edmundbyers on 7th (CDB) and at Derwent Reservoir on 12th (IFo).

Rough-legged Buzzard *Buteo lagopus*

A probable adult female was seen in poor visibility in the mist and quite distant flying E at Plenmeller Common (PH/Chi).

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

11 birds were at Plenmeller Common on 13th (MJC), nine were at Bolton's (Aln Valley) and six were on Alnwick Moor on 8th (MH). Five birds were at Brizlee during January (ASJ) and five at Derwent Reservoir on 12th (IFo). Four birds were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 26th (MSH), Old Berwick (Chillingham) on 30th (MH/AA) and three were at Howick on 6th (JAR). One to two birds were at over 25 sites.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Three birds were at Prestwick Carr on 1st (PCF) and two birds were noted at Swallow Pond (Wallsend) throughout the month (GPK) and at Chevington on 7th (MH). Single birds were either seen or heard at Big Waters NWT, East Chevington and Holy Island.

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

19 were at Castle Island on 21st (DM/PJA), 13 were at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 11th (GB). Eight birds were noted at Linton Ponds on 21st (CDH) and at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 29th (DM) while seven were at Chirton Dene Park (North Shields) on 20th (MSH) and six were at Branton GPs on 3rd (MJC). One to four were seen at Branton GPs, Holy Island, Holywell Pond, Horton Burn (Cramlington) and Jesmond Dene (Newcastle).

Coot *Fulica atra*

115 birds at Swallow Pond (Wallsend) on 28th (TRD) and 67 at Branton GPs on 3rd (MJC) were the highest counts this month followed by 51 at Big Waters NWT (GB), 40 at QEII CP and 37 at Linton Ponds all on 21st (CDH). One to 12 birds were noted at Bothal Pond, Branton GPs, Coanwood, East Chevington, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Holywell Dene and Leazes Park (Newcastle).

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

The first day of 2018 began with a count of 200+ at Budle Bay (MSH), while at the other end of the county a count of 180 was made on 4th at Cullercoats Pier (MK). On 13th 125 birds were at Blyth Estuary (MSH), 123 were at St Mary's on 18th (ASJ) and on 22nd numbers had declined to 110 at Cullercoats Pier (ASJ). Further sizeable counts came from Holy Island (66 on 14th with a pale-mantled individual which had lingered from last month, MJC) and 40 were at Boulmer on 1st (MJC). The Tweed Estuary held 37 on 31st (PRM), Alnmouth had 32 on 3rd (MJC), and Warkworth and Birling Carrs reported 24 on 22nd (AWG). Lower counts came from Berwick (West Ord), Branton GPs, Blyth Harbour, Blyth (Gloucester Lodge Farm), Derwent Reservoir, Hexham, West Hartford and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

Although good sized counts were made at inland sites, the largest count was made at the coast, with a minimum of 1,000 at Budle Bay on 15th (DF). Plenmeller Common provided a count of 830 on 29th (SW), 800 were at Cresswell Pond on 9th (MJC) and 600 were at Derwent Reservoir on 1st (IFo). Also on 1st Newton Scrape reported a minimum of 500 (TD), 500 were at Prestwick Carr on 6th (IK), another 500 were at Cresswell Pond on 5th (MH/AA) and 410 were at St Mary's on 30th (ASJ). Counts of 300-400 came from Cresswell Bell's Farm (MSH, ASJ), Plenmeller Common (MJC) and Prestwick Carr (MH/AA, SRB). Smaller counts came from Alnmouth, Big Waters NWT, Blyth (Gloucester Lodge Farm), Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Boulmer, Branton GPs, Cocklawburn, Coquet Estuary, East Chevington, Fenham Flats, Fourstones, Grindon Lough, Howdon, Howick, Keepersfield (North Tyne), Murton (Craggy Bog), Newcastle (Scotswood), near Stamfordham, Tweed Estuary and West Hartford.

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

St Mary's held 2,000 birds on 20th (ASJ) and Plenmeller Common had an exceptional inland count of 1,640 on 29th (SW). Budle Bay had an estimated 1,500 on 15th (DF), Seaton Sluice Watch Tower recorded 1,190 flying north on 6th (probably part of the St Mary's flock) and over 1,000 were estimated at Blyth, Gloucester Lodge between 18th and 23rd (MSH, DM). Counts from other locations with counts of 400-800 came from Backworth, Blyth, Blyth Links, Cresswell (Bell's Farm), Cullercoats, Low Newton scrape and Prestwick Carr. Counts of 150-350 from sites other than above came from Boulmer, Cocklawburn (Saltpan Rocks) and Whitley Bay (Marden Quarry) with smaller counts from Coquet Estuary, Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge (Coal Road), Ellington, Grindon Lough, Low Newton, Newcastle (Jesmond), Pegswood Bypass, Warden Law, Whittingham and Widdrington Moor Lake.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

During a WeBS at Birling Carr (Warkworth) on 22nd a count of 16 was made (AWG) and a count of 12 was made at Boulmer on 19th (TRD/JD). Counts of four or less came from Bamburgh (Stag Rocks), Beadnell, Berwick (Little Beach), Blyth Estuary, Cocklawburn and Tweed Estuary.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

All counts of 50 or more were from north of the Coquet with 66 at Little Beach (Berwick) on 10th (MHU), 57 at Ross Back Sands on 3rd (CH) and 50 at the Long Nanny (Newton) on 3rd (TD). East Chevington had 49 on 1st (TRD), 40 were counted roosting on a roof at Blyth South Harbour on 1st (DM), 36 were at Cocklawburn on 9th (MHu) and 32 were at St Mary's on 23rd (ASJ). Between 11 and 29 were reported from Budle Bay, Monks' House and Seahouses Harbour with smaller counts from Boulmer, Druridge, Holy Island, Seaton Sluice (Collywell Bay) and Warkworth.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

A single bird found accompanying Curlews was seen for one day only on 5th at Boulmer (BS).

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

St Mary's had a count of 192 on 30th (ASJ) with 178 counted during a WeBS in the Tweed Estuary on 17th (MHu), a number which declined to 152 by 31st (PRM). On 1st ca. 85 were seen at Boulmer (PRM), 82 were at Howdon on 28th (CB), Howdiemont Sands (Boulmer) reported 81 on 9th (MKi) and 81+ were estimated at Harper's Heugh on 1st (MSH). Between 60 and 80 birds were reported from Blyth Estuary, Boulmer, Cocklawburn, Cresswell Pond NWT, Druridge (Coal Road) and Holy Island. Smaller counts came from Alnmouth, Big Waters NWT, Blyth (Gloucester Lodge), Branton GP, Budle Bay, Cheswick Sands (tidal pool), Coquet Estuary, Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough, Lowmoor Point (Fenham-Le-Moor) and Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.



A Curlew passes Boulmer. Tim Dean on 19th January

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Druridge Pools records varied between seven and 15 at various dates with the peak count occurring on 14th (IK/ASH). Cresswell Pond held 12 birds on 5th (MH/AA) and were probably some of the individuals that were included in the peak count at Druridge Pools. Single-figure counts came from Blyth Estuary, Coquet Estuary, Fenham-le-Moor, Holy Island and Howdon Wetland NR.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Between 50 and 100 birds were estimated to be at Budle Bay on 13th (Phi/SSc). Fifty birds were counted at Fenham Flats on 6th (DM), 27 were at Boulmer on 19th (TRD/JD), 14 were at Little Beach (Berwick) on 21st (MHu) and ten were at Fenham-le-Moor on 7th (TRD). Smaller counts came from the Blyth Estuary and Druridge Pools.



Bar-tailed Godwits at Boulmer by Tim Dean on 19th January



A Black-tailed Godwit at Druridge Pools
Mike Hodgson on 26th January

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

More widespread with higher numbers reported this month, the highest count coming from the north shore of Holy Island, with 104 on 14th (MJC). On 1st, 60 were at Low Newton (TD) and 30 at Boulmer (PRM). Double-figure counts from other localities were 25 at Seahouses on 7th (TRD), 16 at Cullercoats pier on 4th (MK), 16 at the River Tweed Estuary on 31st (PRM) and 12 at North Shields Fish Quay on 14th (TRD). Elsewhere, two-eight were at Amble, Birling Carrs (Warkworth), Calot Shad (River Tweed Estuary), Blyth South Harbour, Fenham Flats, Howdon, Longhoughton, Lowmoor Point (Fenham-le Moor), the River Coquet Estuary and Stag Rocks.

A Turnstone reflects
North Shields Fish Quay
12th January by Alan Jack

**Knot** *Calidris canutus*

Low numbers again reported this month with the highest numbers seen being at Boulmer with 30 on 19th (TRD/JD). A count of 20 came from Budle Bay on 13th (Phi/SSc), nine were at the River Coquet Estuary, eight at Birling Carrs, and also at Seaton Sluice and three at Fenham Flats.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

An interesting mid-winter influx into the area occurred this month with a maximum of five at Beadnell on 6th (TB/GB/DM), three males at Low Newton scrape on 29th, two flying N over Hadston Carrs on 6th (TF/JFa) and a single at the River Tweed Estuary on 31st (PRM).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Well reported along the whole coastal stretch with the Berwick area attracting the highest numbers with 160 at Little Beach on 10th (MHu) and 72 at Sandstell Point on 25th (MHu). Other notable counts came from Chibburn Mouth (Druridge Bay) with 56 on 14th (AJR), 55 at Boulmer on 30th (JAR), 52 at Cocklawburn on 19th (MHu) and 40 at Newbiggin on 3rd (GB). In the south east, 21 were at St Mary's Island on 20th (ASJ), 14 at Tynemouth on 20th (DRW) and 11 at Colywell Bay (Seaton Sluice) on 23rd (MSH). At Holy Island, 16 were seen on the north shore on 14th (MJC), 12 were at Low Newton (TRD) and ten at Longhoughton on 1st (TRD). One to eight were at Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Ross-Guile Point and Stag Rocks.

A Sanderling on the beach
Chibburn Mouth
John Richards
14th January



Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

There were some significant mid-winter flocks in the area with the largest being 320 at Boulmer on 1st (TRD). The River Blyth Estuary retained high numbers with a maximum count of 215 on 18th (STH). At Fenham-le Moor, 200 were seen on 7th and the highest number at Berwick Little Beach was 146 on 21st (MHu). Other three figure counts came from Amble Harbour with 124 on 21st (CSa) and a monthly peak of 104 was at Tynemouth on 20th (DRW). Cresswell Pond held 80 on 1st, 78 were at St Mary's Island on 22nd and a count of 50 was made at Low Newton on 29th. At Warkworth, 30 on 1st with possibly the same birds accounted for a sighting of 32 at the River Coquet Estuary on 22nd. Six were at both Druridge Pools and the River Tweed Estuary.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

The Stag Rocks flock fluctuated between two on 6th and 135 on 29th (TB/MSH/DF *et al.*). Other sites attracting notable numbers were Low Newton with a high of 40 on 1st (TD), Blyth South Harbour with 26 on 1st (DM), Cullercoats with 20 on 4th (MK), Cocklawburn had 18 on 26th (MHu), 17 were seen at Boulmer on 1st (MJC), a monthly peak count of 12 at Tynemouth on 20th (DRW) and 11 at Sandham Bay (Holy Island) on 14th (MJC). One to seven were at Birling Carrs, Holy Island (Snipe Point), Newbiggin, Seahouses and Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

A Purple Sandpiper

Tynemouth

Alan Jack

25th January

**Little Stint** *Calidris minuta*

The wintering bird at Fenham-le-Moor (Lindisfarne) was reported on 6th and 13th (GB/DM/Phi/SSc).

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Two were at Northumberlandia (Cramlington) on 1st (DM) and two in conifer plantations at Belford Moor on 6th (DM). Singles were reported from Alnwick Moor, Belford Moor, Derwent Reservoir, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Howick, QE2 CP and in off the sea at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin).

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyrtus minimus*

Singles were at Backworth, East Chevington and West Hartford during the month.

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

The Callerton subsidence area attracted 51 on 12th including a 'wisp' of 21 (MH). The peak monthly count at Backworth was 41 on 29th (GPK) compared to eight in December 2017. The maximum number seen at West Hartford during the month was 38 on 18th (STH). Counts of one to seven came from Alnmouth, Big Waters, Bothal Pond, Boulmer, Branton GP, Castron, Druridge Pools, Gloucester Lodge (Blyth), Howdon, Plenmeller Common and Prestwick Carr.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Wintering birds were recorded at Castron on 20th (JD), Howick on 8th and 21st (JAR/BS) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs (CGK/GPK/PS).

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Seven sites recorded triple-figure counts this month with the highest being 305 at St Mary's Island on 23rd (ASJ). Howdon attracted 231 on 7th (CB) and 230 were counted from the lay-by at Budle Bay on 15th (DF). The estuaries of the River Blyth and River Tweed were attractive with a minimum of 200 on the River Blyth Estuary on 13th (MSH) and 135 on the River Tweed Estuary on 31st (PRM). Other three-figure counts included 130 at Boulmer on 1st (PRM) and 125 at Cresswell Pond on 27th (IRD). Lower numbers from coastal and freshwater sites were 50 at Druridge Pools on 29th (TD), 44 at Alnmouth on 3rd (MJC), 31 on Holy Island on 14th (MJC) and 25 on the River Tyne at Elswick on 5th (GB). One-18 were seen at Beal, Birling Carrs, Bothal Pond, Cocklawburn Pond, Fenham-le-Moor, Gloucester Lodge, Lynemouth Flash and the River Coquet Estuary.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

The wintering adult was seen throughout the month at Budle Bay (CDB/AJH/RB/MB/*et al.*).

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

At Seaton Sluice, 35 flying N on 6th was the only record (SSWT). Single birds were recorded at Beadnell and in the River Tweed Estuary on 6th and 31st respectively (CDB/MHu)

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Concentrations of 220-275 were noted at Berwick (Spittal), the QEII CP Lake and in the River Tweed Estuary (CDH/MHu/PRM) with 50-150 at Arcot Pond, Bothal Pond, Castle Island, Cramlington, Exhibition Park, Jesmond Dene, Leazes Park and Newbiggin (Quarry Cottage) (DM/TD/BS). Birds ringed in Denmark, T73, and in Norway, X3C1, were seen on 17th at Brierdene, Whitley Bay (PCF)



Two 'cousins'. Above: a Black-headed Gull by Jack Bucknall on 10th January at Killingworth lake and below: a Mediterranean Gull on 29th January at St.Mary's by Alan Davis



Mediterranean Gull *Ichthyaetus melanocephalus*

The maximum count from Newbiggin was 20 (16 adults) on 16th (CH) and up to seven adults fed all month at Quarry Cottage garden, Newbiggin (RS). At Swallow Pond, two adults, including the white-ringed Danish bird, were seen regularly throughout (GPK *et al.*). Many observers noted single birds, mainly adults, at eleven coastal localities between Boulmer and Tynemouth and inland at Big Waters NWT (GB).

Common Gull *Larus canus*

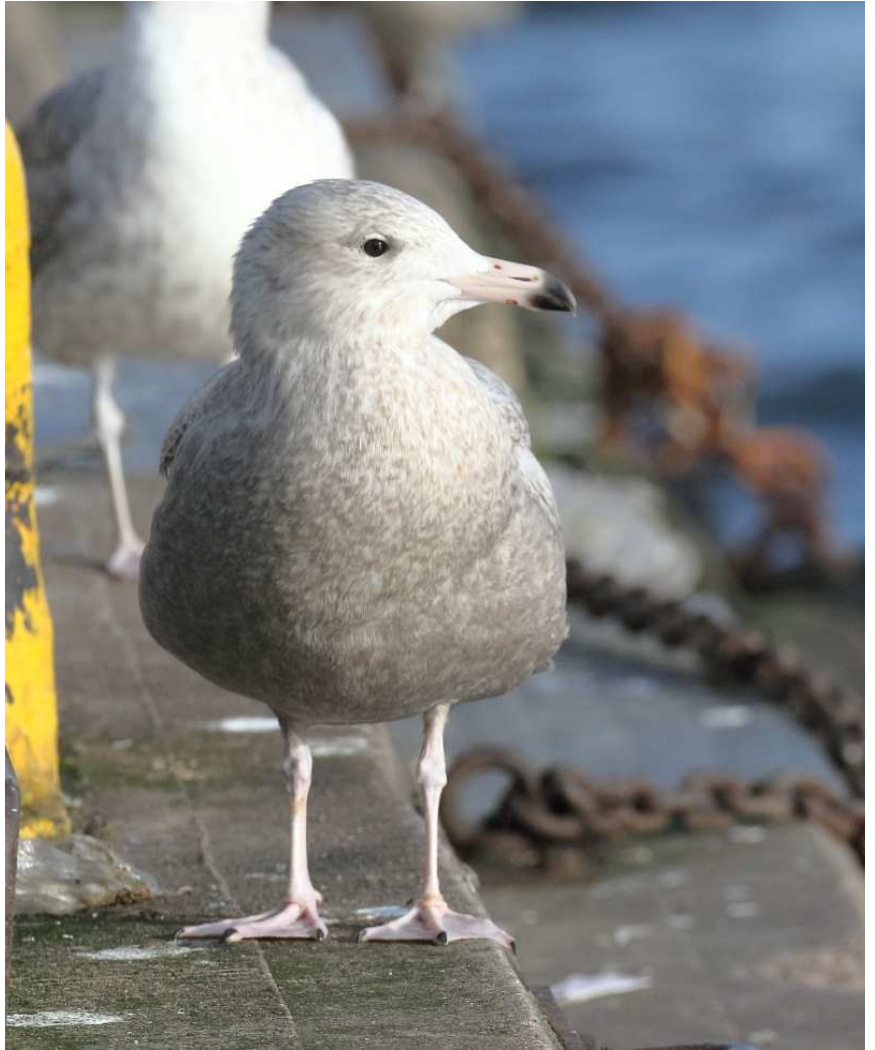
Counts of 10 to 25 came from Bothal Pond, Castle Island, Cramlington and the QEII CP Lake (DM/CDH/TD) with one to three at six other widespread localities.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

The maximum count was 76, mainly adults, in the Blyth Estuary on 6th (MSH) and smaller groups of 12-26 were recorded at Castle Island, Cheswick Sands, Derwent Reservoir and the River Tweed Estuary with up to nine at six other sites.

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

Reports of single immatures came almost daily throughout the month and as many as three individual birds, possibly four, may have been present. One was seen regularly at the North Shields Fish Quay from 1st-30th (DM/DRW *et al.*) and from 6th-30th one was in the Cambois/Blyth Harbour/Estuary area (NFO *et al.*). Immatures were in Budle Bay on 23rd (ASJ) and at East Chevington from 21st-30th (MSH/DM *et al.*).



A Glaucous Gull by Alan Jack at North Shields Fish Quay on 31st January

An Iceland Gull at Gosforth Golf Course by Mike Carr on 6th January



Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoides*

Two 1st-winter birds were seen in the Cambois/North Blyth/Blyth Harbour area from 6th-10th (JF/TFa/NFO/GPK/PS) and also on 6th an immature was noted at the Gosforth Golf Club (MJC); thereafter a single immature was recorded regularly in the Blyth area until 22nd (GB *et al.*). Possibly the same individual frequented the Black Middens rocks at Tynemouth from 23rd-28th (MK/DRW). The only adult bird seen was one at Swallow Pond on 20th-21st (GPK *et al.*).

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

A very large flock, numbering around 1,500 of which ca.70% were adults, was at Linton Pond on 30th (EC/JSB); other large concentrations were 442 and ca.1,100 in the River Tweed Estuary on 17th and 31st respectively (MHu/PRM) and 167 on the QE II CP Lake on 21st (CDH). Smaller groups of ten to 44 were at Airy Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield), Castle Island, Cheswick Sands and Leazes Park (DM/IFo/PHi/SSc). A count of eight on the Tyne at Hexham was described by the observer as indicative of increasing numbers there of a formerly rare bird (AJR).



A near-adult Herring Gull at North Shields Fish Quay
15th January by Alan Jack

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

Two were at East Chevington (TF/JFa) and singles at Cramlington, East Chevington and West Hartford (TB/DM/GPK/PS).

Auk *sp*

Ten were at Beadnell on 6th (CDB) and four in Alnmouth Bay on 22nd (AWG).

Common Guillemot *Uria aalge*/**Razorbill** *Alca torda*

On 6th 225 flew N in 4.5 hours at Seaton Sluice and on the following day, 50 flew N (SSWT).

Common Guillemot *Uria aalge*

At Warkworth/Amble North Pier, 20 were recorded on 16th, many in breeding plumage (MH/AA), seven were at Cheswick on 29th (MSH) and one to three at three other localities.

Razorbill *Alca torda*

At Cheswick, 15 were sighted on 29th (MSH) and ten, many in breeding plumage, were in the Warkworth/ Amble North Pier area on 16th (MH/AA). One to two were also at Bamburgh during the first week (TRD/MSH).

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

One moved N at Seaton Sluice on 26th, noted as a extremely rare bird there in January (SSWT).

Rock Dove *Columba livia*

A peak count of more than 441 in the R Tweed Estuary on 31st (PRM), 78 at Blyth Estuary on 1st and 50 there on 13th (DM/GB), 26 at Seahouses harbour on 6th and 18 at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 28th.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Howdon is still the stronghold with 64 on 28th (CB), 18 on stubble at Stamfordham on 23rd (EC), seven at Druridge Pools on 18th (TRD/JD) and five at Coanwood Common on 29th (SW). One to four were at seven other widespread localities.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

High counts were of 650 at Gosforth on 18th (MJC), 400+ at Longhirst Flash on 13th (MSH) and flying north at Humshaugh on 21st (SW), 360 in kale at Longlands School on the same date (MHu) and 100 at Prestwick Carr on 6th. One to seven were at four other locations.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

On 14th 39 were at Holy Island (MJC), 16 attended feeders at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) during the month (BS), 12 at Wark on 24th (PRM), with ten at Widdrington on 12th and East Sleekburn on 26th. Six were in gardens at Cramlington, Gosforth and Dinnington with one to three at four other locations.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Two resident pairs at Holy Island were out hunting on 28th (IK) with two late afternoon at Low Newton on 30th (JAR). Singles were at Boulmer on 1st, Lesbury on 3rd, Howick on 4th and 8th, Carrawbrough Farm on 11th, Waren Mill on 19th and Ellington on 29th.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Two calling birds were at Spartylea on 1st, Howick throughout the month, Whittingham on 7th and Wark on 11th (CT/JAR/CW/PRM). Singles were at Howick on 4th, Belford Moor on 6th, Shillbottle on 15th and 31st and the observer's garden at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 19th.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

One was observed at Gloucester Lodge (Blyth) on two dates (GPK/PS), at Derwent Reservoir on four dates from 1st to 8th (IFo) and at Druridge Pools on 20th and 29th (TF/JFa/TD/MJC).

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Two were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 2nd (EC/JSB/AA) and two at West Hartford on 18th (STH).

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

All sightings were of singles at Howick Pool field on 1st, Prestwick Car on 3rd and 6th, Tyneview Park (Benton) on 5th, Branton GP on 5th, Jesmond Dene on 7th, Castle Island and St Mary's Island on 21st and East Chevington on 28th.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Three noted at Crooked Oak (near Derwent Reservoir) on 5th (IFo) and Eachwick on 28th (CDB) with two at Spartylea all month, Gosforth Park on 1st, Jesmond Dene on 7th, Stamfordham on 14th, Gosforth on 18th, Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 20th, Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 21st and Howick on the same date. Singles were at 12 other widespread localities.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

On 12th one was at Winnows Hill (Slaley) (IFo) and one heard at Letah Wood (Hexham) on the same date (AJH).

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

A total of five birds were noted on Alnwick Moor on 23rd (MH/AA) and three birds were noted at Foxton (Alnmouth) on 5th (JAR). Two birds were noted at Dryburn Moor (nr Allendale), Howick, and Plenmeller Common and at West Hartford. Single birds were at 22 sites during the Month.

A Cullercoats Kestrel

Alan Jack on 17th January

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Two birds were interacting and dive bombing each other at an inland site on 23rd (TRD/JD). Single birds were Druridge Pools (TF/JFa/SRB), Beal (DF//MH/AA), Boulmer (BS), Fenham-le-Moor (TB), Foxton (Alnmouth) (Jar) and a juvenile female with a Turnstone *Arenaria interpres* kill between Ross and Guile Point on 7th (MJC)



Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

A female and a male were noted on 17th at Prestwick Carr on 15th (AJR) with a female also seen there on 5th which the observer described as "a big-headed rather ugly bird" (MH/AA). Single birds were also noted at an inland site on 21st & 23rd (TRD/JD) and others at or near the coast at Beal, Blyth Links, Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond, Fenham-le-Moor, Holy Island, River Blyth Estuary, Ross, Seaton Sluice WT and at Widdrington Moor Lake.

Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

Eight flew W over Claremont Road (Newcastle Town Moor) on 26th (*per* PCF), five at Moorside Allotments on 14th (CGK/GPK/PS), two at Nuns Moor on 5th and Gosforth on 18th with singles at the Golf Course Gosforth on 6th, over the observer's garden at Heaton on 7th, Freeman Hospital (Heaton) on 9th and RGS Jesmond on 17th.

Ring-necked Parakeet

Gosforth Golf Course

Mike Carr

6th January

**Great Grey Shrike** *Lanius excubitor*

The wintering bird remained at Prestwick Carr all month being reported on six dates (PCF *et al.*).

The Prestwick Carr

Great Grey Shrike

John Richards

22nd January

**Jay** *Garrulus glandarius*

Six at Gosforth Park NR on 18th (MJC), four at Long Walk (Howick) on 1st (PHa/AHa) and three at Crooked Oak (nr Derwent Reservoir) on 9th (IFo) with one to two at 16 widespread localities.

Magpie *Pica pica*

On 1st 39 came in to roost at Northumberlandia (Cramlington) (DM/STH/PJA), 16 at Howdon on 28th (CB), 14 at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 13th (DM) and 11 at Alnwick on 5th with one to three at four other locations including one lingering at Holy Island.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

A stubble field at Beacon Hill (Cramlington) attracted 100 on 13th (DM), 70 were at Quarry Cottage and nearby horse pastures (Newbiggin) during the month (BS), ten to 56 all month at Spartylea (CT) and 53 at Alexandra Park (Cramlington) on 27th (DM). Three to nine were at Eachwick, Gosforth and Jesmond.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

High count of 67 at Derwent Reservoir on 1st (IFo) with four pairs at Cramlington Hall displaying, two pairs coming to food at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) and a black and white bird in the flock at QEII CP on 14th.



A Rook in black and white

QEII CP

by Chris Barlow

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

At Prestwick Carr on 19th, 23 fed together (STH), 15 at Beacon Hill (Cramlington) on 13th (DM), five at Jesmond Dene on 14th and one pair coming to food at Newbiggin during the month.

Raven *Corvus corax*

Three were at Plenmeller Common on 13th and at Brizlee on 20th (MJC/ASJ), two N at Spartylea on 16th (CT) and two at Thrunton Woods on 20th (MJC) with singles at Greenhead on 20th, Alnwick Moor on 21st and Doddington on 27th.

Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus*

Three found by Tom Tams on Links Road (Tynemouth) on 30th (DRW) and one at Longhoughton on 19th (Bst).

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

On 20th 31 were at Thrunton Woods (MJC), eight to 15 at Spartylea during the month (CT), six including five trapped and ringed including a re-trap at Spindleston on 25th (BRS), four at Howdon on 7th, three at Jesmond Dene on the same date and one to two at seven other locations.

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

During the month three were at East Linden (Longhorsley) (PHa/AHa), two north of Stobswood on 2nd (AA), at Bolam Lake on 3rd (GB), Hartburn on 7th (SW) and Mitford Castle on the same date (TF/JFa). Singles were at Abbey Mill, Linden Hall, Letah Wood and singing at Rothbury.



One of the few sightings of Waxwings this winter
on a Tynemouth TV aerial
Duncan Watson
30th January

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

Four were at Prestwick Carr on 1st and 6th with one to three there regularly during the month (PCF *et al.*). Three were at Derwent Reservoir on 8th (IFo) and East Linden (Longhorsley) on 26th (PHa/AHa) with two at East Cramlington on 15th and singles at three other locations .



A Willow Tit at John Richard's garden feeder on 15th January

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

At least 35 were in a roving flock at Crooked Oak (near Derwent Reservoir) on 9th (IFo), 33 at Spindlestone on 25th of which 30 were trapped and ringing including three re-traps (BRS). Five to ten were at Spartylea during the month (CT) with one to five at five other locations.



Two Tits from Howdon by Colin Bradshaw on 7th January
Above: a Blue and below: a Great Tit

**Great Tit** *Parus major*

At Spindlestone on 25th 12 of 14 were trapped and ringing including two re-traps (BRS), eight in mixed flock at Crooked Oak (nr Derwent Reservoir) on 9th (IFo), four to six at Spartylea during the month (CT) with six at Gosforth on 18th and Prestwick Carr on 20th. One to five were at six other locations.

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

A good count of at least 220 on organic farmland stubble near Stamfordham on 23rd (EC) and 30 flew S at Blyth Estuary on 18th (STH). Five were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 20th, four at St Mary's Island on 22nd and Alnwick Moor on 23rd with one to two at three locations including singing birds on 27th and 29th

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

An impressive 35 were noted at Dukeshouse (Hexham) on 5th (AJH). There was a 'tribe' of 20 at Howick on 1st and 18 were at Letah Wood (Hexham) on 12th, while other sizeable gatherings were 15 at Northumberland Park (North Shields), 14 at Allendale, both on 14th and ten at Cramlington (Valley Park). Counts of nine came from Derwent Reservoir, Keepersshield (North Tyne) and Spartylea, eight were at Gosforth Garden Village, and Cramlington (Alexandra Park and Southfield Green). Elsewhere, six to seven were reported from Annitsford, Furnace Bridge (Bedlington), Gosforth GC, Seaton Delaval and Tynemouth; four were at West Hartford and two to three at Eachwick, East Chevington, Exhibition Park, Jesmond Dene, Leazes Park, Newburn Park and Wark (North Tyne).

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Singles were noted at Newbiggin on 3rd, Crooked Oak (near Derwent Reservoir) on 9th, Low Newton on 19th and Amble on 29th.

A single bird of the **Siberian race** *P.c.trisitis* was seen and heard at Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 1st (DRW).



A Siberian Chiffchaff at Northumberland Park on 1st January
a good start to the New Year for Duncan Watson

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

There were three reports from Gosforth this month, beginning with a female at Gosforth Garden Village on 6th (MJC); a male was at Melton Park on 21st (MHM) and an un-sexed bird at Beatty Avenue Jesmond on 28th (MJCo).

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapilla*

The wintering bird from December 2017 was still at Northumberland Park (North Shields) to at least 28th (MNC *et al.*).

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

A total of 42 were found in typical habitat at Thrunton Woods on 20th (MJC). Elsewhere, 12 were at Dukeshouse (Hexham) on 5th, three at Hartburn on 7th and two at Ellington and Northumberland Park (North Shields). Singles were reported from a further ten localities.



The elusive Firecrest photographed by Iain Johnson in Northumberland Park

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

A total of 21 were noted in Thrunton Woods on 20th and 19 were found between Ross and Guile Point on 7th (MJC). Holywell Dene held 11 on 18th and seven were at Branton GP. A marauding Weasel attracted the attention of three at Newton Point on 1st; two were at Spartylea on 1st and two at Holy Island on 14th. A single was noted at Jesmond Dene and at least one roosted in a Swallow nest in a stable yard at Howick on 10th.

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Four at Hartburn on 7th included two singing birds (SW). Singles were at three Jesmond Dene localities, also on 7th and two at Abbey Mill (Morpeth), Humshaugh, Northumberland Park (North Shields), Spartylea and Spindleston. Singles were noted at Allendale, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), two sites at East Ord (Berwick), Humford Woods (Bedlington) and Longhirst Hall.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

All reports this month were of singles; at Allendale, Big Waters, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Exhibition Park, Furnace Bridge (Bedlington), Hartburn, Humshaugh, Howick, Spartylea and Rothbury.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

The largest reported gatherings were 500+ and 1,000 in the Cresswell area on 13th and 25th respectively (MSH/SRB). A further 500 were at Hebron on 14th and 300+ at Prestwick Carr on 22nd and at Whalton on 30th. Elsewhere 160 were at Harwood Forest on 7th, 110 at Whitley Bay links on 17th, 65 at Plenneller Common on 13th and eight to 20 at Spartylea throughout.

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Counts of up to 12 came from Exhibition Park and Prestwick Carr early in the month (PCF/GB). Ten were noted between Ross and Guile Point on 7th and four to nine at Spartylea throughout. Up to seven were reported from Quarry cottage (Newbiggin) and six visited a garden at Gosforth Garden Village. One to four were noted at a further four localities.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

Very well documented this month with over 50 reports. By far the largest gathering was 900 at Prestwick Carr on 6th (IK). Counts of ca. 300 came from Birchwood Hall (Warenford) on 6th and Red Row on 17th, while 200-250 were reported from Backworth on 20th, Newham Fen on 12th and Whittingham on 15th. Further sizeable gatherings of 100-185 were noted at Chesterhill (Budle Bay), Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Corbridge, Doddington, Harwood Forest, Hebron and West Minsteracres, while 60-90 were at Blyth Estuary, Bothal Pond, Cambois, Humshaugh, Norham, Sharperton, Shoresdean and Viewley. Counts of one to 56 from a further 21 localities included one to 17 in off the sea at Seaton Sluice and Guile Point on 3rd, 5th and 7th, while six at Holy Island on 14th may also have been recent arrivals.



A winter visitor at Allenheads

A Fieldfare

18th January

Colin Bradshaw

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

The largest gathering was 252 at Gosforth GC on 6th (MJC). Another large flock of 200 was at Hebron on 14th when 150 flying E at dawn over Beal may have come in off the sea. Counts of 30-50 came from Branton GP, Bywell/Sod Hall, Cambois and Pegswood Moor and 25-26 were noted at Gosforth and Hexham. One to 15 were reported from a further 14 localities.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Five were at Castle Island on 21st (DM) and there was an unusual occurrence of three on the beach at Boulmer on 19th (TRD/JD). One to two were also reported from Brandling Park and Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Gosforth Garden Village, Harwood Forest, Holy Island, Jesmond Dene, Keepersfield (North Tyne), Little Mill, Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) and Spartylea, several of which were in song.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Six were noted at Gosforth on 16th (CDB). Two were reported from Cocklawburn, East Ord (Berwick), Fulbeck (Morpeth), Leazes Park and Stamfordham, the latter in full song. Singing birds were also heard at Linden Hall, Prestwick Carr and Spindlestone, while further singles were found at Belford Moor, Jesmond, West Hartford, West Ord and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Five were at Holy Island on 14th and four at Spartylea throughout. Three were at Eachwick and at Quarry House (Newbiggin), two at Jesmond Dene and a single in a South Gosforth garden.

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

Peak monthly counts were eight at Beadnell on 14th (AJ), six between Warkworth and Amble North Pier (two pairs + separate male and female), four at St Mary's Island, three on Holy Island and at East Chevington, pairs at Blyth links, Boulmer and Gloucester Lodge (Blyth) and two at Druridge Pools NR, Howick and between Ross and Guile Point. Further singles were reported from Alnwick Moor, Brizlee, Callerton subsidence area, Cambois, Cheswick, Cresswell, Gowk Hill (Rothbury), Newbiggin, Newton and Tynemouth.



Above: a Robin at Bolam Lake by Chris Barlow 7th January
and below: a Stonechat at Chibburn mouth by John Richards



Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

Two spent the month at Spartylea and two were noted at Ponteland, Hedgeley, Cockshaw Burn (Hexham) and Hartburn during the month. Singles were seen at a further ten sites, including on a stream at a Morpeth supermarket car park on several dates.

Dunnoek *Prunella modularis*

A total of ten birds were at two feeding stations in Holywell Dene on 28th (ASJ). Eight were noted at Howdon on 7th (CB). Four were at Spartylea all month, at Prestwick Carr on 7th and at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 29th. One to three were at three further sites.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

240 were counted at Straight Lonnen/Coombes Farm (Holy Island) on 14th (MJC). Up to 50 frequented garden feeders and roosted at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) all month (RS). 45 were at Cullercoats Bay all month and around 20 at garden feeders all month at Marden Estate (ASJ). 16 to 29 roosted at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on several dates (DM). 12 were also at feeders at Gosforth Garden Village on 27th (MJC). Six were noted at a Newcastle Pub beer garden on 29th.

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

At least 50 were feeding in a game crop at Old Bewick on 30th (MH/AA). At least 30 were part of a large mixed flock of sparrows, buntings and finches at Stamfordham on 23rd (EC). 30 were at Chugdon Wood on 20th (TB). Around 30 were at Mootlaw Quarry on 25th (ALT). 23 were seen at Derwent Reservoir on 5th (IFo). 17 were seen at Warden on 27th (SW) and ten were seen in a Longbenton Garden on 26th (AJ). Ten were at Holywell Pond on 29th (DLo). Eight were in a Newton garden on 26th (PG). One to six were at six other sites including two in a Gosforth garden on 27th.



A Tree Sparrow

Gosforth

Mike Carr

8th January

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Two were at Jesmond Dene on 14th (MJCo). Single birds were seen at twelve further sites, including one in a backyard at Newton Red House on 6th (PG).

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

Nine at Chevington Burn mouth was the month's highest count, made on 26th (TRD). Six were at Prestwick Carr on 1st, with five here on 3rd (PCF). One to two were watched at five other sites during the month.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Small numbers over-wintered in the county this year, with 12 present at Prestwick Carr on 7th, seven at West Hartford on 18th and seven on moorland, in snow at Brizlee on 20th (PCF/STH/ASJ). Five were at Mickley Square feeding in a rape field on 26th (DLe). Four were at St. Mary's Wetland on 22nd (ASJ). Three were at Cambois on 19th and at Gibb's Hill (Whittingham) on 23rd (MSH/CW). Somewhat unusually, two were at North Shields Fish Quay on 17th also two at Big Waters, Newcastle Town Moor, Gosforth, Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin), and Thrunton Woods, at Castle Island and West Hartford during the month (ASJ/GB/MJC/RS/DM). A single at Widehope on 25th (TRD/JD) and at Northumberlandia (Cramlington) on 1st (DM).

Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta*

A single spent the month at Druridge Pools where two were noted on 26th (MSH).

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Eight were at Snipe Point/north shore and seven at Sandham Bay (Holy Island) on 14th and eight at St. Mary's Island on 22nd (MJC/ASJ). Four were at the Tweed Estuary on 31st (PRM). Three were at Ross on 7th, Tynemouth and Cullercoats Bay on 17th (MJC/ASJ). One to two were at six other sites.

Chaffinch *Fringilla montifringilla*

Some large flocks were noted this month feeding in stubble with 200 at Howick on 1st and 180 at North Charlton on 30th and 150 at Shadfen on 27th (JAR/MH/AA/TFa/JFa). 60 were at West Minsteracres on 11th and at least 60 at Stamfordham on 23rd. 40 plus were at Holburn and at Bywell on 6th and 30 plus at Milbourne on 14th. Two to 20 were at six further sites, including four to five in gardens at Gosforth and Marden Estate.



A Chaffinch at Howdon
Colin Bradshaw
7th January

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

34 were noted at High Craggs (Murton) on 11th (MHu). Up to 25 were at Bolam Lake on 3rd and 6th (GB/NFO). Around 18 were seen at Bywell on 6th (MH) and ten noted at Shadfen on 27th (TFa/JFa). Nine at Crooked Oak (Derwent Reservoir) on 5th (IFo). One to seven were seen at a further six locations, including up to five in a Hexham garden all month (AJH).

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

The wintering group at Abbey Mill (Morpeth) reduced this month, with a maximum number of three birds noted on 14th and one to two reported on four other dates (TRD/IRD/TB/TD *et al.*). A high flying large finch at Prestwick Carr on 15th was thought to be this species (AJR).

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Birds attending garden feeders at Rothbury peaked at a site record of 16 on 21st (TRD/JD). Groups of 11 were seen at Milbourne, Prestwick Carr and Thrunton during the month. Eight were seen at Castle Island on 21st. Eight were at Ellington and seven at Marden Quarry on 7th, with seven at Holywell Dene the following day. Six were at altitude at Alnwick Moor on 12th. One to five well reported this month from 24 other locations, including two to four at gardens in South Gosforth and Morpeth.

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

23 leaving a roost at Riverside C.P (Prudhoe) on 27th was the month's peak count (DLe). 16 were at Linden Hall on 8th (NFO). Ten plus were at Holburn on 6th (DM/LAR/GB). One to seven birds at a further 15 sites during the month.

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*

Flocks peaked this month at 75 birds at Elwick on 6th and 70 plus at Druridge Links on 31st (TB/MSH). A flock at Beal was variously counted at 30 on 2nd, 40 on 6th and 21st and 25 to 60 on 9th (DF/CH/MH/AA). 30 were at East Chevington on 1st, 19 on 20th (TFa/JFa). 12 seen at Long Nanny on 1st, six at Cocklawburn on 26th and four at Beadnell on 14th.

Linnet *Cinaria canabina*

A huge flock of 700 plus were feeding at Shadfen (Morpeth) on 21st (TFa/JFa). Elsewhere, 180 were counted at High Craggs (Murton) on 11th (Mhu). 120 were at Boulmer on 1st (TRD). 60 plus were found at Spindlestone on 8th and 60 at Bywell in a game crop on 6th (BRS/MH). One to 30 plus were at a further seven sites during the month.

Common Redpoll *Carduelis flammea*

The only sighting was of one at Fenham Le Moor on 4th (TFa/JFa).



A Mealy Redpoll on a Wylam garden feeder

Chris Potter

21st January

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis caber*

21 were observed in tree tops at Hexham on 29th (AJR). Nine were at Prestwick Carr on 5th, with five there on 7th. Up to three attended garden feeders all month at Rothbury. Three at Thrunton on 20th. One to two at five other sites.

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

21 in flight at Dilston on 28th was the largest count at this site this winter (DLe). One to five were seen at a further four sites this month.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

An impressive 68 were at garden feeders at East Ord (Berwick) on 18th, with 42 at a different East Ord site on 1st (MHu). 55 were at Marden Quarry on 14th (KWY). Another good garden count was at Eachwick, with 42 a site record on 28th (CDB). 25 were seen at Beacon Lane (Cramlington) on 13th (DM). One to 15 were at five other sites during the month.

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

Around 120 noted at Dilston on 28th (DLe). About 60 were at Abbey Mill (Morpeth) on 3rd and 6th (GB/NFo). 25 flew over a Morpeth garden on 11th (TD). One to 15 were at 11 further sites, including three in a Gosforth garden on 27th (MJC).

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

Some encouraging counts this month. Large numbers remained at Outchester (Waren Mill) during the month, with 120 plus noted feeding on 27th (up to 150 were reported by other observers) and 60 plus here on 7th. At Big Waters 22 on 1st, increased to 80 plus seen on 11th (ASJ/GB/SPP). 100 were noted at Callerton on 19th, with 72 there on 12th (MH). At least 70 birds were at Stamfordham on 23rd feeding in a large mixed flock with buntings and finches (EC). The importance of game crops in winter was shown when 60 plus fed in one at Old Bewick on 30th and 60 plus did likewise at Crow Hall Farm (Holywell) on 31st (MH/AA/ASJ). 50 plus at Shilbottle on 10th (BS). 42 seen at Crooked Oak (Derwent Reservoir) on 5th (IFo). 38 were at a traditional winter site near Old Mousen (Belford) on 27th (ASJ). 30 at Birling Carrs on 7th (TD). One to twelve were at six other sites.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

40 with Yellowhammers at Callerton on 12th and 30 plus on 19th (MH). A minimum of 30 were at Stamfordham in the mixed finch and bunting flock feeding here at an organic farm (EC). 20 plus were in a game crop at Crow Hall Farm (Holywell) on 31st (ASJ). 15 plus in a game crop at Old Bewick on 30th with Yellowhammers (MH/AA). 14 noted at Crooked Oak (Derwent Reservoir) on 5th (IFo). Ten were at Birling Carrs on 7th (TD) and one to six at a further 14 locations during the month.

Lapland Bunting *Emberiza lapponicus*

Five fed on the saltmarsh at Beal on 21st (CH).

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

18 were watched at the north shore (Holy Island) on 28th (IK). 14, including two males, were north of "Shell Road" Lindisfarne on 8th (CH). Two were found between Ross and Guile Point on 7th (MJC). A single was at the Tweed Estuary at Sandstell Point on 31st (PRM).

ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN**Escapes****Red-breasted Goose** *Branta ruficollis*

The ringed escape seen last month was re-found, this time at East Chevington on 29th and 30th (PHi/SSc/TD) where it was associating with Greylag Geese. The blue plastic ring is very narrow and hard to see unless good views obtained.

Hybrids**American Wigeon x Wigeon** *Mareca americana x Mareca penelope*

A hybrid drake was found at Druridge Pools on 14th (TF / JFa) and was still present on 28th.



A hybrid Wigeon and a drake Wigeon at Druridge Pools by Jonathan Farooqi on 19th January

Birds of Unknown Origin

No sightings

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

A.Allen, C.D.Barlow, S.R.Barrett, M. & R.J.Bentley (MB/RB), T.Blake, J.S.Booth, G.Bowman, C.Bradshaw, J.Bucknall (JBU), M.J.Carr, M.N.Coates, M.J.Cook (MJCo), E.Crabtree, A.Curry, T.Daley, T.R. & J.Dean, I.R.Douglas, J.Farooqi (JFa), T.Farooqi, P.C.Fletcher, D.F.Forshaw, I.Forsyth (IFo), P.Gilbert, C.D.Hampton, A. & P.H.Hanmer (AHa / PHa), A.S.Hart, C.Hartley, M.Henry, A.J.Hewitt, P.Higginson (PHi), M.S.Hodgson, S.T.Holliday, M.Hutcheson (MHu), A.S.Jack, A.Janes, M.G.Kerby (MK), I.Kerr, M.Kirby (Mki), C.G.Knox, G.P.Knox, D.Leat (Dle), D.Lovatt (DLo), P.R.Massey, M.H.Mayfield, D.McKeown, A.J.Newson, N.F.Osborne, A.J.Richards, J.A.Roper, C.Saunders, S.Scowcroft (SSc), M.R.Smith, B.Steel, R.Stevens, P.Stewart, A.L.Todd, C.Tudge, D.R.Watson, S.Westerberg, C.Wright, K.W.York.

Alnwick Wildlife Group (R Poyer), Bamburgh Ringing Station, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

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

This bulletin was compiled by Graeme Bowman (Geese to Mergansers), Steve Laing (Red Grouse to Cormorant), Trevor Blake (Hawks to Falcons), Tom Brewis (Oystercatcher to Godwit), Clive Hampton (Turnstone to Redshank), Eddie Crabtree (Kittiwake to Puffin), Tim Dean (Escapes, Hybrids and Unknown Origin, List of Contributors, Highlights), Peter Fletcher (Doves to Larks), Mike Richardson (Tits to Stonechat), Alan Jack (Dipper to Buntings).

Data Manager is Tom Brewis.

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 records for the month to ntbc.records@googlemail.com

Please email for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and grid references: Please use of standard location names and 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

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 online resource for anyone interested in birds. There are:

Photo Galleries – Here you can view hundreds of photos of birds from Northumberland, Newcastle and North Tyneside. Members are encouraged to contribute their own photos. Simply send them to galleries@ntbc.org.uk

Sightings – Here you can view reports of birds recently reported in the County. Anyone who would like to contribute and post sightings to this page, please email sightings@ntbc.org.uk Please note this section is moderated, so there may be a short delay before your record appears.

There are also County Checklists, Records Committee updates, Information on important Surveys, useful articles and reports on Bird ID and Overseas Birding Trips....and much more...

Please submit any other new content for the website to the main club email address at ntbcorg@gmail.com

New content such as Birding Trip Reports etc., is always welcome and very much appreciated.

To find out more please visit www.ntbc.org.uk

BIRDS IN NORTHUMBRIA 2017

Photographs - Photos are always welcome for consideration. All members are free to submit images (taken within the county during 2017) to the editor. Please send to Andy Mould at highroller10@btinternet.com as 300Dpi max. resolution images, max. width and height 246mm x 346mm, on one or more emails by **31st May 2018** latest.

Papers - Papers from members (on any bird-related topic in the county) are always welcome for publication. I have a few already agreed for BiN 2017, but there should be room for one more. To discuss a possible paper for BiN 2017, or a future BiN, please contact Andy Mould, **ASAP**, on 0191 2664265, or email: highroller10@btinternet.com

NEW IOC SPECIES ORDER

NTBC has adopted a new species list from this month as a result of the British Ornithologists Union changing to the International Ornithological Union World Bird List as of 1st January 2018. Details can be found on the BOU website www.bou.org.uk and clicking on the 'British List' tab. The new county list has also been updated to reflect the changes and can be found on the NTBC website www.ntbc.org.uk under the 'Members Resources' tab and then 'Recording'. The county list links for PDF, Excel & Word are to be found on the right hand side of the web page under the 'Work in Progress' files which show the current position regarding county rarities. Acknowledgements go to Dick Myatt, Tom Brewis and Mike Hodgson (and Tim Dean (ed.)) who all helped enormously to move over to this new species order.

Although the families in this new list are roughly in the same order the species within each family have been re-ordered extensively. It has been universally accepted though that the new IOC species list will be the one that everyone uses in the UK and it has always been the case for NTBC to fall in line with the BOU stance.

Tim Dean

email : t.r.dean@btinternet.com



An Iceland Gull at Gosforth Golf Course by Mike Carr on 6th January

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2018 No 2

MONTHLY SUMMARY FEBRUARY 2018

3rd April 2018



CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Tundra Bean Goose	One was found again at Budle Bay on 26th.
American Wigeon	The returning male was again noted at Grindon Lough all month.
Great Northern Diver	The two over-wintering birds remained all month at Widdrington Moor Lake.
Bittern	Two at Gosforth Park and East Chevington.
Little Stint	The wintering individual stayed until at least 20th.
Spotted Redshank	The wintering bird at Budle Bay was present all month.
Glaucous Gull	Several individuals present.
Iceland Gull	Several individuals present.
Black Guillemot	One at Stag Rocks on 23rd. Presumably one of the Farne Islands wintering birds.
Great Grey Shrike	The wintering bird was present at Prestwick Carr all month.
Waxwing	Three at Whitley Bay and two at Kenton. Sparse winter for species.
Cetti's Warble	Calling at East Chevington South Pool. Presumably wintered.
Firecrest	One still wintering at Northumberland Park, N Shields.
Water Pipit	Up to two at Druridge Pools all month.
Hawfinch	Continued sightings of up to five at Morpeth, Craggside and Stamfordham.
Mealy Redpoll	Two at Branton GP on 8th.
Linnet	Huge flock of 650 at Elwick on 17th.
Snow Bunting	14 at Holy island on north shore of Snook and one at Ross Point.

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 is on Thursday 12th April.

Birds in Myth and Fact, Ancient and modern beliefs by Graham Bell.

Graham has been a member of the NTBC for many years and was a founder member of the NNBC. He is very well travelled, having given presentations from the Arctic to Antarctica.



A welcome visitor to Eddie Crabtree's Stamfordham garden on 25th February
One of the winter influx of Hawfinches

FIELD TRIPS Contact Steve Anderson seaswan@btinternet.com

April 22nd Langholm for harriers and upland birds.

CLASSIFIED LIST**Brent Goose** *Branta bernicla*

Pale-bellied *hrota* race birds included large numbers in Budle Bay, with an estimated 1,200 on 16th and 1,100 on 26th (DF); 90 were at Beal Point, Lindisfarne NNR on 4th (TRD) and 60+ there on 23rd (PRM).

Two dark-bellied *bernicla* race birds were at Budle Bay on 26th (DF).

Red-breasted Goose *Branta ruficollis*

One, of presumed captive origin, was with Pink-footed Geese *Anser brachyrhynchus* at Druridge Pools on 17th (GB/LAR) and East Chevington on 18th (IRD).

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

About 60 flew SE over Wark on 27th (PRM). Numbers at Grindon Lough peaked at 270 on 21st (MRS), 183 were at Derwent Reservoir on 7th (IFo), 102-125 at Caistron (MKi), Cresswell Pond (STH) and Killingworth Lake (LJM), and 50-93 at Big Waters, Druridge Pools, East Gosforth, Fontburn Reservoir and West Ord. Groups of 24-46 were at at Horncliffe, Linton Ponds, and QEII CP and Widdrington Moor Lakes, and ten to 13 on the River Aln at Alnwick Castle and at Newcastle Leazes Park. One to eight were also at Bothal Pond, Castle Island and Spartylea.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

At Budle Bay, one to 13 were noted on 3rd-4th (MSH/JCD) and about 1,200-1,500 between 16th-26th (DF/ASJ). Further up at Fenham Flats, 240 were present on 4th (JD). Singles were also at Gloucester Lodge-Old Hartley, QEII CP Lake and St Mary's between 2nd-20th. Two leucistic individuals were noted at Budle Bay between 11th-26th (DF/ASJ).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

58 flew N at East Ord on 17th (MHu). Peak counts were 730 at West Minsteracres on 10th (IFo), 365 at Budle Bay on 26th (DF), 204 at Cocklawburn on 16th (MHu), 125-165 at Haughton Strother GP (MR), Holywell village (MSH) and Newton Pool (CDH), and 44-57 at Gosforth Park and Maiden's Hall Lake. Counts of 22-28 came from Druridge Pools, Prestwick Carr and Spartylea, while one to seven were at eight further scattered sites.

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

A group of 550 flew W at Spindlestone on 1st (JDL) and 35-62 flew N at East Ord and East Thirston. An estimated 5,000 were at Burton, near Bamburgh, on 12th and included a strikingly leucistic individual (DF); 5,000 were at Ellington on 27th (TB), 4,000 at Hemscott Hill on 4th (TF/JFa), 3,885 at East Chevington on 18th (IRD), 3,000 near Stobswood on 15th (TRD/JD), 2,500 at Budle Bay on 16th (DF), about 2,000 at Cresswell Pond and Druridge Pools, 1,000-1,585 at Doddington, East Holywell, Ellington and Gloucester Lodge, and 600-950 at Backworth-Earsdon, Old Hartley and St Mary's. Counts of 248-307 also came from Bothal Pond, Cocklawburn and Woodhorn, with 66 at Low Newton Scrape.



A Pink-footed Goose at Druridge
Chris Barlow on 18th February

Tundra Bean Goose *Anser serrirostris*

One was at Budle Bay on 26th (DF).

White-fronted Goose *Anser flavirostris*

Reports of Eurasian *albifrons* race birds involved four (adults) at Gloucester Lodge on 2nd (MSH), three at Holywell Pond on 25th (ASJ), two at Burton (near Bamburgh) on 12th (DF), Gloucester Lodge on 12th (MSH), Hemscott Hill on 4th (TF/JFa), Newton Pool on 23rd (CDH), and singles at Druridge Pools on 17th (GB/LAR) and West Minsteracres on 10th (IFo). Two Greenland *flavirostris* race birds were at Hemscott Hill on 4th and two adults were at Woodhorn on 15th (MSH). Un-raced birds involved three at East Holywell on 25th (MNC), and two at East Chevington on 18th (IRD).

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Peak concentrations were 105 at QEII CP Lake on 18th (CDH), 52 at Killingworth Lake on 1st (LJM), 25 at both Buston Links (TB) and the Tweed Estuary (MHu), and 12-16 at Bickerton, Big Waters, Newcastle Exhibition Park and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. An immature bird was about 3km offshore at Seaton Sluice on 22nd (SSWT).

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Four flew N at Seaton Sluice on 20th (SSWT). Peak counts involved 46 (at least seven juveniles) at Druridge Bay on 4th, with 43 at East Chevington on 6th (NFO), 26 at Fenham Mill on 6th (MH/AA), 19 feeding on brassicas at High Buston on 25th (CH), and 13-17 at Castron, Cresswell Pond, Shield on the Wall and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Five were on the sea off Hadston on 20th (JSB) and one to two were also at Branton GP and Cocklawburn Pond.



Whooper Swans at Castron
Janet Dean on 19th February

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Five flew N and one S at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). 30 were at Howdon on 10th (CB), 13-15 at the Blyth Estuary (MSH), Cresswell Pond (IRD), Druridge Pools (GB/DM/LAR) and Scotswood (KWY), three to seven at Boulmer, Castle Island, the Coquet Estuary, Druridge Lane, Elswick and Widdrington Moor Lake, and one to two at East Chevington, Linton Ponds, Low Newton Scrape and the Tweed Estuary. Inland, singles were at Haughton Strother GP on 19th (MR) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 18th (AJR).

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

One was at Morpeth on 25th (TF/JFa).

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Peak counts were 35 (21 drakes) at Budle Bay on 14th (DF), 20 at Druridge Pools on 3rd (DM/GB/LAR), 16 at Low Newton on 4th (SW), five to seven at Monks' House Pool (JDL) and Swallow Pond (GPK), and three to four at Linton Ponds and Prestwick Carr. One to two were also at Branton GP, Grindon Lough and Linton Ponds. More unusual was a pair at Newcastle Exhibition Park on 7th (DHWB) and a drake on several dates between 1st-27th (GB).

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

The largest counts were 27 at Swallow Pond on 27th (GPK), 24 at Bothal Pond on 25th (TF/JFa), 22 at Bickerton (near Castron) on 5th (MKi), 13-15 at Arcot Pond (LJM) and Castron (JD), and six-nine at Big Waters, Howdon, Linton Ponds, Longhirst Flash, Marden Quarry and Widdrington Moor Lakes. Four were also at Killingworth Lake, and one to two at Castle Island, Cocklawburn Pond, East Chevington, Marden Quarry and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

Four flew S at Seaton Sluice on 26th (SSWT). Largest counts were 600 at Branton GP on 11th (MJC), 535 at Cresswell Pond on 2nd (AJR), 409 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 8th (MR), 300 at Derwent Reservoir on 7th (IFo), 200-232 at Druridge Pools (MSH), Grindon Lough (PRM) and Widdrington Moor Lake (MSH), and 115-170 at Bothal and Linton Ponds and the Coquet Estuary. Counts of 58-97 came from Boulmer, Newton Point and the Tweed Estuary, while 12-40 were at Haughton Strother GP, Longhirst and Lynemouth Flashes, Maiden's Hall and QEII CP Lakes, New Water Haugh, Shield on the Wall and Spittal Bay.

American Wigeon *Anas americana*

A drake was at Grindon Lough on 2nd and 18th-21st (TRD/JD/PRM/MRS *et al.*).

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Peak counts were 237 at Derwent Reservoir on 15th (IFo), 137 at the Tweed Estuary on 23rd (PRM), 88 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 8th (MR), and 52-60 at Bothal Pond (TD), Castle Island (DM/PJA) and Widdrington Moor Lake (MSH). Groups of 25-45 were at Airy Holm Reservoir, Grindon Lough, Haughton Strother GP, Linton Ponds, Morpeth, Newcastle Leazes Park, QEII CP Lake and Whiteadder Water, and ten to 11 at Alnwick Castle, Boulmer Flash and Spartylea.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

Four flew N at East Chevington on 17th (TF/JFa). 320 were close inshore at Fenham Flats on 1st (JDL) while 67 were noted there on 12th (DF). Away from this core area, one to two were at Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough, Prestwick Carr and Widdrington Moor Lake on scattered dates.

Teal *Anas crecca*

Peak counts were 248 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 8th (MR), 244 at Howdon on 26th (CB), 162 at Derwent Reservoir on 5th (IFo), 100-115 at Druridge Pools (MSH) and Grindon Lough (PRM), and 50-80 at Arcot, Linton and Swallow Ponds, Big Waters, Castle Island, the Coquet Estuary and Widdrington Moor Lake. Counts of 23-48 also came from the Blyth Estuary, Bothal Pond, Eglingham, Haughton Strother GP, Longhirst Flash, Scotswood, St Mary's Wetland, Tyne Green and West Stobswood Pool, and 11 to 16 were at/over Boulmer Flash, Cocklawburn, Cresswell and Linton Ponds, Greenlee and Grindon Loughs, Shiremoor, the Tweed Estuary and Whiteadder Water.

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Killingworth Lake held a peak of 31 (27 drakes) on 1st (LJM), 25 were at Holywell Pond on 24th (KWY), 19 at Swallow Pond on 2nd (GPK), 18 at Bothal Pond on 20th (TF/JFa), 14 at East Chevington (TF/JFa), and seven at Cresswell Pond. Three to four were also at QEII CP and Widdrington Moor Lakes, and one to two at Bakethin Reservoir, Big Waters, Branton GP, Marden Quarry and West Stobswood Pool.



A drake Pochard at Killingworth Lake 7th February by Alan Jack

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Five flew N at Seaton Sluice on 27th (SSWT). Killingworth Lake held a peak of 133 on 14th (MSH), 55 were at Caistron on 15th (JD), 45 at Bickerton on 5th (MKi), 30-36 at Grindon Lough, Holywell and Swallow Ponds, and QEII CP Lake, and 21-25 at Bothal and West Allotment Ponds, Haughton Strother GP and Marden Quarry. Counts of 11-16 were at Big Waters, Cocklawburn and Linton Ponds, Newcastle Exhibition Park and Shield on the Wall.

Scaup *Aythya marila*

A drake was at Haughton Strother GP on 5th (MR).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

A total of 42 flew N and 22 S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). Moderate counts involved peaks of 26 at North Shields Fish Quay on 25th (DRW), and 13-14 at the Blyth and Coquet Estuaries (AWG/MSH), while one was at the Tweed Estuary.

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

Two flew N at Seaton Sluice on 3rd (SSWT).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

At Seaton Sluice, 32 flew N and 11 S during the month (SSWT). Variable numbers at Stag Rocks included peaks of 300 on 4th (TRD) and 11th (MSH/JCD), 130 were at Cheswick Black Rocks on 2nd (MHu), 28-52 off Cocklawburn, East Chevington-Hadston Links, Ross Back Sands, 15 at Goswick and five at Alnmouth.

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

Three flew N at Seaton Sluice between 22nd-26th (SSWT). The only large counts came from Budle Point-Stag Rocks, where a peak of 74 was recorded on 3rd (BS). Six were off Goswick on 20th (CH) and three off Ross Back Sands (MR). One was regularly at East Chevington between 4th-25th (TF/JFa/NFO *et al.*).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

At Seaton Sluice, 11 flew N and one S during the month (SSWT), and six flew N at Newbiggin on 2nd (STH). A total of 108 was noted at the Tweed Estuary during a WeBS count on 15th (MHu), 51 were at East Chevington north pool on 17th and 24th (MH), 28 at Castle Island on 18th (DM/PJA), 20-22 at Branton GP (MHu), Killingworth Lake (MSH), New Water Haugh (MHu), Warkworth (AWG) and Widdrington Moor Lake (MSH), and ten to 19 at Caistron, Castle Island, Football Hole, Grindon Lough and QEII CP Lake. Five to eight were also at Big Waters, the Blyth Estuary, Bothal Pond, Embleton Bay, Horncliffe, Tweedmouth, West Ord and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, while three to four were at Bakethin Reservoir, Cresswell Pond and Druridge Pools.



A Goldeneye at Druridge Pools. Tim Dean on 21st February

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

14 were at Horncliffe on 9th (JDL), 12 at Branton GP on 11th (MJC), ten at Greenlee Lough on 21st (MRS), eight at the Tweed Estuary (PRM), and three to five at Caistron, Newcastle Exhibition Park, Ridley Stokoe and West Allotment Pond. One to two were also at Ashington, Bellingham, Hedgeley GP, Kilham, Fenham Flats, Marden Quarry, Morpeth, Ponteland Park, QEII CP and Widdrington Moor Lakes, and Windyhaugh.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

One flew N at Seaton Sluice on 21st (SSWT). Nine (seven drakes) at Ladyburn Lake on 24th included some displaying (MH), eight were offshore at Druridge on 21st (TRD/JD), six at Warkworth on 4th (AWG), and four at the Tweed Estuary (MHu). One to two were also at the Alnmouth Bay, the Blyth Estuary, Budle Bay, Druridge Pools, East Chevington and Stag Rocks.

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

High Knock Shield (Spartylea) was again a popular location throughout the month with numbers peaking at ten (three males and seven females) together on 16th (EC/JSB). Three were also at Meadow Cottage (Allenheads) on that date.

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

A total of 20 were in several small coveys all the way up to the summit at Simonside on 24th (JD), nine were in snow at Blanchland Moor on 7th (IFo) and two to four were seen at Alnwick Moor, Harwood Forest, Longframlington Common and Spartylea.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

Eight at Hedgeley on 22nd were the observer's first there this year (TRD). Three in the Fontburn area on 16th was the only other report (TD).



A Red-legged Partridge at North Charlton
by Alan Jack on 3rd February

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Six at Shiremoor on 28th was the highest count this month (CGK). One to three birds were seen at Beal Point, Beal Saltmarsh, Billylaw (Berwick), Boulmer, Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay), Ellington, Haughton Strother GP, Hemscott Hill (Cresswell), the Tweed Estuary and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

Between two to eight were at Spartylea all month (CT), four males were at Abbey Mill (Morpeth) on 3rd and two at Castle Island on 18th (DM).

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

The total for the month at Seaton Sluice was 78 (40 N and 38 S) in 36 hours. A total of 15 were present during a WeBS count at Alnmouth Bay on 19th (AWG), and 12 were at both Stag Rocks on 17th (RB/MB) and East Chevington burn mouth on 18th (DM). Six were at Cocklawburn on 16th and one to two were seen at other localities throughout the coastal stretch.

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*

The only report was a single over-wintering in the Berwick Pier/Tweed Estuary area (MHu).

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

The two juveniles at Widdrington Moor Lake from last month were still present until at least 21st, thereafter only one was reported (TB/NFO/TRD/GB *et al.*). Singles were seen at Budle Bay, Ross Back Sands, Seahouses, Seaton Sluice and Stag Rocks.

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

The only movement noted at Seaton Sluice was 25 S in two hours on 13th (SSWT). Singles were at Hadston and Snab Point (Cresswell).

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

At Bickerton, in the south western corner of the Caistron complex of gravel extraction lakes, a total of 15 were present on 5th (MKi). Castle Island peaked at 14 on 18th (DM) and 13 were counted on the River Tweed between Chainbridge-Paxton on 26th (CH). One to seven were at many other localities including three on the sea all month at Boulmer and trilling reported from Howick.



A Little Grebe at Druridge Pools on 17th February by Chris Barlow

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

The only record at Seaton Sluice was one S on 25th (SSWT). Birds started to arrive at favoured breeding areas mid-month with three, including a pair briefly displaying, at Killingworth Lake on 25th (LJM), two at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) from 20th (TF/JFa) and singles at Alnmouth Bay, East Chevington and QE11 CP.

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

As usual the Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) area proved popular, peaking with a minimum of eight, and possibly ten, there on 21st (DF). Two were at Ross Back Sands on 2nd (MR).

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

The two individuals from last month remained at Gosforth Park until at least 17th (MH), with a likelihood that there were three present on 3rd (IK), and probably only one by the end of the month.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

A total of 16 were in the Tweed Estuary during a WeBS count on 15th (MHu), with the same number in the heronry at Howdon on 21st (CB). Nine were at Greenlee Lough on 21st (MRS) and eight at Druridge Pools on 3rd (DM). One to five were at many other localities including signs of nesting at Howick and Druridge Pools.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

One to three were at 15 locations, mostly coastal but also some individuals well inland at Belsay, Caistron, Whittingham and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

The vast majority of the monthly total of 51 (39 N and 12 S) past Seaton Sluice were adults (SSWT). One to three were reported from several other locations including two adults joining a brief gull feeding frenzy offshore at Newbiggin on 10th (IK).

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Seaton Sluice Watch Tower recorded a monthly total of 23 N and eight S (SSWT). 12 were at Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 23rd (MHu) and one to two were at Goswick, the Tweed Estuary and Tynemouth.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

At Howdon, 120 were roosting on staithes on 19th (CB), 14 were at Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 23rd (MHu), nine at Greenlee Lough on 21st (MRS) and seven at Big Waters NWT (GB). Six at Amble on 15th were already brandishing white breeding patches (IK) and six were present during a WeBS count at Alnmouth Bay on 19th (AWG). The monthly maximum count for Derwent Reservoir was only four (IFo) and one at Horton Burn (Cramlington) on 14th was totally unexpected considering the burn is barely four feet across and six inches deep at that point (STH). Single continental "sinensis" race birds were sighted at Linden Hall and Warkworth.

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Three birds, a male and two females, were in the air together interacting at River Wansbeck (Ashington) on 2nd (TB). Two birds were seen at Chapel House (Newcastle) on 1st (IK), West Hartford on 6th (TB), Boulmer (RB/MB) and Tyne Riverside (Newburn) (IK), Ellington and River Tweed Estuary on 23rd (TB/PRM). Single birds were seen at 19 sites.



A Sparrowhawk in Denis Lovatt's garden on 12th February
This bird has developed a taste for mice.

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

Two birds of equal size were seen near Edlingham on 15th (MH) and one flew over the valley at Hulne Park (Alnwick) raising everything on 1st (MH) and one was calling near the hide at Bakethin (Kielder) on 11th (TRD/JD). Single birds were also seen at Harwood Forest on several dates.

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

A ringtail was seen near Beadnell on 8th (JPL) and a 2nd calendar year female was at a confidential site on 9th (MH).

Red Kite *Milvus Milvus*

Two birds were at seen at Airy Holm Reservoir (near Shotleyfield) on 8th and Derwent Reservoir on 12th (IFo). Single birds were also noted at Derwent Reservoir on 9th, 11th and 16th (IFo), Crooked Oak (Carterway Heads) on 12th (IFo) and one was noted flying slowly SW at Chapel House (Newcastle) on 25th (IK).

January bulletin addition**Rough-legged Buzzard** *Buteo lagopus*

One was first seen at Plenmeller Common on 8th January at 14.45h distant to east. It flew into a small tree and perched for five or six minutes, then flew a short distance landing on ground where it stayed seven or eight minutes before flying up onto a fencepost where it remained for maybe 12-15 minutes (S J Hingston).

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Seven birds were seen in a 4km stretch from Hornccliffe – Gainslaw House (River Tweed) on 15th (CH). Six birds were seen at Edlingham on 15th (MH) and at Newham Fen on 16th (DF); four birds were noted at Derwent Reservoir on 8th and at Hulne Park (Alnwick) on 23rd (IFo/DF). Three were between Corbridge and Heddon on 16th (AJN), Cheswick House on and Old Bewick on 17th (DF/ASJ) and three were at Whiteadder Point (Berwick) on 19th including one which was hanging dead from an electricity cable (ASJ). One to two birds were at 23 sites.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Two birds were at East Chevington on 4th (TF/JFa) and two birds were noted at Backworth Pond and Swallow Pond (Wallsend) throughout the month (CGK/GPK). Single birds were either seen or heard at Ellington Pond on 4th (TB), Haughton Strother GP (Humshaugh) on 5th (MR), Holywell Pond on 6th (MSH), Big Waters NWT and East Chevington on 18th (GB/DM/PJA).



A Water Rail makes the best of the icy conditions at Gosforth NR. Mike Carr on 28th February

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

16 birds at Castle Island on 15th, 18th and 24th were the highest counts (STH/DM/PJA/GB) followed by 12 at Big Waters NWT on 16th (GB) and at Whiteadder Point (Berwick) on 19th (TBr). Ten birds were noted at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 5th (GB); nine were at QEII CP on 18th (CDH) and eight at Linton Pond NR on 3rd (DM/GB/LAR). One to five were seen at Arcot Pond, Jesmond Dene (Newcastle), River Aln (Alnwick Castle) and at Wark (North Tyne).

Coot *Fulica atra*

44 birds were at Killingworth Lake on 1st (LJM) was the highest count this month followed by 30 at Linton Ponds NR on 18th (CDH) and 28 at Bothal Pond on 18th (TD). On 18th 20 birds were at QEII CP (CDH), 18 were at Linton Ponds NR on 3rd (DM/GB/LAR) and 16 were at Haughton Strother GP (Humshaugh) on 21st (MR). One to ten birds were noted at Arcot Pond, Big Waters NWT, East Chevington, Grindon Lough, Killingworth Lake, Leazes Park (Newcastle) and at Shield on the wall.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

By far the largest count was of 145 birds at Budle Bay on 24th (DF). Spring movement of birds inland was reflected in the count of 96 at Branton GP on 22nd (IBDa/KDa). St Mary's recorded 73 on 12th (ASJ) while another substantial inland count came from the R. Aln at Alnwick Castle where 60 were seen on 21st and a further count of 57 at Derwent Reservoir on 12th – a count which had increased from 32 on 7th (IFo). Boulmer Flash held 44 on 26th (AB/LB), 33 were at Humshaugh, Haughton Strother GP on 27th (MR) and a further 27 were at Stocksfield, Merryshield GP on 23rd (DLe). Another inland sighting was of 24 at Coquetdale, Bickerton (nr Castron) on 25th. Counts of 14-23 came from Berwick (West Ord), Prudhoe Riverside Country Park, Spartylea and the Tweed Estuary. Smaller counts came from Castle Island (R. Wansbeck), Chollerford, Gosforth Park, Grindon Lough, Hexham (Tyne Green), Killingworth Lake, Rothbury, Pauperhaugh and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.



An Oystercatcher at Budle Bay by Chris Barlow on 12th February

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

A roosting flock of 1,300 was recorded at Budle Bay on 5th (DF) and 1,050 were seen at West Minsteracres on 10th (IFo). Newlands (Belford) had c. 550 on 17th (DF), counts of 250-500 were made between 9th and 17th at Prestwick Carr (IK, TD, PCF), the Tweed Estuary held 250 on 15th (MHu) and 220 were reported from Blyth Links on 16th (TB). Counts of 100-200 were made at Berwick (Whiteadder Point), Cocklawburn, Coquet Estuary, Grindon Lough, R Tweed (New Water Haugh), Spartylea and St Mary's. Smaller counts came from Blyth (Horton), Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Cresswell Pond-Cresswell, Bell's Farm, Howdon, Humshaugh (Haughton Strother GP), Ponteland Park, Spartylea (High Knock Shield), West Hartford and Widdrington Moor Lake.

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

About 3,000 birds were seen moving S from Seaton Sluice Watch Tower on 10th. From the same vantage point 2,000 birds were recorded on 17th. Blyth Links reported a total of 1,800 on 6th, made up of groups of 600 and 1,200 (TB), 1,500 were seen at St Mary's on 27th (ASJ) and up to 1,500 were at Blyth, Gloucester Lodge Farm between 8th and 28th (ASJ, MSH). Many of the birds in all of the above sightings are likely to have been the same birds. On 9th 800 birds were seen at West Minsteracres (IFo) and 700 were gathered on the western fields at Prestwick Carr on 17th (IK). Between 100 and 200 were reported from Allendale (Meadow Cottage), Caistron, Cocklawburn, Coquet Estuary and Cresswell, Bellshill Farm. Smaller counts came from Blanchland Moor, Cresswell Pond-Hemscott Hill, Grindon Lough, Hexham Racecourse, Longhorsley (Linden Hall), Newcastle (Jesmond, Royal Grammar School), Newcastle Town Moor, Sewing Shields and Spartylea (High Knock Shield).

Two Plovers at the coast

Right: a Golden Plover at St. Mary's

by Alan Jack on 27th February

below: a Grey Plover at Stag Rocks

on 12th February by Chris Barlow

**Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola*

There were only three records. These were from Boulmer (two on 12th, TB), Fenham-le-Moor (one on 4th, TRD) and the Tweed Estuary (one on 15th, MHu).

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Forty four birds were counted offshore from Goswick on 20th (CH), and 22 were at St Mary's on 26th (ASJ). A report of 19 came from Druridge Bay, Chibburn Mouth on 2nd (AJR), on 12th there were 18 at Boulmer, Seaton Point (NFO) and 12 were in the Blyth Estuary on 4th (MSH). Counts of 4-6 came from the beach at East Chevington on 15th and 20th.



A Ringed Plover at Stag Rocks
Chris Barlow on 12th February

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

A roost of 440 occurred at Boulmer on 4th (BS), 310 were at Budle Bay on 9th (DF) and 139-148 were counted in the Tweed Estuary on 23rd and 15th, respectively (PRM, MHu). Low Newton had a count of 120 on 4th (SW) and 107 were in the Coquet Estuary on 9th (CSa). Counts of 40-75 came from Boulmer, Cocklawburn, Howdon, Howick, Newbiggin (Quarry Cottage), St Mary's Island and Wylam with smaller counts from Berwick (West Ord), Branton GP, Callerton subsidence area, Castle Island (R Wansbeck), Druridge Pools NR, East Chevington, Grindon Lough, Humshaugh (Haughton Strother GP), Prestwick Carr and Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.



A Curlew grabs a snack at Budle Bay on 12th February. Chris Barlow

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

A minimum count of 50 was made at Fenham-le-Moor on 11th (MSH/JCD). Ten were reported from Berwick (Little Beach) on 18th (MHu) with two seen at Boulmer on 12th (TB). Other counts were of singles from the Tweed Estuary and Druridge Pools, as well as a single at Fenham-le-Moor on 12th which was colour-marked from a Norwegian source.

January bulletin correction

The species texts for Bar-tailed and Black-tailed Godwit were reversed. The correct text is below.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Between 50 and 100 birds were estimated to be at Budle Bay on 13th January(Phi/SSc). Fifty birds were counted at Fenham Flats on 6th January(DM), 27 were at Boulmer on 19th January(TRD/JD), 14 were at Little Beach (Berwick) on 21st January(MHu) and ten were at Fenham-le-Moor on 7th January(TRD). Smaller counts came from the Blyth Estuary and Druridge Pools.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Nineteen were counted just outside the tower hide at Fenham-le-Moor on 6th (MH/AA), between one and 16 (MJC on 16th) were reported from Druridge Pools between 3rd and 25th. Budle Bay, with two on 5th (SRB), was the only other site with records.

January bulletin correction

The species texts for Bar-tailed and Black-tailed Godwit were reversed. The correct text is below.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Druridge Pools records varied between seven and 15 at various dates with the peak count occurring on 14th January (IK/ASH). Cresswell Pond held 12 birds on 5th January(MH/AA) and were probably some of the individuals that were included in the peak count at Druridge Pools. Single figure counts came from Blyth Estuary, Coquet Estuary, Fenham-le-Moor, Holy Island and Howdon Wetland NR.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

There was a reduction in reports this month with lower numbers of birds noted. Fenham-le Moor had the largest count with a minimum of 60 seen on 11th (MSH/JCD). At Cresswell Pond, 50 were at a high-tide roost on 21st (TRD/JD) and the maximum at Stag Rocks during the month was 20 on 4th (TRD). The only other sightings came during WeBS counts with six at the River Tweed Estuary and two at the River Coquet Estuary.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

The very poor winter continued with only one report of a single at Boulmer on 17th (RB/MB).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Like other shorebirds, there was a decrease in reports and numbers of birds this month. Cheswick Black Rocks was the most attractive locality with a count of 91 made on 20th (CH). At Newbiggin, 32-33 were recorded on 23rd and 25th (CH/STH). Most other sightings came from the Druridge Bay area with 30 at Snab Point (Cresswell) on 15th (TB), 27 at East Chevington on 15th (TRD/JD) reducing to five by 20th (TRD) and two at Druridge on 21st (TRD/JD). Other counts were 22 at Low Newton on 4th (SW), 20 at Boulmer on 12th and four at Blyth South Beach on 6th (both TB).

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Some large concentrations were still in evidence with an impressive 421 at the River Blyth Estuary on 4th (MSH). A WeBS count on 18th at the River Coquet Estuary recorded 120 (AWG) and 105 were at Cresswell Pond on 21st (MKi). Warkworth Gut held 80 on 25th and the highest count from Tynemouth was made on 3rd when 67 were recorded. The maximum at East Chevington beach was eight on 20th (TRD). An interesting inland mid-winter sighting was a single at Killingworth Lake on 28th (GPK).

Dunlin at Cresswell

Tim Dean

21st February



Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

Most records came from the stronghold of Stag Rocks where a high count of 175 was made.(JPL). Numbers declined at this location during the month, from 154 at roost on 4th (TRD) to 18 on 23rd (JDL/SRB/CDH). Other regular haunts held smaller numbers, with 51 at Boulmer on 3rd (BS) reducing to 30 by 17th (RM/MB). The most seen at Newbiggin was at Church Point with 17 on 2nd (STH) and 16 were at Cheswick Black Rocks on 20th (CH). Four-five were at Seaton Sluice and Low Newton.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

The wintering bird at Fenham-le-Moor (Lindisfarne) persisted with reports on 6th and 11th (MH/AA/MSH/JCD).

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

The harder winter conditions may have made this species more conspicuous this month with more reports received. A notable six were reported from Longhorsley Moor on 18th (AB/LB) and two were seen from roosts at Arcot Pond on 12th and nearby Northumberlandia (Cramlington) on 13th (both STH). Singles were seen at Branton GP, Breamish Valley, Dipton Wood, Howick, Mickley Square (under a hedge in a rural garden), Morpeth, Prestwick Carr and Whittingham.

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyptes minimus*

Three reports of singles all in the last week of the month at Backworth on 24th (CGK), St Mary's Wetland on 28th (MSH) and Longhoughton also on 28th (BS).

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Callerton subsidence area retained decent numbers from January with a total of 58 seen in the area on 26th (MH). The gravel pits at Branton and Haughton Strother attracted 46 and 51 respectively on 17th (MJC) and 19th (MR). A count of 36 was made at Arcot Flash on 18th (DM). Much smaller groups were noted elsewhere, with Cresswell Pond the only other locality holding double figures with 16 on 19th (MJC). One to nine were at Arcot Pond, Bothal Pond, Druridge Pools, Howick, Prestwick Carr, St Mary's Wetland, Wark and West Hartford. The hard weather was probably responsible for one being found poking around the woodland footpath at Howdon on 26th (CB).

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

The winter haunts of Hedgeley GP and Whittle Dene Reservoirs both attracted two birds during the month (IBDa/KDa/AJR *et al.*) A single was seen at Haughton Strother GP on 9th (MR).

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

As last month, the major concentrations remained at Howdon, St Mary's Island, Budle Bay and the River Tweed Estuary. At Howdon, 226 were recorded on 24th (CB), 147 were at St Mary's Island on 25 (ASJ), 134 at Budle Bay on 24th (DF) and 132 at the River Tweed Estuary on 23rd (PRM/MHu). A minimum of 80 were at Druridge Pools on 9th (MSH) and 52 were at New Water Haugh on the River Tweed on 11th (MHu). Elsewhere 17 were at Boulmer Flash on 26th (AB/LB) and 14 at Cocklawburn Pond on 2nd (MHu). Three to five were at Bothal Pond and Cresswell Pond.



A Redshank at Boulmer on 4th February by Janet Dean

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

The wintering adult was reported from Budle Bay on 17th (ASJ).

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

At Seaton Sluice, 106 moved N in two hours on 4th, but otherwise very few were seen there (SSWT). Five were at Bamburgh on 6th and two at Cocklawburn on 16th.

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

The peak counts were 1,400 at Howdon on 28th (CB) and 1,000 in an evening roost at Spittal Bay, Berwick on 22nd (BWG). Three-figure gatherings were 512 at Castle Island (DM/PJA), 258 in the Tweed Estuary (MHu), 252 on the QE II CP Lake (CDH), and 120 in Jesmond Dene (MJCo). Elsewhere, 91 were recorded at Big Waters NWT (GB), 50 at Bothal Pond (TD) and 20-30 at Grindon Lough, Leazes Park and the River Aln (Alnwick Castle) with up to ten at four other localities.

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

A peak count of 27 (24 adults) was recorded at the species' favourite location, Newbiggin, on 25th (CH) with 22-26 there on other dates. One to two, the majority adults, were seen at eight other sites namely Amble Harbour, Craster, Cresswell (Snab Point), Druridge Bay (Hadston), Seaton Sluice, Shiremoor, Swallow Pond and Widdrington Moor Lake.



A Mediterranean Gull getting its hood

Amble

Chris Barlow

11th February

Common Gull *Larus canus*

Haughton Strother GP hosted 660 on 27th (MR) with smaller flocks of 150-200 elsewhere, at Chatton Moor, Grindon Lough and West Newton (JR/MRS), 40-100 at Forestburngate, Howdon and Otterburn and up to 20 at five other sites.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

Small counts of only one to 11 were recorded from five sites, Castle Island, East Chevington North Pool, Grindon Lough, Linton Pond and the River Tweed Estuary,

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

Two immatures were at the North Shields Fish Quay on several dates (ASJ) and single immatures, both following fishing boats N, were sighted at Seaton Sluice on 3rd and 21st (SSWT). Single immatures were also sighted elsewhere at Boulmer on 13th (BS) and Tynemouth on 3rd (DRW). The number of individual birds involved is not known.

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoides*

An adult bird was recorded on eight dates throughout at Swallow Pond (GPK *et al.*), other records this month being of immatures, comprising a 2nd-winter on 4th seen by the Metro bridge in Newcastle city centre (JPD/GB) and perhaps the same 2nd-winter bird at Castle Island on 24th (STH) plus an immature passing S at Seaton Sluice on 26th (SSWT).



A Glaucous Gull checks out Alan Jack on 25th February at North Shields Fish Quay

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

The largest of two counts in the River Tweed Estuary was 568 on 15th (MHu), 119 were at the QE II CP Lake on 18th (CDH) with 30-50 at Buckshaw Farm (Mitford) (JR), Castle Island and Linton Pond (DM/GB/LAR).

January bulletin correction The Herring Gull photograph was by Jack Bucknall

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

One and three adults were at Swallow Pond on two dates (GPK), three at Grindon Lough (AJR) and the regular single overwintering bird at Southfield Green, Cramlington on many dates with a second bird there late in the month (DM). Other sightings of single adults were at Haughton Strother GP (MR), Jesmond Dene (MJCo) and Seaton Sluice (SSWT); a very dark-backed adult bird, described by the observer as of the race '*intermedius*', was seen at Annstead on 26th (DF).

Auk *sp*

At Seaton Sluice, three days of very heavy movement recorded 700 moving N in five hours on 2nd, mainly Guillemots, 360 N in two hours on 4th and 700 N in one hour on 21st with very few seen otherwise (SSWT).

Common Guillemot *Uria aalge*

Four in full breeding plumage were at Church Point (Newbiggin) on 10th (IK), four at Berwick Meadow Haven on 23rd (MHu) and singles at Cheswick and Cocklawburn during the first week.

Razorbill *Alca torda*

Four pairs were at Bamburgh Stag Rocks on 6th with a similar number there on 23rd (MH/AA/CDH) and two were at Ross Back Sands on 2nd (MR).

***Black Guillemot** *Cepphus grylle*

One was recorded off Bamburgh Stag Rocks on 23rd (CDH)

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

Two flew N at Newbiggin on 2nd (STH) and one S at Bamburgh Stag Rocks on the same day (MR).

Rock Dove *Columba livia*

On 5th 1000 were at Heddon Haughs Farm (SRB), 110 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 8th (MR), nine at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 1st and present at Jesmond Dene during the month.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

A high count of 46 was at Howdon on 10th (CB), 25 on stubble at Callerton on 11th (MH), 18 roosted at Tyne Watersmeet (Acomb) on 6th (AJR) with five to eight at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) and Leazes Park. One to four were at nine other widespread locations.

A Stock Dove

Alan Jack

Marden Quarry

21st February

**Woodpigeon** *Columba palumbus*

Many large counts with around 2,500 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 18th and 200 there on 16th (AJR/JSB), 2,000 at Buston Links (Alnmouth) (TB), 1,000 at Haughton Strother GP (Humshaugh) on 5th (MR), 800 at West Lyham on 17th (JR) and 600 at Low Cocklaw-Letham (Berwick) on 27th (TBr). 120 – 500 were at Bedlington, Carterway Heads, Howick, Mickley Square and Walbottle with five – 86 at six other locations.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Up to 17 came to food at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) during the month (RS), five pairs were at Chapel House Estate with display noted on 25th (MH), nine at North Blyth on 7th (PCF), eight the peak garden count at Gosforth Garden Village on 28th (MJC) with one to two at North Shields, South Gosforth and Spartylea.

A Collared Dove eyeballs
Mike Carr

Gosforth

17th February



Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

One seen all month at Spartylea (CT) with singles at New Moor (Ashington) on 1st, Alnmouth on 2nd, Haltwhistle Common and Waterhead (Greenhaugh) on 5th, Longhoughton and Prestwick Carr on 9th, Acomb on 16th, Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 18th Humshaugh on 22nd, Little Houghton on 23rd, Boulmer and Whittingham on 26th. The only multiple count was of two road casualties on A1 north of Alnwick.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Three seen and heard during the month at Spartylea (CT), two in tree hole at Tranwell on 4th (TF/JFa) with one in the observer's garden at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 20th (TD) and single at Howick heard throughout the month (JR).

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Two at Derwent Reservoir on 15th with singles there regularly between 7th and 12th (IFo), one at Prestwick Carr on 9th (PCF) and West Kyloe on 21st (BWG).

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

On 17th two were at East Chevington and two at Jesmond Dene on 25th (TF/JFa/MJCo) with single males at Jesmond Dene on 7th and 21st (DHWB). One fished in the sea from rocks at Low Newton on 4th (SW), one at Wylam on 5th, Low Warden on 6th, Boulmer on 10th and Branton GP on 22nd.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

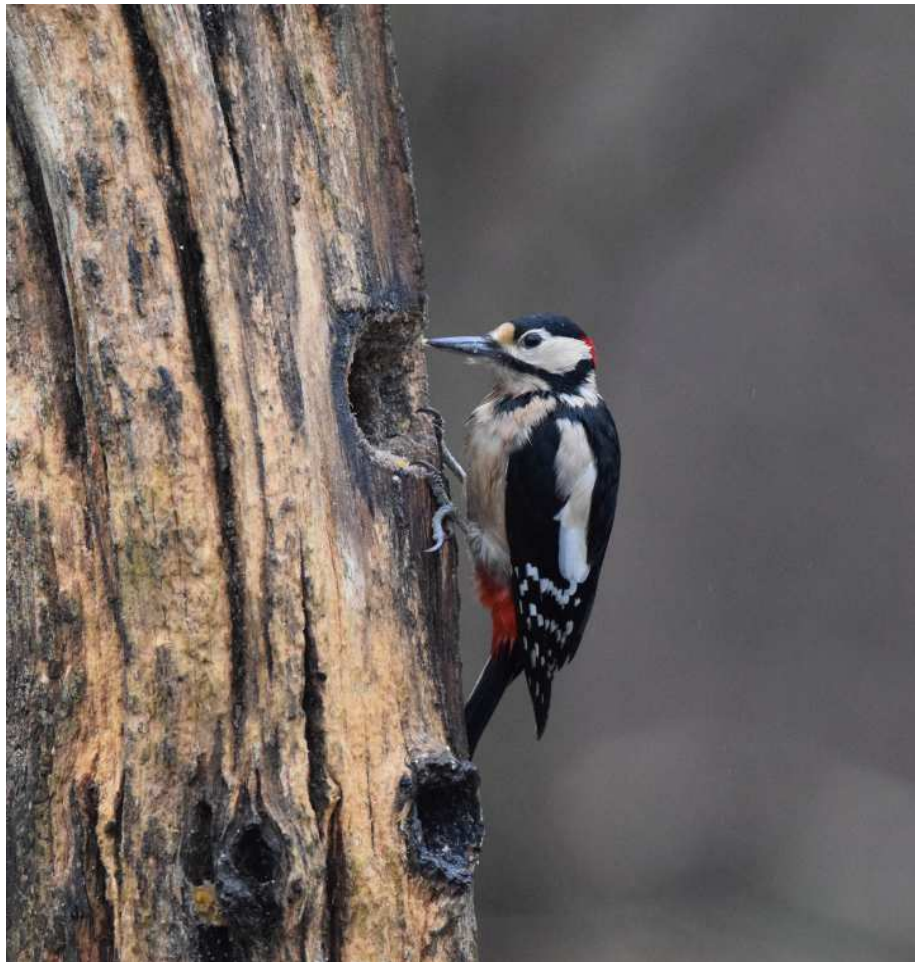
Four seen at Spartylea all month (CT), two at Gosforth Park NR on 8th, Gosforth on 9th (MJC) and Ellington on 25th. Singles were at 14 other widespread localities.

A Greater Spotted Woodpecker

Gosforth NR

John Richards

19th February

**Green Woodpecker** *Picus viridis*

Birds yaffled at Gosforth Park on 18th (GB), New Ridley on 22nd, Broomley Woods (near Stocksfield) on 25th (IK) and at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 26th being only the 2nd record in 14 years (NFO).

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Three birds were at Eglington on 11th (MJC) while two birds were noted regularly throughout the month at West Hartford (TB) and two birds were also at Corbridge-Heddon (AJN), Druridge Pools (TB), Harwood Forest (MJC), and Lanehead (ADM) and at Windyhaugh (Upper Coquetdale). Single birds were at over 30 sites during the Month.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

There was only one record this month of a female on a tree stump on the mudflats at Holy Island on 17th (ASJ).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Only single birds were noted this month at a number of coastal and inland sites including sightings in the Newcastle City Centre area on 4th (GB), 15th (GB) and 16th (KWY).

Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

Three flew over Hotspur Street (Heaton) on 22nd (JBU) with singles over garden at Gosforth Garden Village on 1st and displaying from 9th of the month near a potential nest hole in Gosforth (MJC).

Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor*

The individual remained at Prestwick Carr all month (GB/PCF/PRC).

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Highest count was of three at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 9th (NFO), two at Spindleston and Abbey Mill (Morpeth) on 3rd, Eshott on 7th, Gosforth on 9th, Linton Ponds on 17th and Horsley Wood (nr Wylam) on 25th. Singles were at five other locations.

Magpie *Pica pica*

On 13th 18 went to roost at Northumberlandia (Cramlington) (STH), 16 foraged at Derwent Reservoir on 12th (IFo), six at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) all month (RS) and five were in Jesmond Dene on 25th (MJCo). A pair were noted nest building at Newsham on 6th.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

A peak of around 160 at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) during the month (RS), 150 at Beacon Hill (Cramlington) on 25th (DM), 75 at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) on 6th (MNC), up to 55 at Spartylea all month (CT), 54 at Prestwick Carr on 15th (PCF) and 17 to 25 at Lemington Gut, Jesmond Dene and Netherwitton.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

Large count of 175 at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) on 6th (MNC), 87 at Netherwitton on 4th and 74 there on 10th (JR). A maximum of 30 at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin), 16 were at Beacon Hill (Cramlington) on 25th, two at Spartylea on 21st and one 'snow bathed' at Chapel House on 27th.

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

48 fed at Beacon Hill (Cramlington) on 25th, 27 at Druridge Pools on 18th (DM), 22 were at Horton Park (Cramlington) on 4th, 4 at Jesmond Dene on 11th and two displaying males at Gosforth on 9th and one displaying at Branton GP on 8th.

Raven *Corvus corax*

Four at Carter Bar on 17th (JD), two at Catcleugh Reservoir on 4th, Stewart Shiels (Otterburn) on the same date and Winters Gibbet (Harwood Forest) on 17th (JR/MJC). Singles were at Alnwick Moor on 9th and Deadwater (Kielder) on 11th.

Waxwing *Bombus garrulus*

Three were seen briefly in a private garden at Rockliffe (Whitley Bay) on 2nd and 6th (IJ) and two from Kenton on 16th.

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

High count of 20 at Kielder Forest Drive on 9th (ADM), four to six at Spartylea all month (CT), more than four at Howdon on 4th (CB) and three at Jesmond Dene on 18th (MJCo) with one to two at Dinnington, North Shields and Prestwick Carr.

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

Two pairs noted at Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth) on 4th and Tyne Watersmeet (Acomb) on 15th (TD/AJR). Two were at Scotch Gill Woods on 1st, Fontburn Area on 16th and Newton Red House on 28th with singles there on 17th and at Low Cocklaw (Berwick), Linden Hall (Longhorsley) and Rothbury.

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

The regular site at Prestwick Carr had four on 24th (PRC) with two there on three dates from 3rd to 12th, at Derwent Reservoir on 15th and East Cramlington LNR on 16th. Singles were regularly at Big Waters, Linden Hall (Longhorsley), Riverside CP (Prudhoe) and Rothbury all month plus Arcot Pond and Branton GP.

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Feeders attracted a minimum of 50 at Crooked Oak (Carterway Heads) on 5th (IFo), six to 12 at Spartylea all month (CT), seven at Paperhaugh (Rothbury) on 10th (JR) and three inspected boxes at Gosforth on 17th (AJN). Two were at Jesmond Dene and North Shields.

A Blue Tit
Woolsington
27th February
Steve Barrett

**Great Tit** *Parus major*

Feeders at Prestwick Carr attracted 11 on 12th and ten on 4th (STH/PCF), five to ten at Spartylea all month (CT) and ten at Crooked Oak (Carterway Heads) on 5th (IFo). One to three were at Jesmond Dene and North Shields.

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Movement caused by snow involved 250 east during the day at Fulbeck (Morpeth) (TD). At Callerton subsidence area a flock of 47 fed on 26th and 35 on 11th (MH), 30 were at Elwick on 17th and 25 at Waren Mill on the same date both sites noting ten in song (ASJ). 22 were at Druridge Bay on 17th and 20 at Haughton Strother GP on 19th, 12 at Beacon Hill (Cramlington) on 25th and ten flew N at West Lyham on 17th. One to eight birds generally singing were noted from ten widely spread localities.

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*

One heard calling from south end of East Chevington south pool on 17th-18th may have been the bird reported in November 2017 (TF/JFa *et al.*).

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

A 'tribe' of 18 was noted at Pauperhaugh (Rothbury) on 10th (JR), 11 were at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 11th and up to ten visited fat feeders in a garden near Shilbottle from 10th to the end of the month. Birds were also noted at Spartylea throughout the month, with a peak of nine. Eight were at Prestwick Carr on 16th, six at Alnwick Castle on 21st and at Tynemouth on 11th, while four to five were noted at Ellington, Hepple, Longhorsley and the Tweed Estuary. Two were reported from a further six localities.



A Long-tailed Tit in a Rothbury garden
Janet Dean on 26th February

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Singles were noted at Berwick (Palace Green) on 17th (BWG), Chapel House on 25th (MH) and Low Newton on 4th (SW).

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Two visited a South Gosforth garden on 8th (MJCo) and a male and female were noted in a Corbridge garden during the month (RB/MB). A female was present at Gosforth Garden Village throughout the month and was joined by a male on 9th (MJC). Males were also found in a garden at North Shields on 1st and 21st (PRC) and at Killingworth on 8th (GPK). An unsexed bird was noted at Etal Manor on 8th (JJo).

Firecrest *Regulus ingicapilla*

The bird at Northumberland Park (North Shields), present since November 2017, was noted to at least 25th.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Singing males were reported from Gosforth Garden Village on 7th, Valley Park (Cramlington) on 17th and from a large garden conifer in suburban Hazelrigg (Wideopen) on 18th. Two were noted at Linton Ponds and at Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 18th, while singles were reported from Abbey Mill (Morpeth), Cramlington (Alexandra Park and Southfield Green), Howdon, Jesmond Dene, Rothbury and Spartylea.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

A 3km stretch of hedgerow from Low Cocklaw-Letham (Berwick) produced a total of 16 on 27th (TBr). Elsewhere, four were at Howdon and two at Jesmond Dene on 4th and one at Spartylea on 1st.

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Three singles were noted in Jesmond Dene on 4th and three were at Holywell Dene on 24th. Two were reported from Eshott, Furnace Bridge (Bedlington), Northumberland Park (North Shields), Northumberlandia (Cramlington) and Spartylea and singles at Abbey Mill (Morpeth), Howick, Leazes Park and Rothbury.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

There were four at Eglington on 11th (MJC) and three at Gosforth on 9th, while two were reported from Gosforth Park, Howick and Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth). Singles, including a singing male at Linden Hall on 23rd were noted at Jesmond Dene, Rothbury and Spartylea.

A Treecreeper in Gosforth NR
John Richards on 5th February

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

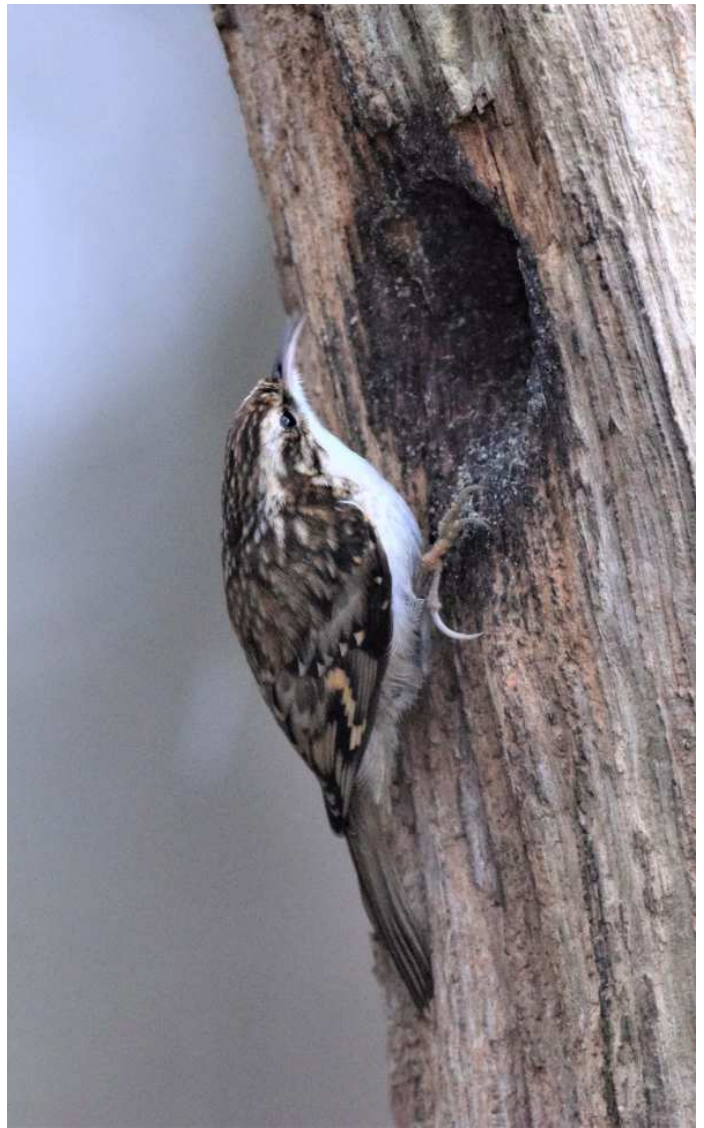
A roost at Blenkinsop Castle (Greenhead) numbered 5,000 on 2nd, doubling to 10,000 by 23rd (SW). A flock of 1,500 was at Prestwick Carr on 11th and 500 roosted by Haydon Bridge Railway Station on 8th. Elsewhere, 300 were reported from Otterburn on 24th and up to 70 at both Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) and Spartylea throughout.

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

13 were in the car park area at Northumberlandia (Cramlington) on 13th and there were peak counts of 12 birds from gardens at Corbridge and Gosforth Garden Village on 27th-28th. Nine birds fed in an apple tree at Blucher on 28th and up to eight were noted at both Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) and Spartylea throughout. Three were reported from Jesmond Dene and a North Shields garden.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

The largest gathering was 160 at Murton Craggs on 25th (MHu). Elsewhere, 120 were reported from Haughton Strother GP (Humshaugh) on 27th and flocks of 100 were noted at Berwick on 26th, Linden Hall on 4th, Otterburn on 24th and Whittingham on 7th. Counts of 90 came from Carterway Heads on 5th, 70 at Lowick on 25th and 66 at Middle Ord (Berwick) on 18th. Lesser gatherings of 40-52 were noted at Bothal Pond, Cambo, Longhorsley, Rayburn Lake and Swallow Pond. Several observers commented on their presence in gardens during adverse weather towards the end of the month, these including 24 at Bedlington, 12 at Stamfordham and one to four at Dinnington, Fulbeck (Morpeth), Gosforth Garden Village, Rothbury and Tynemouth on 27th-28th. One to 25 were reported from a further 13 localities.



A Fieldfare enjoys Mike Carr's apple. Gosforth on 28th February

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

A large flock of 225 were in a rape seed crop at Gosforth on 9th (MJC). Elsewhere gatherings were rather smaller, with 60 at Swallow Pond on 14th, 50 at Howick on 20th and at Low Cocklaw-Letham (Berwick) on 26th, 40 at Heaton on 6th and at Longhorsley on 18th and about 30 at Otterburn on 24th; 15-25 were noted at Ellington, Leazes Park and Northumberlandia (Cramlington) and on to ten at a further 16 localities.



Two Heaton thrushes. by Jack Bucknall on 6th February
Above: a Redwing and below: a Mistle Thrush



Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Singles were noted at four Jesmond Dene localities on 18th (MJCo). Three at Boghouses (Cramlington) on 25th was above the recent average for this area and three were also reported from East Chevington on 6th and Leazes Park on 16th. Counts of two came from Exhibition Park, Kilham, Linden Hall and Spartylea and singles were noted at Dinnington, East Ord (Berwick), Fulbeck (Morpeth), Healey and Newbiggin.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Six were reported from Derwent Reservoir on 14th (IFo) and five at Winter's Gibbet (Harwood) on 17th. Two pairs at Leazes Park on 24th included a singing male on territory, while four were together at Whittingham on 27th. Three were seen with a Redwing flock at Heaton on 6th and three were at Healey on 25th. A pair at Bywell on 2nd included another singing male, while two were at Horton and at Ord Moor (Berwick). Singles were noted at Annitsford, Gainslaw (Berwick), Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin), Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth) and Spartylea.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Six were counted in Jesmond Dene on 25th (MJCo) and five at Kilham on 17th. Four were at Spartylea throughout the month and two desperate birds were feeding on sunflower hearts at Gosforth Garden Village during hard weather on 28th.

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

The peak count from Druridge Pools was six (two pairs + two females) on 17th (MH). Two pairs were at Alnmouth GC on 26th, four at Cocklawburn on 2nd and at Warkworth Gut on 25th and three at St Mary's Island on 15th. Pairs were noted at Boulmer on 26th, inland at Housesteads on 5th and at Ross Back Sands and Ross Point on 2nd. Singles were reported from Alnwick Moor on 1st, Callerton subsidence area on 26th and Low Newton on 4th.



A Stonechat at St. Mary's on 4th February by Alan Jack

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

Five birds were seen at Windyhaugh (Upper Coquetdale) on 18th (MJC). Two were noted at four sites during the month - Abbey Mill (Morpeth), Spartylea, River Aln at Alnwick Castle, Hedgeley and Furnace Bridge (Bedlington). Singles were noted at eight further sites during the month.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

65 at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 26th was the month's largest gathering(TBr). Up to 50 birds spent the month at Quarry Cottage(Newbiggin) (RS). 35 were at Seaton Sluice on 15th(KWY). 30 remained at Spartylea all month (CT). One to 18 were noted on various dates at six further sites.

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

Stubble at Old Bewick attracted 40 plus feeding in a large mixed flock, with Yellowhammers and Reed Buntings on 17th (ASJ). 28 were at Branton on 8th (IBDa/KDa). Groups of 22 were at Corbridge on 6th and at Red House (Newton) on 28th. 20 were at Low Cocklaw on 6th. One to 12 were seen at 11 further sites including pairs in gardens at Rothbury and Gosforth.

Duncock *Prunella modularis*

Eleven were at Prestwick Carr on 4th and ten at Holywell Dene on 6th (PCF/ASJ). Seven fed under bird feeders at Druridge Bay C.P. on 24th (MH). One to five were seen at a further six sites.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

A total of four were at three sites in Jesmond Dene on 28th (MJCo). Two were at Wark Forest on 6th (PRM). Singles were noted at a further 12 locations.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

13 fed at Chibburn Mouth (Druridge Bay) on 2nd (AJR). Ten fed in fields at Howick on 15th (JAR). Seven birds were at Chevington burn mouth on 17th (MH). Two were at two other locations during the month.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

26 were counted in freezing conditions at Prestwick Carr and village on 27th (MH/AA). Eight were at St. Mary's on 3rd(ASJ) and seven at Boulmer on 28th (BS). Four were on a low moor at Lucker on 20th (MH/AA). Three moved S at East Chevington on 18th and two were at Beaconhill (Cramlington) (DM/PA).

Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta*

One to two were present at Druridge Pools from 2nd to 21st (JSB/TFa/JFa/MSH *et al.*).

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Three were seen at the Tweed Estuary on 23rd (PRM). Two were at Cullercoats and at St. Mary's on 10th (ASJ). Singles were at Fenham le Moor and Tynemouth on 4th.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

110 was a good count at Carterway Heads on 5th(IFo). Around 40 were feeding under beech trees at Murton Craggs on 25th (MHu). 30 plus were noted at Spindleston on 3rd (MSH/JCD). 28 were at Kilham on 17th (JR) and 22 at garden feeders at Beaconhill (Cramlington) during freezing conditions on 28th (STH). 20 were at Druridge Pools on 18th (DM). One to 16 were noted at a further seven sites during the month.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

Sparsely recorded this month, with seven present at Carterway Heads on 5th, Bolam Lake on 13th and a Rothbury garden during the month. Four remained at Carterway Heads on 12th and a single was seen on 16th (IFo/AA/TRD/JD). One to six were seen at Spartylea all month (CT). Four were noted at Gosforth Garden Village on 25th, with a male in a garden here on 23rd (MJC). One other single bird was at the Tweed Estuary on 23rd (PRM).

A cock Brambling
a Rothbury garden
Janet Dean
6th February



Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Following the national invasion this winter, birds continued to be found in the county. Five were in conifers at Craggside on 2nd and one very lucky observer in Stamfordham, watched four feeding on Yew kernels on his garden lawn on the morning of 24th, with three returning that afternoon (EC). Singles were seen also at Abbey Mill, once again on three dates (GB/ASJ/TF/JFa).



A Hawfinch from the Morpeth flock
Chris Barlow
17th February

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Birds attending garden feeders in Rothbury all month reached a new peak of 19 on 27th and a monthly peak of eight was in a Gosforth Garden Village garden on 1st (TRD/JD/MJC). Flocks of four and 12 were seen at Chollerford on 3rd (SW). Eight were noted at East Cramlington on 16th (TB). One to six were present at a further 20 locations during the month, including six in a Morpeth garden (TD).

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

45 at a pre-roost gathering was a record count at Linden Hall on 11th (NFo). Nine were at Mitford on 3rd (DM/GB/LAR). Seven were seen at Castle Island on 3rd and six here on 18th (PRC). One to six were noted at 12 other sites.

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*

97 were counted at Chibburn Mouth (Druridge Bay) on 10th with 80 at East Chevington on 15th presumably the same flock (NFo/TRD/JD). 40 noted also with movement between these two sites on 18th (DM/PA). 46 were at Cocklawburn on 16th (MHu). 35 plus were at Hemscott Hill on 4th (TFa/JF). 15 at Beal Point on 4th, with four plus there on 23rd (TRD/PRM). Eight were seen throughout the month at Fenham le Moor (JPL). Five were at Longbridge End on 4th (TRD). One to eight were seen at five other sites. An unusual record was of one seen on 3rd and 10th at Seaton Sluice (MHp).

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

A huge flock feeding in a game crop at Elwick on 17th was estimated at 600 with photos later showing 650 plus and 500 plus remained to the month's end (ASJ). 60 plus were at Druridge links on 2nd and around 60 at High Cocklaw on 26th (MSH/TBr). 40 plus were in fields at St. Mary's all month (ASJ). 25 were at Outchester on 17th (ASJ). 20 were at Healey on 25th (RB/MB). One to eight were at six further sites during the month.

Common Redpoll *Carduelis flammea*

Two found at Branton on 8th (MJC).

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis caberet*

Birds present at Rothbury all month, with a peak of 15 on 6th (TRD/JD). Three were in the observer's garden at Corbridge on 6th and in bushes at Druridge Pools on 18th (MR/DM *et al.*). Two were at Prestwick Carr on 10th (PCF). Singles were seen at Linden Hall and on two dates at Widdrington Moor Lake.

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

30, including several singing males, were watched on 4th at Thrunton Woods (NFO). 12 were at Dipton on 25th (IK). Seven were seen at Simonside on 18th (CSa). At Harwood Forest six were seen at Winter's Gibbet on 17th and six plus at Harwood Head the following day (MJC/MSH). One to two seen at a further six inland forest locations, and one was observed flying in off the sea at Cresswell Pond on 20th (MJC).

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

50 were noted at Linton on 4th (TB). 32 were at Beacon Hill (Cramlington) on 25th (DM). Groups of 30 visited a Corbridge garden on 6th and were seen at Humshaugh on 28th (MR/SW). 26 were noted at Middle Ord (Berwick) on 18th (MHu). 22 at Furnace Bridge (Blyth) on 25th(JR). Up to 15 were at Spartylea and at a Cullercoats garden all month, where two were singing(CT/ASJ). Four to ten were at four other sites.

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

A large flock of around 220 had gathered at Dilston Common on 18th (DLe). 90 plus were at Wark on 14th (PRM). 60 seen at Dipton on 25th (IK). 50 visited a Rothbury garden on 28th where small numbers noted all month (TRD/JD). 40 were at East Cramlington NWT on 2nd (STH). 20 in a Corbridge garden on 6th and 20 at West Newton on 17th (MR/JR). One to ten birds seen at ten other sites during the month, including a maximum of eight in a Gosforth Garden Village garden and four in a Morpeth garden.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citronella*

The Callerton flock from recent weeks remained on stubble and roosting in hawthorns with 70 counted on 11th (MH). Also on stubble at Old Bewick were 65 plus on 17th, feeding with Reed Buntings and Tree Sparrows (ASJ). 60 were again in a game crop at Crowhall Farm (Holywell) on 2nd (ASJ). 50 were at Big Waters on 16th (GB). 25 at Outchester on 17th included a male singing in fine weather (ASJ). Groups of 20 were counted at Linton and Longhorsely on 4th and at West Howdens on 6th where lower numbers remained on several dates, and West Ord on 15th (TB/LB/AB/NFO/NNBC). One to 12 were observed at a further 12 sites this month.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

An area of stubble bordered with hawthorn bushes at Old Bewick held the observer's 45-year personal record count for the county, with an impressive sight of 67 birds counted feeding in a mixed flock with Yellowhammers and Tree Sparrows or perched in the bushes on 17th. A subsequent visit a week later revealed 61 birds (ASJ). 24 were counted at Callerton on 26th, with 20 present on 11th (MH). 23 were seen at Mickley Square in trees bordering a rape field on 19th (DLe). On 9th, 15 were feeding in stubble at Beaconhill (Cramlington) (STH). 12 were at Prestwick Carr on 4th and 6th (MH/PCF). Eight plus were seen at St. Mary's on 17th , with 5 males there on 28th (MSH/ASJ). Four were at Carterway Heads on 5th and 16th (NFO). One to two were at six further sites during the month, including a male visiting a Gosforth garden on 23rd.

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

There were two records this month. 14 fed along the north shore at Snook (Holy Island) on 5th and a single was seen at Ross Point on 2nd (DF/MR).



A Snow Bunting at Cresswell on 16th February by Mike Carr

ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN

Escapes

Red-breasted Goose *Branta ruficollis*

The plastic blue-ringed individual first seen in December 2017 was again in the Druridge Bay area being seen at Druridge Pools on 17th (GB) and at East Chevington the following day (IRD). The ring is very narrow but viewable at reasonably close range.

Hybrids

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

One was located at Big Waters on 18th. (GB).

American Wigeon x Wigeon *Mareca americana* x *Mareca penelope*

The hybrid drake found at Druridge Pools last month was again seen there on 4th (JFa / TF) and on 23rd (NFO).

Birds of Unknown Origin

No sightings

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

A.Allen, S.R.Barrett, M & R.J.Bentley (MB/RB), D.H.W.Blair, T.Blake, J.S.Booth, G.Bowman, C.Bradshaw, T.Brewis (TBr), A. & L.Brunt, J.Bucknall (JBU), M.J.Carr, P.R.Cassells, M.N.Coates, M.J.Cook (MJCo), E.Crabtree, T.Daley, I.B. & K.Davison (IBDa / Kda), J.C.Day, T.R. & J.Dean, I.R.Douglas, J.Farooqi (JFa), T.Farooqi, P.C.Fletcher, D.F.Forshaw, I.Forsyth (IFo), P.Gilbert, C.D.Hampton, A.S.Hart, C.Hartley, M.Henry, A.J.Hewitt, M.S.Hodgson, S.T.Holliday, M.Hutcheson (MHu), A.S.Jack, I.Johnson, J.Joicey (JJo), I.Kerr, M.Kirby (MKi), C.G.Knox, G.P.Knox, D.Leat (DLe), J.D.Lough, D.Lovatt (DLo), J.P.Lumby, P.R.Massey, L.J.McDougall, A.D.Mould, D.McKeown, A.J.Newson, N.F.Osborne, A.J.Richards, J.Richardson, M.Richardson, M.P.Rogers, J.A.Roper, C.Saunders, M.R.Smith, B.Steel, R.Stevens, C.Tudge, D.R.Watson, S.Westerberg, T.Wiffen (TWi), C.Wright, K.W.York.

Alnwick Wildlife Group (R Poyer), Bamburgh Ringing Station, Berwick Wildlife Group, North Northumberland Bird Club, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

Apologies for any accidental omissions

BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION

This bulletin was compiled by Graeme Bowman (Geese to Mergansers), Steve Laing (Red Grouse to Cormorant), Trevor Blake (Hawks to Falcons), Tom Brewis (Oystercatcher to Godwit), Clive Hampton (Turnstone to Redshank), Eddie Crabtree (Kittiwake to Puffin), Tim Dean (Escapes, Hybrids and Unknown Origin, List of Contributors, Highlights), Peter Fletcher (Doves to Larks), Mike Richardson (Tits to Stonechat), Alan Jack (Dipper to Buntings).

Data Manager is Tom Brewis.

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 records for the month to ntbc.records@googlemail.com

Please email for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and grid references: Please use of standard location names and 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

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 online resource for anyone interested in birds. There are:

Photo Galleries – Here you can view hundreds of photos of birds from Northumberland, Newcastle and North Tyneside. Members are encouraged to contribute their own photos. Simply send them to galleries@ntbc.org.uk

Sightings – Here you can view reports of birds recently reported in the County. Anyone who would like to contribute and post sightings to this page, please email sightings@ntbc.org.uk Please note this section is moderated, so there may be a short delay before your record appears.

There are also County Checklists, Records Committee updates, Information on important Surveys, useful articles and reports on Bird ID and Overseas Birding Trips....and much more...

Please submit any other new content for the website to the main club email address at ntbcorg@gmail.com

New content such as Birding Trip Reports etc., is always welcome and very much appreciated.
To find out more please visit www.ntbc.org.uk

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2018 No 3

MONTHLY SUMMARY MARCH 2018

5th May 2018



CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Tundra Bean Goose	Only singles at Earsdon and Cresswell Pond.
Black Scoter	Drake was refound at Cheswick on 8th and at Ross Back Sands on 12th.
Long-tailed Duck	High count of 140 at Bamburgh on 11th.
Smew	Only record of year so far concerned one at Corbridge on 20th.
Rough-legged Buzzard	Two juveniles together over Rothbury on 19th after mini 'Beast from the East!'
Whimbrel	Early migrant over Tynemouth at dawn on 26th.
Ruff	Four noted at Druridge Pools on 19th
Grey Phalarope	Up to three at St Mary's from 2nd to 4th and one at Newton scrape from 28th.
Spotted Redshank	The wintering bird at Budle Bay was still present up to 11th.
Little Gull	Influx in month with sightings at many localities
Glaucous Gull	Several individuals still present.
Iceland Gull	Several individuals still present
Stock Dove	Exceptional count of 109 at Druridge on 9th.
Great Grey Shrike	The wintering bird was present at Prestwick Carr all month.
Waxwing	Two popular birds at Benton from 15th to 23rd. Sparse winter for species.
Water Pipit	Up to two at Druridge Pools all month plus a single at Boulmer from 23rd.
Hawfinch	Interesting late influx into Hulne Park with up to 20 seen from 16th.
Mealy Redpoll	Up to two in a Rothbury garden from 12th to 17th coming to niger seed.

CONTENTS

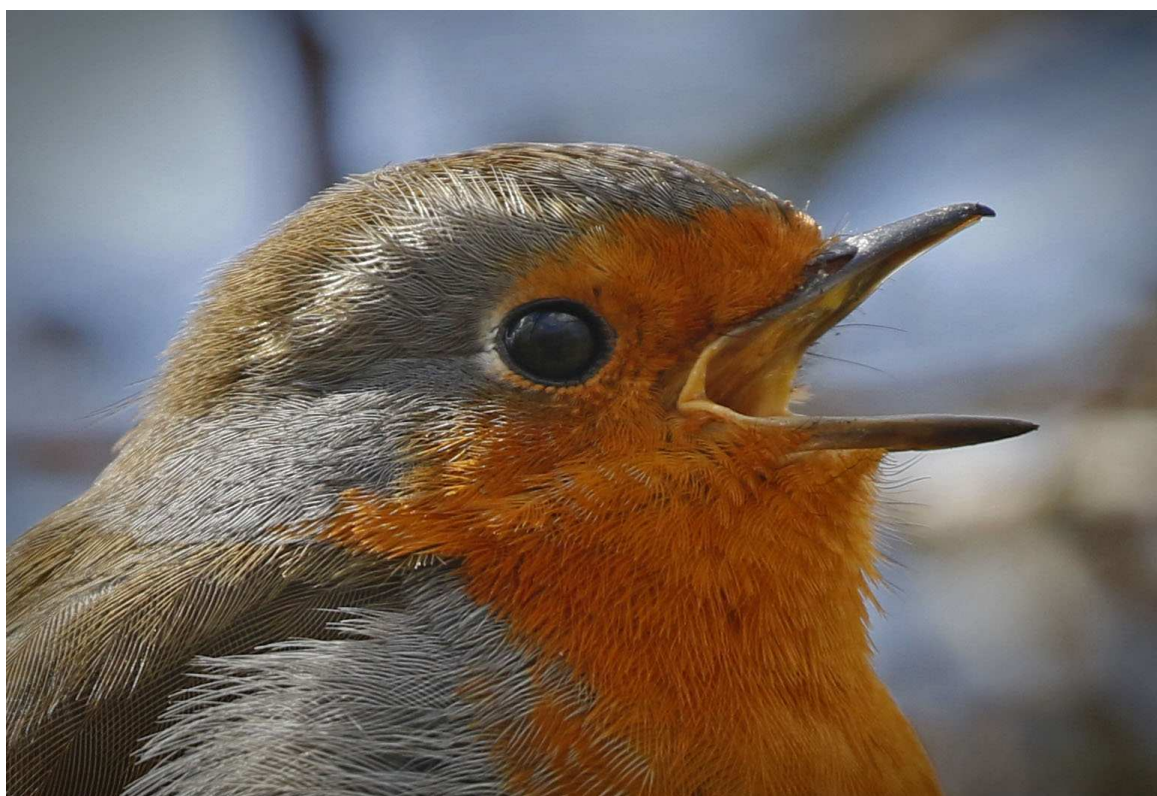
Data Protection Policy- please see end of Bulletin

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 next meeting is in September.

FIELD TRIPS

Contact Steve Anderson seaswan@btinternet.com



A Holy Island Robin sings. By Mike Carr on 25th March

CLASSIFIED LIST**Brent Goose** *Branta bernicla*

Pale-bellied *hrota* race birds involved about 700 at Budle Bay on 9th (DF) and 80 there on 24th (CGK), 200 at Fenham Flats on 11th (TRD/JD), ten N at Boulmer on 28th (BS), and singles at Cresswell Pond and Holy Island 'rocket field'. More unusual was singles at Cresswell Pond on 9th and 31st (GB/TRC/STH) and Holywell Pond on 24th (GPK).

Dark-bellied *bernicla* race birds include 24 at Beal on 31st (BS) and one at Druridge Pools on 14th (TRD/JD). A total of 535 un-raced birds were at Fenham Flats on 10th (JDL).

Red-breasted Goose *Branta ruficollis*

One (presumed escapee) was with Pink-footed Goose at Cresswell Pond (MJC) and near QEII CP (TB) on 7th. Perhaps the same individual was at Holywell Pond on 13th (seen to have a thin blue ring on the left leg; AC).

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Three flew N at Seaton Sluice on 28th-29th (SSWT). Aside from 209 at Derwent Reservoir on 11th (IFo), there were no other three-figure counts. Other peaks involved 73 at Grindon Lough on 26th (PRM), 72 at Hauxley Reserve on 9th (HRS), 32-49 at Linton Ponds (CDH) and West Ord (MHu), and 11-19 at Haughton Strother GP, Newcastle Leazes Park, QEII CP Lake and West Stobswood.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Good numbers at Budle Bay included peaks of 1,100 on 9th (PRM) and about 800 on 12th (DF), with 280 remaining on 24th (CGK). Two were at Holywell Pond on 24th (GPK) and singles at East Holywell and QEII CP Lake.

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Peak counts were 340 at Budle Bay on 9th (PRM), 140 at Cocklawburn on 14th (MHu), 113-126 at Haughton Strother GP (MR) and Holywell (MSH), and 88 at Bothal Pond (TD). Counts of ten to 30 came from East Holywell, Hauxley Reserve, Spartylea and Woodhorn Flashes, while one to eight were at Grindon Lough, Linton Ponds and QEII CP Lake.

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

70 flew N at East Ord on 26th (MHu). Large gatherings involved 1,510 at Hauxley on 17th (BS), 1,500 at Beal on 25th (NFO), 1,500 at Budle Bay on 9th (DF), 1,500 at Cresswell on 9th (TRD), 1,300-1,328 in the Brier Dene Farm (Whitely Bay) area between 13th-20th (AC/MNC), 1,200 at Widdrington Moor Lake on 29th (TRD/JD), 1,000 at Backworth on 11th (CGK), and 800-975 at Cheswick (TRD/JD), Gloucester Lodge, Seaton Sluice (MSH), and West Stobswood Pool (MSH). Counts of 220-400 also came from Budle Bay, Cheswick, Druridge, Holywell and Scremerston, while 82-199 were at/over Bothal Pond, Cocklawburn, Maiden's Hall Lake, the Tweed Estuary and Woodhorn. Two neck-collared birds at Holywell on 14th had been marked at High Kelling, Norfolk on 16th January 2018 (MSH).

Tundra Bean Goose *Anser serrirostris*

Singles were at Cresswell Pond on 7th (MJC), and Earsdon on 3rd (ASJ), 13th (AC) and 14th (MSH).



A Tundra Bean Goose near Earsdon 14th by Mike Hodgson

White-fronted Goose *Anser flavirostris*

Eurasian *albifrons* race birds involved three near Earsdon on 13th (AC), two were at Budle Bay on 9th (DF), and singles at Cresswell Pond on 7th (MJC), Druridge on 14th (TB/TRD/JD), East Holywell on 17th (MSH) and Hauxley on 17th (BS).

Eight Greenland *flavirostris* race birds were at Prestwick Carr between 23rd-31st (PCF *et al.*), and one was at Cresswell Pond on 13th (MSH). Two, probably of this race, were also at Budle Bay on 19th (BS).

Three un-raced birds were at Brier Dene Farm, Whitley Bay on 12th (MNC).

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Five flew N at Ellington on 30th (TB), 114* were at QEII CP Lake on 11th (CDH), 44 at Killingworth Lake on 21st (LJM), 21-25 at Buston Links (STH) and the Tweed Estuary (PRM), and 14-16 at Bothal Pond and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Five to eight were also at Grindon Lough, Newcastle Exhibition and Leazes Parks, and one was on the sea off St Mary's on 25th (CDH).

* two flew into power lines but were apparently not seriously hurt.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Movement to N/NW involved 35 at Slaley Hall on 30th (RMH), 18-27 at Howdon (CB), Newbiggin (AP), Rothbury (TRD/JD), Seaton Sluice (SSWT) and Titlington Mount (IBDa/KDa) on various dates, and five to 11 at Cresswell Pond, Ellington and Linden Hall on various dates; and 19 flew E at Derwent Reservoir on 15th (IFo). A flock of 95 at Derwent Reservoir consisted of 92 adult and three first-winter birds (IFO), 65 were at Beal on 26th (NFO), 48 on the sea off Cheswick on 26th (MHu), 41 at East Chevington north pool on 28th (STH), 32-33 at Big Waters (GB) and Holy Island (DF), 21-29 at Buston Links, Druridge Pools, Linton Ponds and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, and 14-16 at Airy Holm Reservoir and East Chevington. Two to six were also at Branton and Haughton Strother GPs, Castron, and Prestwick Carr.

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

A total of nine flew N at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). Numbers at Budle Bay peaked at 195 on 5th (DF), 33 were at the Tyne Estuary on 21st (MK), 26 at Druridge Pools on 20th (MSH), 22 at Howdon on 17th (CB), and 14-17 at Boulmer (BS) and the Coquet Estuary (AWG). Five to six were at Ellington and Hauxley Reserve, and one to two at Cresswell and Middle Ord Ponds, Haughton Strother GP, Prestwick Carr, West Ord and the Tweed Estuary. A pair prospecting around Tynemouth priory between 24th-31st (DRW).

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

Single pairs were at Haughton Strother GP on 31st (MR), Smalesmouth on 24th (JR) and Wark on 24th (JR). A drake displayed to Mallards on a small pond at Causey Hill, Hexham on 23rd (PRC).



A drake Mandarin at Causey Hill Hexham. Paul Cassells on 23rd March

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

19 were at Budle Bay on 5th (but none on 8th; DF), 15 at Druridge Pools on 23rd included much display (TD/TRD), six pairs were at Monks' House Pool on 12th (JPL), up to seven birds at Prestwick Carr between 13th-21st (PCF), and three at Big Waters. One to two were also at Branton GP, Cresswell, Holywell and Linton Ponds, Grindon Lough, Haughton Strother GP and Low Newton scrape.

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Peak counts were 18 at Killingworth Lake on 5th (MSH), 17 at Swallow Pond on 9th (GPK), 16 at Arcot Pond on 8th-9th (DM/LJM), 14 (seven pairs) at Bothal Pond on 29th (TD), and ten at Castle Island (STH). Five to nine were also at Big Waters, Caistron, Cresswell, Holywell and Linton Ponds, Hauxley Reserve, Prestwick Carr, West Stobswood Pool and Woodhorn Flashes, and two to four at Branton GP, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Haughton Strother GP, Howdon and Low Newton scrape.

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

One flew N at Seaton Sluice on 28th (SSWT), 800 at Cresswell Pond on 7th (MJC) fell to 315 by 17th (IRD), 487 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 21st (SR) dropped to six by 29th (PRM), 300 were at Druridge Pools on 9th (IF), 217-234 at the Coquet Estuary (AWG), Derwent Reservoir (IFo) and Grindon Lough (PRM), and 120-160 at Amble Braid, Budle Bay, the Coquet Estuary, Craggy Bog (Murton) and Hauxley Reserve. Counts of 56-78 came from Linton Ponds and the Tweed Estuary, and 20-43 were at Boulmer Flash, Haughton Strother GP, Hazlerigg, Lynemouth Flash, New Water Haugh, Prestwick Carr and QEII CP Lake. None at Bothal Pond (a popular site in past years) all month was thought to be the result of frequent disturbance by anglers (TD).

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

100 were at the Tweed Estuary on 9th (PRM), 72 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 21st (SR), 38 at Craggy Bog, Murton on 11th (MHu), and ten to 27 at Bothal Pond, Castle Island, Chirton Dene Park, the Coquet Estuary, Haughton Strother GP, Hauxley Reserve, Newcastle Exhibition and Leazes Parks, and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

A peak of 13 was noted at Druridge Pools on 14th (TRD/JD) and one to 12 (up to nine drakes) regularly there throughout the month. Two pairs were at Prestwick Carr on 7th and 9th (PCF/MH) and a single pair there on 6th and 27th (PCF). Single pairs were at Big Waters on 18th (GB) and Widdrington Moor Lake (BS), and a pair at Howdon Wetland on 5th was a 'first' for the site (CB). Singles were also at Fenham Flats and Grindon Lough.

Teal *Anas crecca*

Peak counts were 240 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 12th (SR), 155 at Derwent Reservoir on 15th (IFo), 130 at Howdon on 12th (CB), 110 at Grindon Lough between 8th-14th (PRM), and 52-85 at Arcot and Middle Ord Ponds, Budle Bay, Castle Island, the Coquet Estuary, Prestwick Carr and St Mary's Wetland. Groups of 20-46 were also noted at Craggy Bog, Hauxley Reserve, Linton Ponds, Lynemouth Flash and Tyne Green (Hexham), and ten to 17 at Bothal and Howick Mill Ponds, and the Tweed Estuary.

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Holywell Pond held 19 on 8th (DLo), 18 (16 drakes) were at Killingworth Lake on 5th (MSH), 15 at Bothal Pond between 17th-19th (IRD/TD), and fours at Grindon Lough on 8th (PRM), Linton Ponds on 5th (IRD) and Woodhorn Flashes (AP). One to two were also at Arcot Pond, Big Waters, Caistron and Tynemouth boating lake.



A drake Pochard at Killingworth Lake by Jack Bucknall. 8th March

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Largest counts came from Killingworth Lake with a peak of 63 on 21st (LJM), Bothal Pond with 50 on 19th (TD), and Swallow Pond with 45 on 31st (GPK). Other peak counts involved 30-32 at Haughton Strother GP and Woodhorn Flashes, 20-25 at Arcot Pond, Druridge Pools and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, and ten to 18 at Big Waters, Cresswell, Linton and West Allotment Ponds, Howdon, Grindon Lough, Longhoughton Quarry and Newcastle Exhibition Park. Two were on the sea off Druridge on 23rd (TRD). Five to six were also at Cocklawburn Pond, Hauxley Reserve, Newcastle Leazes Park, QEII CP Lake and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.



A drone Tufted Duck at Killingworth Lake by Jack Bucknall. 8th March

Scaup *Aythya marila*

Four were at East Chevington on 8th (MK), and five there on 9th (TRD) and 14th (NFO). At Cresswell Pond, four were noted on 12th (MJC) and 17th (IRD), and one to three regularly between 5th-23rd (IRD/CH/NFO et al.).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 89 N and 76 S (SSWT), 39 were off St Mary's on 31st (MK), 23 at North Shields Fish Quay on 1st (MK), and ten to 14 at Cocklawburn, the Tweed Estuary and Whitley Bay. Two to seven were also off Birling Carrs and at Blyth Harbour.

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

Two flew N at Seaton Sluice on 17th (SSWT), and one N at Newbiggin on 30th (BS). A drone was off Druridge on 23rd (TRD).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

At Seaton Sluice, 122 flew N and 17 S (SSWT). About 400 were at Stag Rocks on 11th-12th (TRD/JD/TF), about 300 at Goswick on 11th (TRD/JD), 200 off Ross Back Sands on 12th (CH), 110 at Cocklawburn on 7th (MHu), and 50 off Druridge (TRD). Groups of 14-15 were at Birling Carrs and Warkworth, and one to nine at Newbiggin, St Mary's, the Tweed Estuary and Whitley Bay. A drone was on the River Tyne at Tynemouth on 18th (ASJ) and 24th (DRW).

Black Scoter *Melanitta americana*

An adult drone was at Cheswick Sands on 8th (CH) and then off Ross Back Sands on 12th (CH).

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

At Stag Rocks, 140 were present on 11th (TRD/JD), 75 on 8th and 12th (DF), and seven to 40 on various dates between 7th-26th (MH/AA/NFO et al.). Singles were at East Chevington north pool on 9th, 14th and 23rd (AA/TRD et al.).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Two flew N at Seaton Sluice between 19th-31st (SSWT). The Tweed Estuary attracted a peak of 69 on 9th (PRM), 26 at Killingworth Lake on 25th included several displaying (AJ), 24-25 were at Branton GP (IBDa/KDa), East Chevington (TRD) and Grindon Lough (PRM), and 11-16 at Castron, Castle Island, Cresswell Pond (some displaying; IRD), Longhoughton Low Steads, QEII CP Lake and West Ord. Eight were at Haughton Strother GP, and three to four at Big Waters (brief display; GB), Bothal Pond, Hauxley Reserve and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.



A drake Goldeneye at Killingworth Lake by Jack Bucknall. 8th March

Smew *Mergellus albellus*

On 20th, one was with Goldeneyes at Dilston, Corbridge before flying W (RB/MB).

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

A pair flew N at Seaton Sluice on 20th (SSWT) when a pair were noted asleep offshore at Hadston (MH/AA), and two flew N at Tynemouth on 24th (DRW). Eight were at Horncliffe on 25th (JDL), six at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 24th (SR), five at Killingworth Lake on 5th (MSH), and three at Branton GP, Greenlee Lough and the Tweed Estuary. One to two were also at Bedlington Station, Castron, Morpeth, Newcastle Exhibition and Leazes Parks, Tyne Green, Wark and Weldon Bridge.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Nine were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 17th (BS), seven at East Chevington on 14th (TRD/JD), six at the Tweed Estuary on 16th (MHu), and four at Cresswell Pond (MSH). One to two were also at Castle Island, Druridge Pools (the main pool and the 'Budge fields'), Royal Quays (North Shields), Stag Rocks, Whitley Bay and Widdrington Moor Lake. More unusual were a pair at Tynemouth boating lake on 18th (IJ/DRW).



A drake Red-breasted Merganser at Tynemouth boating Lake by Duncan Watson on 18th March

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

Good views were obtained of three males feeding in open areas at Pea Hill (Westburnhope) on 24th, with others "bubbling" from several closer locations nearby (PRC). A single was at Spartylea on 3rd.

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

"Very good numbers" were reported from Allendale with 60 present on 24th (ASJ). Also on 24th, during a visit to Harthope Valley, "lots of displaying males" were included in totals of 60 in the Carey Burn area and 33 at Hawsen Burn, with a further 16 at New Burn (Cheviots) (MJC). Two to three were also at Alnwick Moor, Langleeford and Winter's Gibbet (Harwood).



A red Grouse under the microscope. Mike Carr in the Cheviots on 24th March

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

Ten were courting at Langleeford (Harthope Valley) on 27th (TRD/JD), four were at Backworth, up to three at Craggside, two under feeders at a garden in Rothbury on several dates, two at Crawley Hill (Hartburn) and Netherwitton, and a single on the roadside at Druridge farm.



A Red-legged Partridge in the Harthope Valley on 27th March by Tim Dean

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Two pairs were at Prestwick Carr on 20th (PCF) and single pairs were at Boulmer, Druridge Pools, Haughton Strother GP, Spittal Bay (Newbiggin) and Woodhorn Flashes. One was calling at Beal.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

A total of 17 were in fields at Hartford Bridge on 3rd (JR), between two to eight were at Spartylea all month (CT), seven were at Prestwick Carr on 28th and one to five were at Arcot Pond, Fulbeck, Hauxley NWT, Linton Ponds (including one completely white bird) and in a garden at Tynemouth.



A hen Pheasant at Craggside on 12th March by Janet Dean

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

The total for the month at Seaton Sluice was "well above average" with 88 (29N and 58S) in 42 hours of watching (SSWT). 13 were seen between Bamburgh-Budle Point on 11th (MJC) and ten were offshore at Cheswick Sands on 8th (CH). Stag Rocks peaked at seven on 13th and several reports of one to three were seen at other coastal locations. One was found inland at QE11 CP on 27th (STH).

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*

The only report was a single at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 7th (MSH).

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

Up to three were present at Stag Rocks early in the month and singles were at Cheswick Sands and Holy Island. One juvenile still remained at Widdrington Moor Lake until at least 14th (NFO).

White-billed Diver *Gavia adamsii*

One was seen on the sea off Church Point (Newbiggin) on 24th, before flying S (ADM per JS).

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

The only movements of note at Seaton Sluice were 220N in four hours on 31st and 85N in two hours on 15th (SSWT). 20 were on cliffs at Old Hartley on 11th and Howick on 14th, 15 were at both Stag Rocks on 7th and Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 11th and two corpses were found on Blyth beach during the month (MHP).

Fulmars return to the cliffs

Cullercoats

Alan Jack

25th March



Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Eight were present at Caistron during a WeBS count on 20th (JD), four pairs were on territory at Linton Ponds by 27th (STH) and one to six were at 18 other localities.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

The only movement recorded at Seaton Sluice was two N on 3rd. Numbers started to build up at favoured breeding sites with seven at East Chevington North Pool on 28th (STH), four at Big Waters NWT, Killingworth Lake and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, and three at Haughton Strother GP and Widdrington Moor Lake. One to two were at Airy Holm Reservoir, Arcot Pond, Birling Carrs, Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Branton GP, Caistron, Cullercoats Bay, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Newbiggin, QE11 CP, Stag Rocks, Swallow Pond and Tynemouth.

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

As usual the Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) area provided the majority of records, peaking with 11 there on 7th (BS). Five were at Ross Back Sands on 11th (BS) and five were also counted between Bamburgh-Budle Point on 11th (MJC). Four were at St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) on 17th, two of which were moulting into breeding plumage (IK). Two were offshore at Chewick Sands on 8th (CH) and in Budle Bay on 21st whilst singles were observed at the Tweed estuary and Horncliffe.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

12 were sheltering in near-gale conditions at Druridge Pools on 23rd (MH), 11 were present in the Tweed estuary on 9th (PRM) then again during a WeBS count on 16th (MHu). Reports from nest sites included 12 in the heronry at Howdon on 31st (CB), at least seven at Old Hartley on 31st (SJL) and three at Howick (JAR). One to three were at several other locations.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Only very low numbers in the county this month with the highest count being two present all month at Horton Burn (Cramlington) (LJM). Singles were at Annstead, Big Waters NWT, Caistron, Druridge Pools, East Cramlington LNR, Furnace Bank (Bedlington) and Prestwick Carr.

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

Seaton Sluice Watch Tower reported "extremely low numbers" with only 46N and five S in 42 hours of watching (SSWT). The only other report was four at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 11th (IJ).

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

A welcome increase in numbers at Seaton Sluice, following a poor winter for records, with a monthly total of 146 (50N and 96S) (SSWT). Birds gathering at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) to return to breeding sites on the Farnes numbered ca.250 on 11th (TRD/JD), an increase from a minimum of 80 there on 7th (MSH). 60 were offshore at Budle Point on 24th (CGK) and one to three were reported from Blyth Harbour, Boulmer, Druridge, Tweed estuary and Tynemouth. A fresh corpse found at Ross Back Sands on 13th was wearing Ring No: 1396574 which determined it had been ringed as a nestling at Craighleith, in the Firth of Forth, on 28/06/2003 (CH).



A Shag 'stranded' at Bamburgh. Janet Dean on 11th March

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

No significant movements were recorded past Seaton Sluice during the month and very few from 22nd (SSWT). The largest congregation was 46 in Blyth Harbour on 6th (STH), QE11 CP peaked at 13 on 11th, 11 were at Derwent Reservoir on 15th and ten were at Big Waters NWT on 13th. One to eight were at several other localities. Three continental "sinensis" race birds were at QE11 CP and singles at Arcot Pond and Linden Hall.

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Only single birds noted this month at 21 sites including a 1st summer male at feeders most days between 13th and 31st at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) (BSt).

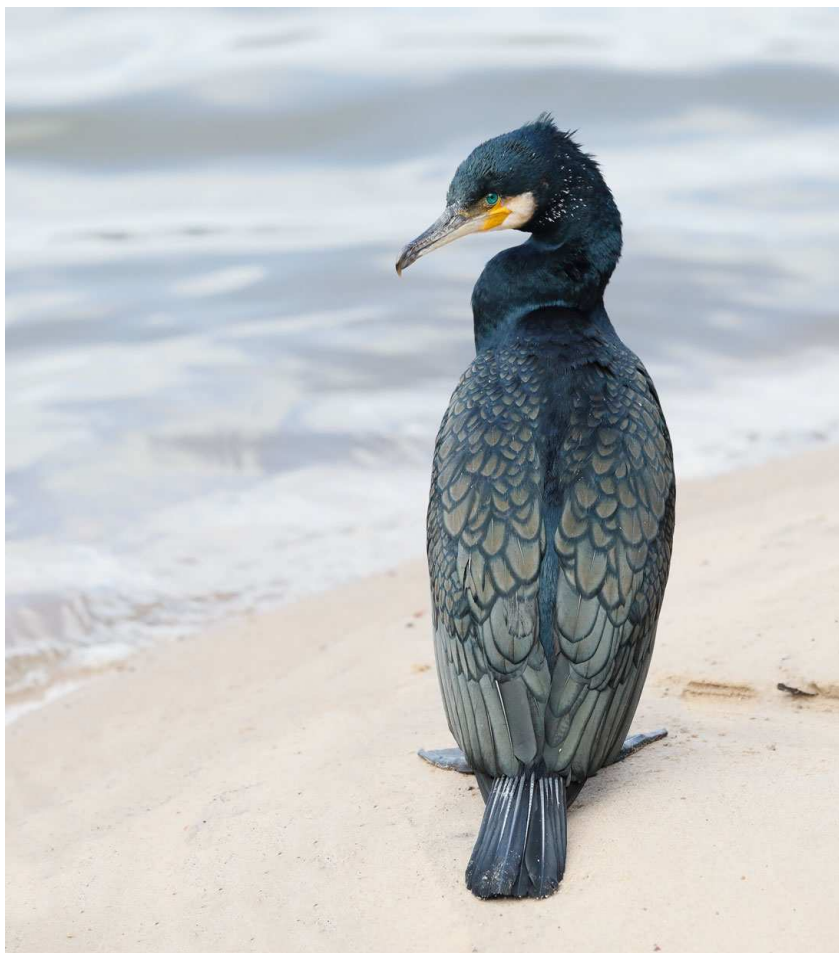
Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

Birds were noted at the Harwood/Gibbet area with a female on 11th, three birds on 20th and two birds on 26th (ADMc). An adult was displaying over a wide area of moorland on 13th (MH/AA)

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

A male and a female met while hunting at a confidential site on 19th (MH/AA).

A Cormorant on Blyth beach
Colin Bradshaw
19th March

**Red Kite** *Milvus Milvus*

Single birds were noted at Derwent Reservoir on 5th (RMH), over the A69 at Whittle Dene on 9th (AJN), Crooked Oak (Carterway Heads) on 14th (IFo) and at Heddon-on-the-Wall on 25th (MH/AA).

Rough-legged Buzzard *Buteo lagopus*

Two juveniles were seen harassing a Rook *Corvus frugilegus* over the football field at Rothbury, one of them perched briefly on a low tree (JD).

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

17 birds in one flock drifted North parallel with the A1 at Rosebrough Moor (Alnwick) on 13th (MH/AA). Eight birds were noted at Sleaford Hall on 13th (RMH), and six were at Haughton Strother GP's (Humshaugh) on 26th (MR) and five were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 19th (SR). Four birds were noted at the following sites River Tweed Estuary & west Hartford on 9th (PRM/TB), Whittingham on 13th (MJC), Big waters NWT on 25th (GB), Tyne Riverside CP (Newburn) and Thrunton Woods on 29th (SR/MJC). One – three birds were at 29 sites.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Three birds were at Holy Island on 4th (SR) and at East Chevington on 28th (STH). Two birds were noted at Backworth Pond and Swallow Pond (Wallsend) throughout the month (CGK/GPK). Two birds were seen at St Mary's Wetland throughout the month (AC/MK) and singles were at Arcot Pond and Prestwick Carr on 25th (STH/PCF).

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

21 birds at Castle Island (River Wansbeck) was the highest count this month (STH), nine birds were at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 19th (GB) and eight were seen there on 28th (DM). Six were seen at Hauxley NWT on 9th (HRS), QE11 CP on 11th (CDH) and at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 22nd (DM). One-three was seen at Arcot Pond, Bedlington Station, Grindon Lough, Jesmond Dene (Newcastle) and at the River Coquet Estuary.

Coot *Fulica atra*

Bothal Pond had the highest count with 22 birds there on 19th (TD) followed by 16 birds at Haughton Strother GP's (Humshaugh) on 7th (MR). 14 were at Linton Ponds on 11th and 12 were at QE11 CP on also on 11th (CDH), 11 were at Arcot Pond on 8th (STH) and 10 were at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 16th (GB). Two to nine birds were at four sites.

Common Crane *Grus grus*

Two adults were seen at Pegswood and flew off towards Longhirst Flash area on 20th (ADMc).

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Typically, counts of coastal and inland birds began to converge as inland movements became established. Coastal counts of 20 or more came from Tynemouth with 62 on 30th (MK), from Berwick, Little Beach with 56 on 8th (MHu), from Hauxley NWT with 55 on 9th (HRS), from Blyth Estuary which had 47 on 5th (STH) and from Boulmer Flash where there were 46 on 29th (AB/LB). Cresswell Pond had 30 on 18th (DM) and the Tweed Estuary had 26 on 16th (MHu). Inland counts of similar size came from Derwent Reservoir where 54 were counted on 14th (IFo), from Humshaugh, Houghton Strother GP where a peak count of 32 occurred on 19th (MR), Spartylea with 28 on 14th (CT), Branton GP with 23 on 8th (MJC) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs which had 20 on 19th (SR). Smaller counts came from Airy Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield), Benton, Berwick (West Ord), Big Waters NWT, Birling Carr S, Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Coquet estuary, Cramlington (Southfield Green), Derwent Reservoir, Gosforth Park, Grindon Lough, Hazlerigg and Prestwick Carr.

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

The first reported sighting, one day later than last year, was of a single bird at Cresswell Pond on 9th (MJC, TRD, STH/TRC) although the bird had "apparently arrived the day before". All other reports came from the same site and numbers gradually built to a peak of 26 on 30th (TB). This however, decreased to 16 the following day (GB). Both counts appear to be well above the maximum of previous years.

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

As the month progressed more reports came from breeding grounds inland although the wintery conditions appeared to postpone some of the movement that might have otherwise occurred. Between 14th-18th 210 birds were still present at St Mary's (CT) although 200 were at Derwent Reservoir on 11th (TD). Earlier in the month, on 7th, 55 pairs among a total count of 170 were seen displaying (ASJ) at Cresswell Pond but the same location was reporting only single numbers a few days later. All other three-figure reports came from inland sites with 140 at Murton (Craggy Bog) on 11th (PRM) and 110 seen displaying at Allendale (Acton Fell) on 24th (TB). Other reports came from Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Cullercoats (Browns Bay), Derwent Reservoir, Ellington, Grindon Lough, Grindon Lough, Harthope Valley (Carey Burn), Hauxley NWT, Howdon, Murton, Craggy Bog, Prestwick Carr, Spartylea, Tweed estuary, Tynemouth and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

The largest counts were still to be found along the coast with the largest at Backworth where counts varied between 450 and ca. 620 between 11th and 30th (CGK, AJ, MK). Blyth Links had a count of 400 on 19th (TB). Testimony to the severe weather earlier in the month were reports from SSWT of "...several birds trying to feed on the island and in island gardens" on 3rd, when 195N and 97S were also recorded. The largest inland count came from Longhorsely Moor on 24th with 200 birds seen (TB) and several birds were seen displaying in a flock of 155 at Allendale, Acton Moor on 24th (ASJ). One hundred and fifty were reported from Cresswell Pond on 14th (TB) and St Mary's had 110 birds on 2nd, where birds took advantage of some snow free ground to feed (ASJ). Counts of less than 100 came from Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Boulmer, Cresswell Pond, Cullercoats, Druridge Lane, Earsdon (Beehive area), Grindon Lough, Prestwick Carr, Spartylea, St Mary's, Tynemouth, West Woodburn, Whitley Bay, Brierdene Carpark and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Five of the nine reports came from Boulmer with the peak count of 22 seen on 24th (BS); other counts at Boulmer varied between one and 17. Budle Bay held 17 on 5th (DF), there were five present in the Blyth Estuary on the same date (STH), three were counted at Berwick Coastguard Station on 8th and a single bird was reported from Fenham-le-Moor.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

On 11th Holy Island had 30 (IK) and the same number was reported from Boulmer on 22nd (TBr). Boulmer, Seaton Point had ten birds on 28th (NFO) and eight were seen at Goswick on 11th (TRD/JD). Seven returnees were at Derwent Reservoir on 9th (IFo) and six were reported from the beach at East Chevington on 9th (TRD). Other counts of three and less came from Cresswell Pond, Humshaugh, Houghton Strother GP, Lynemouth Power Station and Newcastle Airport.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

The only record was of a single bird flying N at Tynemouth on 26th (CB).

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

All the large counts came from coastal locations with the largest made at Boulmer, Howdiemont Sands, where 360 were seen at a high tide roost on 12th (MKi). Druridge Pools reported 100-150 between 17th and 30th with the highest count made on 23rd (TD). On 16th, 143 were in the Tweed Estuary (MHu), 120 at Cresswell Pond, Snab Point on 22nd (TB) and 107 at Hauxley NWT on (HRS). Amble Braid provided a count of 97 on 22nd (TBr) and 90 were in the Blyth Estuary on 9th (LJM). Counts of 50-90 came from Blyth (Gloucester Lodge Farm), Cocklawburn, High Hauxley and St Mary's. Counts of less than 50 came from Allendale (Acton Fell), Berwick (Coastwatch Station), Branton GP, Callerton, Derwent Reservoir, Grindon Lough, Harthope Valley (Carey Burn), Harthope Valley (Hawsen Burn), Howdon, Humshaugh (Houghton Strother GP), Newbiggin (Spital Bay), Prestwick Carr, R Wansbeck (Castle Island), Seaton Sluice Watch Tower, Spartylea, Whittle Dene Reservoirs and Woodhorn.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

A notable increase in the number of reports with 70 reported from Goswick on 11th (TRD/JD). Boulmer had counts of ca. 40 on 18th (BS) and 22nd (TRD/JD). On 7th Blyth Estuary had a count of ten (STH). All other reports were of single-figure counts, coming from Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond, Cresswell (Snab Point), Druridge Pools, North Shields Fish Quay, St Mary's and Tynemouth.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Druridge Pools and Cresswell Pond dominated the larger counts with 35 at Druridge Pools on 30th (STH) and 27 at Cresswell Ponds on 27th (MH/AA). Holy Island had 20 on 14th (SR) and Howden had eleven birds on 30th (CB). Blyth estuary, Boulmer and Budle Bay had counts of less than ten.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Numbers increased at St Mary's Island from 70 on 20th to 124 by 30th (MK). Other sites attracted considerably smaller numbers with a monthly maximum at Tynemouth of 29 on 10th (MK). Other double figure counts were 24 at Cocklawburn on 19th (MHu), 20 at Cresswell Pond on 31st (GB), 20 at Newbiggin on 18th (DM) and 18 at Berwick Little Beach on 8th and the same number at Cheswick Black Rocks on 14th (both MHu). One-eight were at Boulmer, Cocklawburn Pond, Low Newton and the River Tweed Estuary.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

After last month's single report, more reports were received as northbound passage birds appeared. In the River Coquet Estuary/Amble Braid area, 32 were reported on 17th and 23rd (BS/TBr). The maximum recorded at Boulmer during the month was 18 (BS) and 11 were in the River Blyth Estuary near the boatyard. Three were at Budle Bay and one-two at Cresswell Pond from 9th-31st. Singles were seen at North Shields Fish Quay and Tynemouth.

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

Four were seen on 19th and a single on 25th at Druridge Pools (ADMc/NFO/MJC)

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

At Seaton Sluice passage was recorded from 14th-22nd with a total of 206 N (SSWT). A count along the beach between Cresswell Pond and Druridge Pools revealed 232 on 9th MJC). Reports were received from other locations in Druridge Bay which may have involved the same group with 120 at Chevington Burn on 6th (MK/AA), 40 at Cresswell on 20th (PCF) and eight at East Chevington. St Mary's Island attracted a high of 80 on 26th (MK), 66 were at Boulmer on 29th (AB/LB), 58 at Beacon Point, Newbiggin on 26th (STH), 26 at Cheswick on 26th (MHu), 20 at Goswick on 11th (JD/TRD) and seven at Cocklawburn.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

The wintering flock in the River Blyth Estuary remained during the early part of the month with a minimum of 350 reported on 4th (LJM) and the highest count at Cresswell Pond was 105 on 23rd (TRD). A WEBS count on the River Coquet Estuary recorded 43 on 19th (AWG) and 40 were on the beach at Whitley Bay on 3rd (MSH). Further north 18 were at Boulmer and ten at Goswick. One- four were at Druridge Pools, the River Tweed Estuary and St Mary's Wetland. A bird returning to inland haunts was seen at Haughton Strother GP on 26th (MR).

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

Numbers reported from Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) ranged from 20 on 11th to 150 on 20th (TRD/JD/DF *et al.*). A very high site count came from Boulmer on 18th (BS) and counts of 20-29 were made at Cheswick Black Rocks, Newbiggin Bay, St Mary's Island and Tynemouth. Seahouses attracted 18 on 7th, seven eight were at two localities in Berwick and six were at Low Newton. A report of 12 from Seaton Sluice on 27th was the highest March count in 15 years. The record count from this site was 160 in March 1980 (SSWT).

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

There were 34 reports of this normally retiring species, several coming from gardens. Coastal areas accounted for many records with five in the St Mary's Island area on 1st (AC). Two were at Holy Island on 23rd (ADM) and Howick on 5th (JAR). Singles were seen at Beal, Boulmer, Newbiggin, Prior's Park (Tynemouth), Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay), Tynemouth (CB's garden) and Whitley Bay Health Centre's garden. Corpses were found at Buston Links, Blyth Beach and East Chevington. Inland, two were at Howdon (CB) and Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Cramlington (both TB) and Wallsend Swallow Pond (GPK). Singles were reported from Anick (Hexham), Bedlington Station, Bedlington Free Wood, Darlees Farm, Ellington, Linden Hall (Longhorsley), Newcastle (coast road), Mickley Square (under garden hedge), Prestwick Carr, Thrunton Woods Simonside and Woosington (observer's garden tick).

Jack Snipe *Limnocyttus minimus*

Three reports of singles this month at Arcot Pond on 8th (STH) and Warkworth Golf Club on 4th (CSa). A first site record came from Wydon Water (Hexham) on 3rd (Louis Driver)

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

The large groups of earlier months had largely dissipated apart from 44 at Haughton Strother GP on 5th (MR) and 34 at Arcot Lane Flash on 9th (DM). In the Cramlington area, nine were at West Hartford on 8th (LJM), eight on a stream at Beaconhill on 2nd (STH) and seven at Arcot Pond on 8th (STH). At Prestwick Carr, eight were seen on 3rd (PCF) and six were at both Alnwick Moor on 9th (MH) and The Snook (Holy Island on 23rd (ADM). One-five were at Acton Fell (Allendale), of which four were displaying, Big Waters, Bothal Pond, Caistron, Cocklawburn Pond, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Haltwhistle, Holywell Pond, Simonside, Spartylea and Wark.

Grey Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius*

Two very popular and co-operative birds were seen this month. One was found at St Mary's Island on 2nd remaining until 4th (JBu/AC/ASJ/IJ). A first winter was at Low Newton Scrape from 28th-30th (TRD/JD/IBDa/KDa).

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Surprisingly the only report this month was of a single at Longhirst Flash on 9th (ADMc).

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

The River Tweed remained a favoured haunt with 344 seen on 9th (PRM). St Mary's Wetland had a maximum of 311 at roost on 11th (ASJ) and the only other three figure count came from Budle Bay with 194 on 8th (DF). Along the coastal stretch, 65 were at Boulmer Flash on 29th (AB/LB), 50 at Druridge Pools on 23rd (TD), 42 at Berwick Little Beach on 8th (MHu) and 39 at Annstead (Seahouses) on 7th (MSH). The regular WEBS count on the River Coquet Estuary recorded 31 on 30th, the monthly maximum at Tynemouth was 31 also on 30th and 28 were at Hauxley NWT on 9th. Birds were noted returning to inland areas with 13 seen at Grindon Lough on 26th (PRM), six displaying at Acton Fell (Allendale) on 24th (ASJ) and two at Derwent Reservoir on 14th (IFo). One to nine were at Big Waters, Bothal Pond, Castle Island, Cocklawburn pond, Cullercoats and Prestwick Carr.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

The wintering adult was reported from Budle Bay on 7th, 8th and 11th (BS/DF/KDa/IBDa).

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

The only movement of note at Seaton Sluice was seen on 31st with 480 N and 85 S in four hours (SSWT) and on 20th 169 moved N at Hadston in 45 minutes (AA/MH). Gatherings of 500 were at Bamburgh, Stag Rocks on 24th (CGK) with 250 on the cliffs at Howick on 25th (JAR). Elsewhere, mainly during the second half of the month, 30 were at Budle Point (CGK), 18 at Northumberland Dock, Howdon (CB) and one to eight at eleven coastal localities between Boulmer and St Mary's with one also at Widdrington Moor Lake; corpses of one to four birds were found during the month at Alnmouth (Buston Links), Blyth and Warkworth beaches and Howick (Mhp/STH/JAR) following the very strong easterly gales early in the month.

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

The largest counts were 1,500 at Howdon on 1st (CB), 500 feeding offshore at Whitley Bay beach on 3rd (ASJ) and 303 at Linton Ponds on 11th (CDH). Smaller three-figure gatherings on dates throughout were 100-210 at Castle Island (DM), Haughton Strothrer GP (MR), Jesmond Dene (MJCo) and in the River Tweed Estuary (PRM) and 40-50 at Grindon Lough and Leazes Park Lake. Up to 20 were at eight other coastal or inland sites.

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

Following strong, cold easterly gales, an early influx occurred comprising up to at least four birds seen at St Mary's Island, Tynemouth and Whitley Bay from 1st-4th (many observers). Thereafter, a single moved N at Seaton Sluice on 7th (SSWT) with singles seen elsewhere on 8th-20th at Boulmer, Bamburgh, Cresswell (Snab Point), Cullercoats, Hauxley, the River Coquet Estuary and Warkworth beach. Five to eight were at Tynemouth on 17th-18th (MK/DRW) and nine in Blyth Harbour on 18th (AC). The majority of birds seen in this influx were adults.



A Little Gull at Tynemouth by Duncan Watson on 18th March

Mediterranean Gull *Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus*

From Newbiggin Bay to the Wansbeck Estuary, 12 were counted on 19th (CH) and two other records from Newbiggin were of three and four birds (RS/DM/PJA) with two found as corpse there on 7th (AP). Elsewhere, two were at Whitley Bay on 20th (MK) with singles seen at other sites, namely Amble Harbour, Bamburgh, Boulmer, Hauxley, North Shields Fish Quay, St Mary's Island and Tynemouth. Three different individuals were noted at Swallow Pond including the regular Danish-ringed adult (GPK *et al*).

Common Gull *Larus canus*

At Seaton sluice, 160 moved N in two hours on 21st (SSWT) and counts of 520 and 400 respectively came from Haughton Strother GP on 19th(MR) and 400 in Lower Redesdale on 17th (CB). A maximum gathering of 154 was recorded at Howdon on 3rd (CB) and 20-25 were at Grindon Lough and in the River Tweed Estuary. Single- figure numbers were at four other localities.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

Very few records this month, comprising up to 13 in the River Tweed Estuary (MHu), seven at Derwent Reservoir (IFo) and Linton Ponds (CDH) and two at Grindon Lough (PRM).

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

Single immature birds, probably comprising only one individual, were seen several times from 3rd-4th at St Mary's Island, Tynemouth and Whitley Bay (DRW/AC/IJ/AJ/ASJ/MSH). Later in the month, single immatures were at North Shields Fish Quay on 23rd (JBU) and Monks' House Pool from 28th-31st (SPP/AJ/BS)

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoideus*

A record number of sightings were made at Seaton Sluice from 3rd-28th when three passed N and four S, all 1st-winters, therefore the number of individuals involved could not be determined (SSWT). From 2nd-3rd a 1st-winter was St Mary's Island and Whitley Bay (AC/MK/MSH/ASJ) and, between 12th-30th, 1st-winter birds, probably comprising just one individual, were recorded at Blyth Harbour, Big Waters NWT, Brunswick Village and North Blyth (GB/AJJ/PG/AC). The last sighting was a 1st-winter, again at Tynemouth on 22nd (MK).

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

At Emmanuel Point (Holy Island), light but steady passage N involving 60 per hour was noted on 11th (IK) and 220 moved N in two hours at Seaton Sluice on 21st (SSWT).. Offshore at Whitley Bay beach were 800+ on 3rd (ASJ) with a maximum count in the River Tweed Estuary of 424+ on 9th (PRM) and 210 there on 16th (MHu) with 148 at Linton Ponds on 11th (CDH). Castle Island held 25 on 18th (DM/PJA) with up to ten frequenting Brierdene (Whitley Bay), Exhibition and Leazes Parks (Newcastle), Grindon Lough and Haughton Strother GP.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

Well-reported this month as the seasonal influx gathered momentum. At Seaton Sluice 31 moved N and three S during the month (SSWT) and a peak count at Swallow Pond was 17 on 26th (GPK *et al*). Ten were at Castle Island on 18th (DM/PJA), Budle Bay held eight on two dates(TRD/JD/CGK) with seven at the RGS sports field (Jesmond) (GB) and Haughton Strother GP (MR), three to five at Cresswell Pond, East and West Hartford, Ellington, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Grindon Lough and the River Tweed Estuary with one to two at 11 other sites.

Sandwich Tern *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

The first report of the year was a single passing N at St Mary's Island on 17th (JBU) followed on 30th by another single moving N at Seaton Sluice (SSWT)

Auk *sp*

Very few were recorded from Seaton Sluice with a monthly total of only 19 N and six S (SSWT).

Little Auk *Alle alle*

One corpse was found on Boulmer beach on 13th (EC).

Common Guillemot *Uria aalge*

The biggest counts this month comprised corpses following the severe easterly storms early in the month. A total of 61 were found at Buston Links (Alnmouth), 38 on Blyth beach (MHP), four on Warkworth beach (STH) and at Chevington Burn beach (TD). Counts of living birds were 16 at Birling Carr S on 18th (AWG), nine at Cocklawburn on 26th (MHu) and one to three at six other localities

Razorbill *Alca torda*

As for the previous species, corpses comprised the largest count with a total of 10 on Blyth and Buston Links beaches (STH/MHP). Elsewhere, seven birds was the largest of three counts during the month at Bamburgh, Stag Rocks on 13th (MH/AA/MSH/TRD/JD).

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

Four corpses were on Blyth beach during the month (MHP) but otherwise only a single was reported at Bamburgh, Stag Rocks on 26th (NFO).

Rock Dove *Columba livia*

Nine at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 1st and present at Jesmond Dene on 25th (DM/MJCo) were the only reports.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

An exceptional count of 109 north of the road from Widdrington to Druridge on 9th was possibly a cold weather movement (TRD). Elsewhere well reported in low numbers with five at Jesmond Dene on 25th and Chugdon Wood (Ellington) 30th (MJCo), up to four at Spartylea and Ellington. One to two were at 15 other widespread localities.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

2000 plus in two fields at East Holywell on 17th (MSH), 630 at Chollerford on 18th (CB), 600 at Brownieside on 20th (JPL), 400 at Acomb on 20th and West Monkseaton on 22nd with 350 at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 3rd. Eight to 35 were at four other locations.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Up to four at Spartylea during the month (CT), three at Wallsend on 25th (CDH) and two in the observers garden at South Gosforth on 4th (MJCo).

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

A pair hunted most nights at Prestwick Carr from 9th to 25th being observed by a third bird on 20th (PCF) with two seen all month at Spartylea one being found dead on 23rd possibly starved (CT). Singles seen regularly at Boulmer and at 10 other locations with a starving bird taken into care at Holy Island, a dead bird at Buston Links and road casualty on the A697.



A Barn Owl at Boulmer
Janet Dean
22nd March

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Four were seen or heard at Spartylea all month (CT), three calling around garden at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 18th (NFO) and a pair calling regularly around garden at Stamfordham but not using nest box (EC). Singles were at Howick, Holystone (Rothbury) and Prestwick Carr.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Two were observed on four dates at Shiremoor (CGK), sheltering at Druridge Farm on 23rd (MH) and at Big Waters on 25th (GB). Singles were seen regularly in the Druridge area and at Derwent Reservoir on 9th.

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Singles were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 4th, Boulmer on 22nd, Holy Island on 23rd, Newbiggin by the Sea on 24th & 26th and Cocklawburn on 29th.

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

All sightings were singles at Jesmond Dene on 5th, 12th and 25th (DHWB/MJCo), Tyne Green (Hexham) on 7th, Howick Mill Pond on 17th, and Tyne Riverside CP (Newburn) on 29th.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Four were at Spartylea all month (CT) and at Druridge Bay CP on 7th (TB) with three at Haughton Strother GP (Humshaugh) on 14th, Prestwick Carr and Big Waters on 25th. Two were at Ellington, Jesmond Dene, Gosforth, North Shields and Simonside with singles, often drumming, at ten other locations.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

On 22nd two birds were in territorial dispute at Dye House Juniper (RMH) with two seen and heard at Prestwick Carr on 26th (JBU/GB) and singles there all month. One yaffled at Houxy Burn (Wark) on 11th was at Morpeth on 20th, Letah Wood (Hexham) on 25th and Tyne Riverside GP on 29th.

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Three birds were at Whittingham on 13th (MJC) and two birds were noted regularly throughout the month at West Hartford (TB). Two birds were displaying at Newcastle Airport on 8th (IF) and two were also at Grindon Lough on 8th (PRM) and at Elsdon on 24th (JR). Single birds were at 18 sites during the Month.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

On 7th a male was hunting the golf course at Newbiggin-by-the-Sea (AP), an immature female was hunting at St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) on 17th (IK) and other males were noted at Elwick on 19th (BS) and Prestwick Carr on 23rd (PCF). Unsexed birds were at Boulmer on 18th (BS), Ellington on 24th (TB) and at Haughton Strother GP's (Humshaugh) on 29th (MR). on a tree stump on the mudflats at Holy Island on 17th (ASJ).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Two birds were seen at Grindon Lough on 14th (PRM) and at Alnwick on 25th (MH). Single birds were at several coastal sites and at Walker (Newcastle) and Chapel House Estate (Newcastle).

Ring necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

Two flew N at dusk at Byker on 21st (CGK) and a pair with male displaying at Gosforth Park Golf Course on 28th and the male singing there on 27th (MJC).

Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor*

One remained at Prestwick Carr all month (PCF/MH/AIB)

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

On 11th five were found in Jesmond Dene (MJCo), three at West Ord (Berwick) on the same date and Ellington on 7th (MHu/TB) with one to two at eight other locations.

Magpie *Pica pica*

Six at Free Wood (Bedlington) was the high count on 3rd (JR), four at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) on 18th (IJ) and three at Jesmond Dene on 5th (MJCo).

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

At Howdon on 14th 60 were counted (CB), 36 at Prestwick Carr on 31st (PCF), 22 at Longhorsley on 25th (AB/LB) and two to ten at Jesmond Dene, Spartylea and Whitley Bay.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

100 were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 12th the high count and 13 pairs with active nests at Cramlington Village on 29th (DM).

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

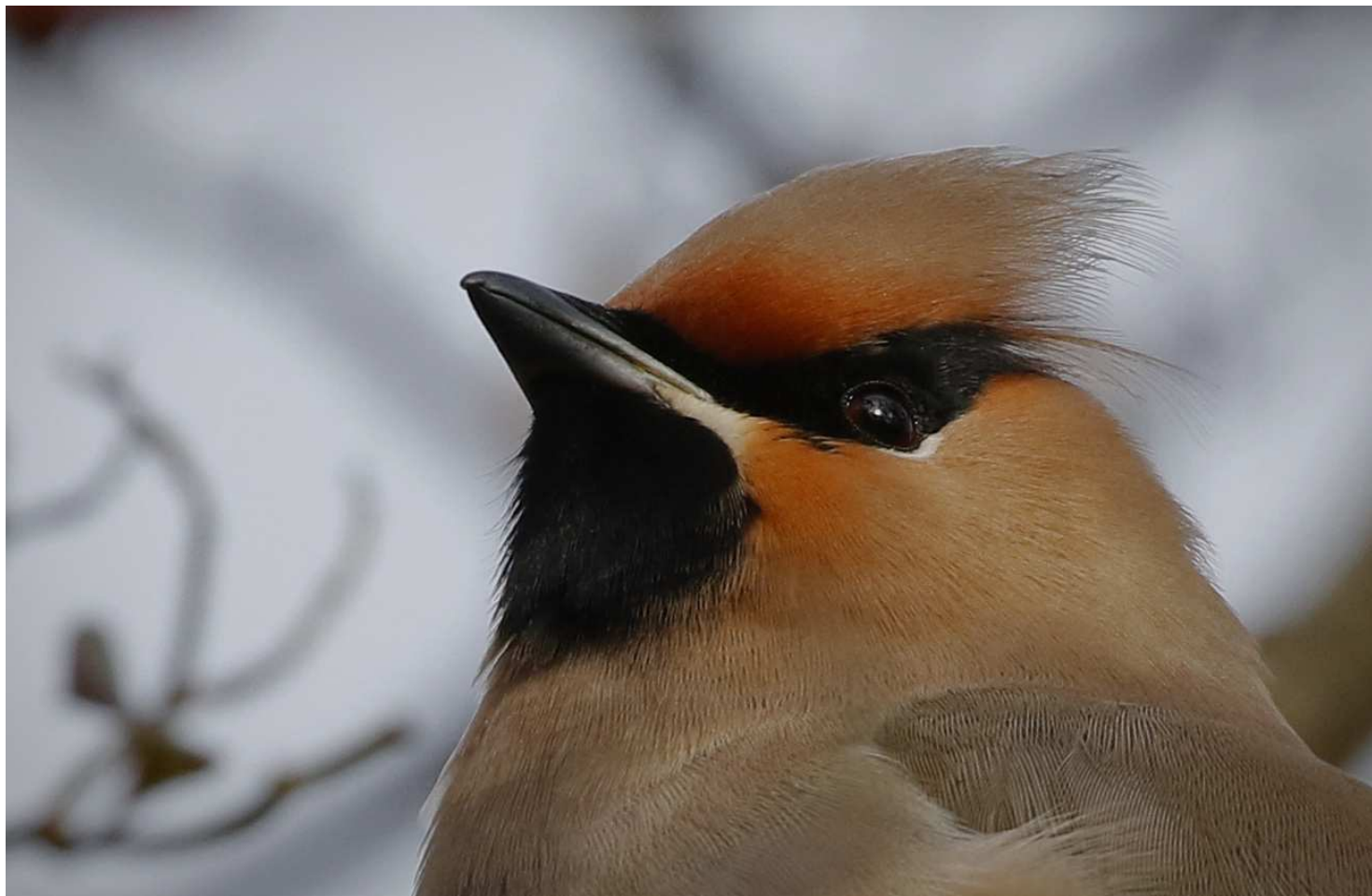
On 13th 44 were at Arcot Lane (Cramlington) (LJM), 35 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 28th (AP), 33 at Howdon on 14th (CB) and 20 (14N, 6S) moved along coast at Seaton Sluice between 21st and 31st (SSWT). Two to six were at Blyth, Cullercoats, Jesmond Dene, Spartylea and Whitley Bay.

Raven *Corvus corax*

Two were at Spylaw (Simonside) on 12th (AB/LB) and flying N displaying at East Ord (Berwick) on 25th (MHu) with singles at Spartylea on 8th, Alnwick Moor on 9th, Widehope on 20th, Woodpark (Wark) on 24th and Crag Lough on 26th.

Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus*

Two were in Benton from 17th to 23rd generally around St Bartholomews Church but also nearby gardens and estates.



A popular Waxwing, one of few in the area this Winter

Both photographed on 17th March at Forest hall

Top by Mike Carr

and right by Alan Jack

**Coal Tit** *Periparus ater*

Six to 12 were seen at Spartylea during the month (CT) with seven at Free Wood (Bedlington) on 3rd (JR), six at Howdon on 7th (CB) and one to three at Holywell Dene, Jesmond Dene, Longbenton Estate and Wallington Hall.

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

From 1st to 4th two were at Newton Red House (PG), at Linton on 14th (TB) and Druridge Bay CP on 26th (TD). Singles were at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) regularly and at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 1st, Letah Wood and West Plantation (Hexham) on 22nd

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

Two were at Prestwick Carr on 8th and 26th (PCF/AIB) and Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 22nd (NFO). Singles were regularly at Linden Hall and Rothbury, Swallow Pond on four dates and Craster, Big Waters NWT, Linton Ponds, East Cramlington Pond NWT.

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

An impressive 24 were at Free Wood (Bedlington) on 3rd (JR), 16 at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 16th (NFO), up to 10 at Spartylea during the month (CT), nine at Bedlington Station on 3rd (JR) and one to five at Holywell Dene, Jesmond Dene, North Shields and Wallington Hall.

Great Tit *Parus major*

At Spartylea four to six were seen all month (CT), three pairs at Longhorsley on 8th (AB/LB), five at Free Wood (Bedlington) on 3rd (JR) and one to four at Bamburgh, Holywell Dene, Jesmond Dene and Wallington Hall.

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

On 19th 93 were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs (SR), around 90 at Birling Farm (Warkworth Golf Club) on 4th (CSa) with 30 in blizzard on the Cumbrian Border (A69) on 1st, Lynemouth Power Station on 22nd and St Mary's Island on 28th. 29 flew north in 1 hour at Bamburgh-Budle Point on 11th, 27 including 15 north at Lynemouth Power Station on 20th and 25 at Holy Island on 23rd with one to 14 at 15 widespread localities.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

First arrival was on 12th at Whittle Dene Reservoirs (SR) with singles there on 29th and 30th (PRM/AJ), four at Haughton Strother GP on 29th (MR) and single at East Chevington on 28th (STH).

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

A 'tribe' of up to 11 visited garden feeders at Shilbottle and four to nine were at Spartylea throughout March (MKi/CT). Six were at Tynemouth on 2nd and at Prestwick Carr on 6th, while fours were at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) and at Wallington Hall and three at Humford Mill (Bedlington) later in the month. One to two at a further 13 localities included nest building at Attlee Park (Bedlington) on 10th, Longhorsley on 25th and a suburban garden in Jesmond on 28th.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Singles were at Howden on 5th, Swallow Pond (singing) on 12th, St Mary's Wetland on 13th, Walker on 14th, Warkworth on 15th and Cresswell Pond on 17th. A larger influx occurred from 20th when singles were noted at Caistron, Chevington (Steads Burn), Low Newton and Prestwick Carr, with further singles at Branton GP, Holy Island, Lynemouth, Newburn, Prudhoe and St Mary's Wetland from 22nd-24th. Two were at Jesmond Dene and singles at Big Waters and Longhorsley on 25th, two were singing at Linton Ponds and one at Linden Hall on 27th and singles were heard at Lesbury and Low Newton on 28th. At least three were at Bamburgh on 29th when singles were also noted at Alexandra Park (Cramlington), Attlee Park (Bedlington), Ford, Fulbeck (Morpeth), Haughton Strother GP (Humshaugh) and Slaley. Numbers at Swallow Pond had risen to six (singing) by 30th (GPK *et al*).

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Birds from last month included two at Gosforth Garden Village, a female throughout the month and a male from 1st-18th (MJC). Others were again in a South Gosforth garden on 3rd (MJCo) at Killingworth on 13th (GPK) and Etal (male) throughout (JJJo). New birds were at Newbiggin, where a male was on feeders at 'The Mound' from 1st-24th and at Longbenton on 6th and 24th (AJ).

A Male Blackcap

Gosforth

12th march

Mike Carr



Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Some coastal movement was evident, with at least three at Bamburgh on 24th and more than four there on 29th (BRS). Elsewhere on the coast three were at Holy Island on 23rd and at Newbiggin (Mound) on 31st. A further three were at Prestwick Carr on 11th, two at the Tweed Estuary on 9th and at Furnace Bridge (Bedlington) and Jesmond Dene on 10th-11th. Single were reported from a further six localities including singing birds at Hazlerigg on 25th and Langleeford (H



A Goldcrest
Woolsington
John Littleton
5th March

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Eight were at Free Wood (Bedlington) on 3rd (JR) and four at Howden on 7th. One to two were reported from Jesmond Dene, North Shields, Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) and Spartylea.

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

A well reported species this month, with singles at five Jesmond Dene localities on 5th, four+ at Holywell Dene on 21st and at Holystone on 26th. Counts of three came from Free Wood (Bedlington), Humford Mill (Bedlington) and Letah Wood (Hexham) and two from Chugdon Wood (Ellington), East Ord, Furnace Bridge (Bedlington), Hulne Park (Alnwick), Northumberland Park (North Shields) and Spartylea. Singles were at a further 11 localities including Budle Bay from 4th-24th, a local patch 'tick' for this observer.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Three at Swallow Pond on 7th was the highest count. Two were at Howick and Letah Wood (Hexham) and singles at Bamburgh (where the species is unusual at this time of year), Druridge Bay CP, Furnace Bridge (Bedlington), Havannah NR, Holystone, Humford Mill (Bedlington), Jesmond Dene, Leazes Park, Rothbury, Spartylea, Wark (North Tyne) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

There was 8,000-10,000 in an evening roost at Brunswick Green (Wideopen) on 18th only, possibly having been displaced from the roost at Gosforth Park NR (GB). There was a large gathering of 1,400 at Knowesgate on 17th and 800 were at Derwent Reservoir on 9th. A flock of 155 was at Houghton Strother GP (Humshaugh) on 19th and 100 flew W at Prestwick Carr on the evening of 26th. Up to 70 were at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) during the month, 50 at Corbridge and Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 2nd and 12-14 at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) and Spartylea. A bird at Gosforth Garden Village on 11th was heard to imitate a Ring-necked Parakeet.



A Starling at Boulmer
Tim Dean on 27th March

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

24 were feeding under trees at Free Wood (Bedlington) on 3rd (JR). The peak count from a garden at Gosforth Garden Village was 12 on 1st, dwindling to eight by mid month. Ten to 11 were noted at Newbiggin (spittle) and Spartylea, eight at St Mary's Wetland and seven at Prestwick Carr, with one to three at a further six localities including a singing male in the snow at Chapel House on 2nd. Nest building was noted at Gosforth Garden Village on 30th.

A Blackbird has a feed in a
Woolsington garden

Steve Barrett

23rdMarch



Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

Hard weather conditions effected birds, several turning up in gardens where they hadn't been seen for many years. The largest gatherings were 200 at Bothal Pond on 29th, Warkworth on 2nd and Whitley Chapel on 24th. Flocks of 150 were at East Holywell on 17th and Shepherd's Law on 11th, 120 were at Linden Hall on 12th and 60-65 were noted at Ingram, Prestwick Carr and Swallow Pond. A Corbridge lawn which had been cleared of snow attracted a flock of 37 on 3rd, while 30-36 were reported from Carterway Heads, Haughton Strother GP (Humshaugh) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Flocks of 20-25 at A69 (Cumbrian border), Bedlington Station, Harwood Village, Hexham, Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) and St Mary's Island included 22 in a Hexham garden on 3rd. One to 18 at a further 20 localities included 15 in gardens at Cramlington and Marden Estate (Cullercoats) on 1st and 3rd respectively, five in Gosforth Garden Village and Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) gardens on 4th and 2nd and one to three in gardens at East Ord, Gosforth, Longbenton (first in 15 years), Tynemouth and a 'tiny' back garden in Heaton, all during the first few days of the month.



A Fieldfare in from the cold at Woolsington
John Littleton on 2nd March

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

The largest gatherings were 200 at Bothal Pond on 19th (TD) and 100 at Haughton Strother GP (Humshaugh) on 14th. Flocks of 40-50 were reported from Carterway Heads on 14th, Dilston (Corbridge) on 20th, Free Wood (Bedlington) on 3rd and Heaton on 15th, while 20-30 were noted at Corbridge on 19th, Ingram on 21st and Whitley Chapel on 24th. Counts of 15 came from Howick on 21st and Killingworth on 18th and 12 were at Tynemouth on 3rd and 6th. One to ten at a further 17 localities included six in a Tynemouth garden during hard weather on 1st, three to four at Holy Island on 23rd and 25th, two S at Seaton Sluice Watch Tower on 3rs and one in a Longbenton garden on 4th (first in garden for 15 years).

A winter thrush in
Tynemouth

A Redwing

Colin Bradshaw

2nd March



Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Snowy conditions during the first few days of the month brought 13 to Free Wood (Bedlington) on 3rd, where they were feeding on available bare earth beneath trees (JR). Counts of six came from Derwent Reservoir and Haughton Strother GP (together) on 15th and 19th respectively and four were at Spartylea all month. Four were singing at Linden Hall on 11th, three visited a garden feeding station at East Ord on 1st and singles were at three Jesmond Dene locations on 11th. There were two at Arcot Pond, Cramlington (Northumberlandia), Longhorsley and Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) and singles at Arcot Lane, Corbridge, Cramlington (Alexandra Park), Fawdon and Wark (North Tyne).



A Song Thrush at Rothbury on 8th March by Mike Carr

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Seven visited a Linden Hall garden and three were in a Corbridge garden during snowy conditions on 3rd (NFO/MR). Four were at nearby Longhorsley on 19th and three in Jesmond Dene on 5th. Counts of two came from Acomb, Abbey Mill (Morpeth), Bedlington Station, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), East Ord, Leazes Park and Spartylea, while singles at a further nine localities included a garden at Gosforth Garden Village on 3rd-4th, Holy Island (where the species is still uncommon) on 4th and 25th and nest building at Newbiggin on 29th.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

A light influx was noted at Holy Island on 31st, with nine in the Vicarage garden alone. Many others were scattered throughout the island, including isolated bushes in the dunes, some showing a greyish cast typical of northern birds (IK). During snowy conditions on 3rd, 13 were noted at Free Wood (Bedlington) and 12 at Bedlington Station (JR). Seven were singing at Furnace Bridge (Bedlington) on 10th, five were in Jesmond Dene on 5th, four at Spartylea throughout and one at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay).

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

At Boulmer, a male was found on 11th, another male on 22nd and a female on 30th (BS). One (un-sexed) was at Cresswell Pond on 17th and a female at Cresswell Village on 22nd. Further males were at Cullercoats on 20th, Holy Island on 23rd and Newbiggin on 30th, while a female was reported from Hauxley Caravan Park on 31st.

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

Peak counts during the month were three (two males) at Winter's Gibbet (Harwood) on 26th (MSH), pairs at Alnmouth Common, New Burn (Cheviots), Hawsen Burn (Cheviots), Low Newton and St Mary's Island and singles at Cullercoats, Big Waters, Druridge Pools, Kidland Lee, Newburn Riverside CP and Old Hartley.

Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

The only reports of this usually early summer visitor were a male at Boulmer on 22nd, with perhaps the same here on 24th (BS/CSa) and another at Newbiggin (Beacon Point) on 30th (BS).

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

Ten pairs were located on 25th in Upper Coquetdale, with one pair incubating eggs (JR). Five seen at Acomb on 28th (AJH). Twos during the month at Abbey Mill, Free Wood (Bedlington) and Spartylea. Singles seen at a further eight river sites.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

30 were observed at Spartylea all month (CT). 26 attended feeders at Gloucester Lodge Farm (Blyth) on 9th (LJM). 20 at Battlesteads on 18th (CB). 13 were at garden feeders in Chapel House (Newcastle).

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

37 counted at Branton on 13th (IBDa/KDa). 25 plus at Hauxley on 10th (LJM). 22 were at Newton, Red House in the first week and 20 at feeders at big Waters on 18th (PG/GB). 19 frequented a garden at Linden Hall on 29th, with 10 on most other days (NFO). 16 were seen at Carterway Heads on 14th (IFo). One to 12 were also at 16 other sites during the month.

Duncock *Prunella modularis*

An excellent count of 30 birds along 2.5 km of hedgerow at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 17th (TBr). 14 singing males were noted in Holywell Dene on 20th (ASJ). One to eight were seen at eight other sites.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Five were at three sites in Jesmond Dene on 25th (MJCo). Elsewhere, seven sites held pairs and single birds were noted at 13 sites, with unusually, a bird in a Longbenton garden on 4th.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

An observer at Prestwick Carr made his personal highest ever count of 48 birds in a flooded field on 10th (MH). 21 had been seen on 9th and 30 were still present on 21st and 16 on 29th (PCF/AB/GB). 21 were at Haughton Strother on 31st (MR). Migrating birds this month involved 14 noted heading N at Seaton Sluice between 11th and 28th and two N at Lynemouth on 14th. Three males were at Derwent Reservoir on 15th (IFo). Pairs were on territory at sites in Newcastle at the Royal Victoria Infirmary and Exhibition Park during the month (DM). Two seen at Tynemouth Front Street on 3rd and singles at two Wallsend supermarket car parks on 4th.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba alba*

The first arrivals were two seen at Boulmer on 18th and then two at Beal on 25th (BS/NFO). Singles were at Haughton Strother on 29th and at Druridge Pools on 30th (MR/STH).

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

150 plus were observed flying N on 31st at St. Mary's, including one flock of around 85, with 90 moving N and two displaying in the area of Lynemouth Power Station on 20th. Two days later, a further 60 flew N and 9 were displaying here. At Gosforth Garden village 48 also headed N in two hours on 28th (ASJ/MJC). A flock of 35 was on Alnwick Moor on 19th (MH). 30 noted at Swallow Pond, 27 at Prestwick Carr and 22 at Big Waters on 18th (GPK/PCF/GB). 25 at Haughton Strother the following day (MR). 20 were grounded in a snow shower at Castle Island on 18th (DM/PA). 23 counted heading N at Seaton Sluice in the latter half of the month. 16 flew N towards Budle Point and 13 singing in the area on 11th, with the first returning birds, also 16, arriving over Marden Estate (Cullercoats) that day (MJC/ASJ). 20 arrived from the south to feed at St. Mary's and 15 flew N at Cresswell Pond on 20th (ASJ/EC/JSB). In breeding areas, ten noted at Caterway Heads on 14th, 20 were noted song flighting at Acton Fell (Allendale) on 24th, with 12 along the Hawsen burn and 11 at New Burn (Cheviots) that day (IFo/ASJ/MJC). Ten plus were at Winter's Gibbet (Harwood) on 26th (MSH). Nine feeding in snowy conditions at Prudhoe on 18th (DLe). Eight were displaying at St. Mary's on 25th (ASJ). Five had returned to Holy Island by the 7th (IK). One to seven were at seven other sites.



A Water Pipit by Neil Osborne
Druridge Pools on 14th March

Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta*

Three were at Cresswell Pond on 20th (EC/JSB). Two found at Budge Fields on 4th, with a single present all month (ADM et al). One was on the beach at Boulmer on 23rd and 28th (BS/NFO).

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Ten were at a flash pool at Hauxley on 8th, at least two of which were of the northern race *Littoralis* (MK). Ten were also at Cullernose Point on 30th (BS). Seven at Bondicarr on 20th, included one *Littoralis* bird (EC/JSB). Six seen at Spital (Berwick) on 12th (MHu). A group of five noted at Warkworth Beach on 19th (STH). One to four at four further sites during the month. *Littoralis* birds were also observed at Boulmer with up to five present all month, a single at St. Mary's on 22nd and at Low Newton on 28th (BS/MSH/TRD/JD).

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

45 were feeding on Alder seeds at Bellingham on 14th and 40 were at Howick on 20th (AJR/JAR). 27 were attracted to provided seed at Newbiggin on 17th (AP). 20 counted at Howden on 18th (CB). 12 in a Gosforth garden on 1st dropped to four by the month's end (MJC). One to six were seen at six other sites.



A splendid selection of finches at Tim Dean's garden feeder in Rothbury. 13th March

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

Up to six were seen at Spartylea all month (CT). Garden feeders attracted two, three then four to Linden Hall during the month's first three days, three at Rothbury during the month and singles at Shilbottle on 2nd and Tynemouth on 31st. At Slaley, a male present on 4th and a female on 30th. A single male was seen at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on three days in the final week (RS).

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Birds frequented Hulne Park (Alnwick) from 16th to 19th, with 13 then nine, increasing to 20 and then dropping to two birds (BS/SR/AH *et al*). Abbey Mill still held ten on 5th and two the following day (ADMc). Once again a Stamfordham garden attracted feeding birds, with two present on 28th (EC).



For the second month lucky Eddie Crabtree had a visit from Hawfinches to his Stamfordham garden. 28th March

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Up to 12 were at garden feeders all month in Rothbury (TRD/JD). Six pairs were located at Longhorsely on 8th (AB/LB). Up to six present in a Gosforth garden and four in a Morpeth garden all month (MJC/TD). One to four were present at a further 16 locations during March.



A male Bullfinch in a Rothbury garden. Tim Dean on 14th March

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

Ten were at Briar Dene (Whitley Bay) and at Castle Island on 18th (IJ/DM). Nine at Newbiggin on 29th (JR). Eight seen at Howden on 18th. One to six were noted at 20 further sites.



A Greenfinch at a Gosforth garden feeder. Mike Carr in 12th March

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*

70 were on the beach at Cresswell on 9th (TRD). 18 at nearby Hemscott Hill on 5th, increased to 25 by 7th (TB/IRD). Also six were at Cheswick Black Rocks on 7th (MHu).

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

90 were at Boulmer on 7th (BS). Around 80 noted at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 5th with 26 the previous day (RS). 44 at St Mary's on 20th with 30 at Howick that day (ASJ/JAR). Several pairs were investigating nest sites, with males in song at Holywell by the end of the month (ASJ).

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis caberet*

A normal number of eight at garden feeders in Rothbury increased to 16 on 14th (TRD/JD). Also at Rothbury, at Beggar's Rigg 15 were noted on 8th (MJC). One to five plus were at five further sites.



A Redpoll at Rothbury by Mike Carr on 8th March

Common Redpoll *Carduelis flammea*

One was found on garden feeders at Rothbury on 12th to 17th, with two birds present on 16th (JD/TRD).



A mealy Redpoll in Tim Dean's Rothbury Garden on 14th March

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

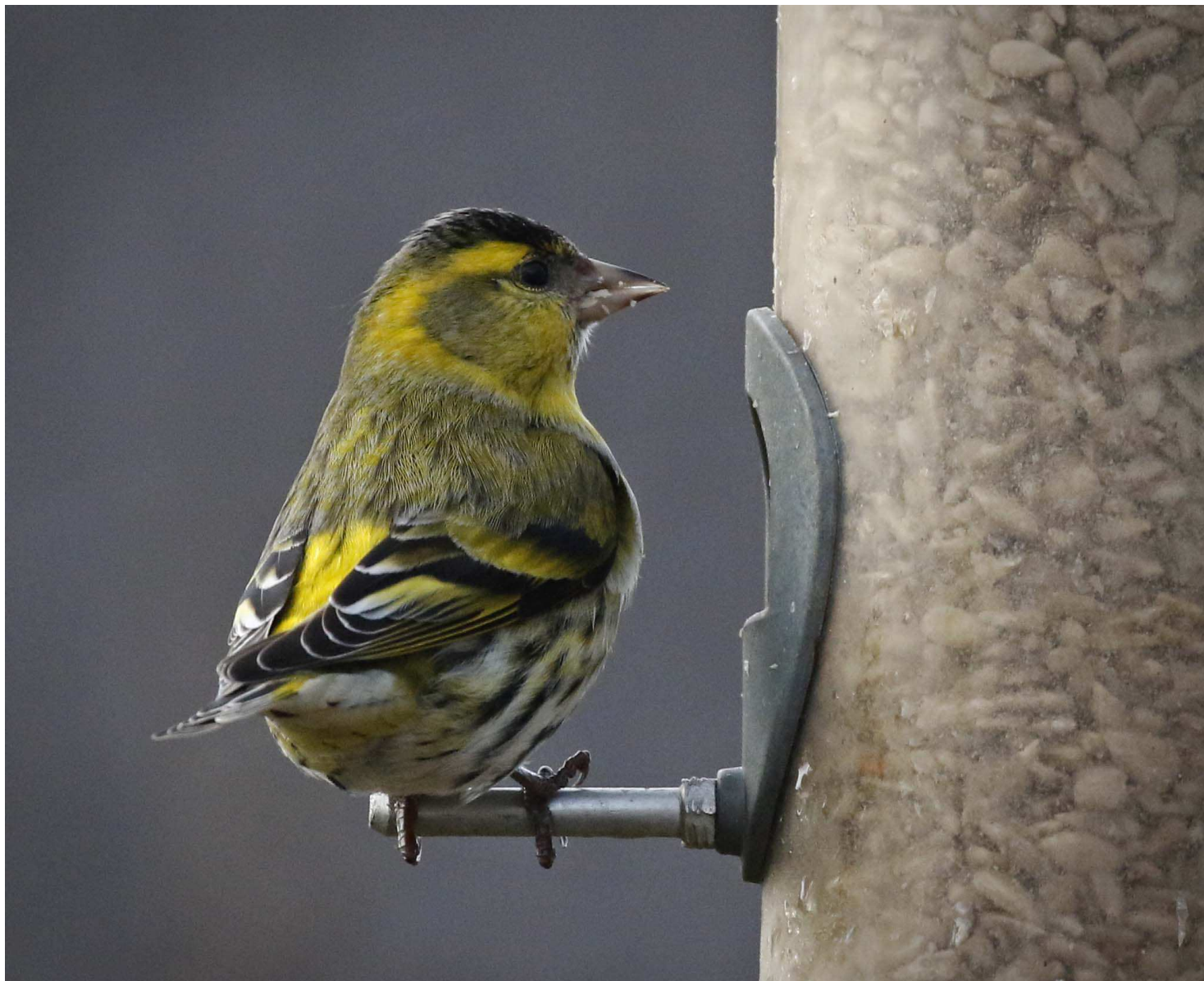
15 were seen at Thrunton on 15th (AB/LB). Ten were at Hepburn Woods on 30th (TRD/JD) and six at Wark on 11th (AJ). Singles at Widehope on 20th and on Hulne Park on 16th .

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

A flock of 40 was at North Sunderland during the month (JPL). 22 were seen in Newcastle Exhibition Park on 28th and eight at Brandling Park (Newcastle) that day (DM). Up to 15 at Spartylea all month (CT). 11 were at Bedlington Station on 3rd (JR). Pairs were observed during the month, males in song at North Seaton, Newbiggin, Blyth and Cullercoats (RS/ASJ). One to ten were seen at eight other sites.

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

Around 140 were in tree tops at Dilston Common on 30th (DLe). 60 was an excellent count from the observer's garden in Corbridge on 16th (MR). 40 plus were at Wark on 8th (PRM). 22 noted at Thrunton on 29th included singing birds (MJC). Birds at garden feeders at Rothbury all month, with a peak of 16 on (TRD/JD). Up to nine all month at Spartylea (CT). one to eight noted at a further 15 locations during the month.



A Siskin in a Gosforth garden. Mike Carr on 12th March

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

46 plus were counted at Big Waters on 30th (GB). On 16th an impressive 27 were attracted to an observer's garden in Corbridge (MR). 14 were at Crooked Oak on 14th (IFo). 12 were at West Howdens on 14th (NFO). One to seven were present at eight further sites, including three along Carey Burn (Harthope) on 24th (MJC).

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Eight were seen at Prestwick Carr on 3rd and at St. Mary's on 20th (PCF/ASJ). Well inland, seven were back in Upper Coquetdale on 25th (JR). Up to six were at garden feeders at Beaconhill (Cramlington) all month (STH). One to four were at 11 further sites, including a single male at Chapel House Estate (Newcastle) , the first sighting here in 20 years (MH).

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

A sighting of a single bird at Boulmer on 5th increased to two by 18th and three by 28th (CSa/BS/RB/MB). One was Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 21st and 23rd at Howick on 26th (AP/JAR)

ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN**Escapes****Red-breasted Goose** *Branta ruficollis*

The plastic blue-ringed individual first seen in December 2017 was again present with sightings at Cresswell Pond and Q E II CP on 7th (MJC / TB) and at Holywell Pond on 13th (AC). The ring was very narrow but viewable at reasonably close range.

Black Swan *Cygnus atratus*

Two were found at Prestwick Carr on 29th (GB). A rarely seen escapee in county.

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

A hybrid was present at Swallow Pond all month (GPK) and another hybrid thought to be this parentage was seen at Silverlink CP on 18th (MSH).

Birds of Unknown Origin

No sightings

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

R.Ahmed, A.Allen, S.R.Barrett, M. & R.J.Bentley (MB/RB), D.H.W.Blair, T.Blake, J.S.Booth, G.Bowman, C.Bradshaw, T.Brewis (TBr), K.V.Brooks, A. & L.Brunts, J.Bucknall (JBu), M.J.Carr, P.R.Cassells, T.R.Cleeves, M.N.Coates, M.J.Cook (MJCo), E.Crabtree, A.Curry, T.Daley, I.B. & K.Davison (IBDa / Kda), T.R. & J.Dean, I.R.Douglas, I.Fisher, P.C.Fletcher, D.F.Forshaw, I.Forsyth (IFo), P.Gilbert, A.Hall, C.D.Hampton, P.H. & A.Hanmer, C.Hartley, M.Henry, M.Hepple (MHP), , A.J.Hewitt, M.S.Hodgson, S.T.Holliday, R.M.Holmes, M.Hutcheson (MHu), A.S.Jack, A.Janes, I.Johnson, J.Joicey (JJo), M.G.Kerby (MK), I.Kerr, M.Kirby (MKi), C.G.Knox, G.P.Knox, D.Leat (DLe), J.D.Lough, D.Lovatt (DLo), J.P.Lumby, P.R.Massey, L.J.McDougall, A.D.Mclevy, A.D.Mould, D.McKeown, A.J.Newson, N.F.Osborne, S.P.Parnaby, A.Priest, A.J.Richards, J.Richardson, M.Richardson, S.Rippon, J.A.Roper, C.Saunders, M.R.Smith, B.Steel, R.Stevens, C.Tudge, D.R.Watson.

Alnwick Wildlife Group (R Poyer), Bamburgh Ringing Station, Hauxley Ringing Station, North Northumberland Bird Club, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

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

This bulletin was compiled by Graeme Bowman (Geese to Mergansers), Steve Laing (Red Grouse to Cormorant), Trevor Blake (Hawks to Falcons), Tom Brewis (Oystercatcher to Godwit), Clive Hampton (Turnstone to Redshank), Eddie Crabtree (Kittiwake to Puffin), Tim Dean (Escapes, Hybrids and Unknown Origin, List of Contributors, Highlights), Peter Fletcher (Doves to Larks), Mike Richardson (Tits to Stonechat), Alan Jack (Dipper to Buntings).

Data Manager is Tom Brewis.

Thanks to David Sanders of NNBC for providing data.

Mail distribution by Paul Stewart.

Edited by Steve Barrett NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com

RECORD SUBMISSION

Please email records for the month to ntbc.records@googlemail.com

Please email for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and grid references: Please use of standard location names and 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

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 online resource for anyone interested in birds. Web-site manager is Paul Buskin.

There are:

Photo Galleries – Here you can view hundreds of photos of birds from Northumberland, Newcastle and North Tyneside. Members are encouraged to contribute their own photos. Simply send them to galleries@ntbc.org.uk

Sightings – Here you can view reports of birds recently reported in the County. Anyone who would like to contribute and post sightings to this page, please email sightings@ntbc.org.uk Please note this section is moderated, so there may be a short delay before your record appears.

There are also County Checklists, Records Committee updates, Information on important Surveys, useful articles and reports on Bird ID and Overseas Birding Trips....and much more...

Please submit any other new content for the website to the main club email address at ntbcorg@gmail.com

New content such as Birding Trip Reports etc., is always welcome and very much appreciated.

To find out more please visit www.ntbc.org.uk

DATA PROTECTION

New data protection regulations come into force in May 2018.

Please note the attached policy agreed by committee at our April meeting in line with the new regulations from 25th May 2018.

We are required to ensure that all members agree to their data being used in the ways listed - you have to opt in.

If you do not agree with the maintenance and/or use of your data you can ask for some or all of it to be deleted.

This could compromise your access to the club's benefits. (sorry to state the obvious!)

We will be looking at the membership form for 2018/9 so that it will comply with the new regulations.

It will mean that we will be asking everyone to complete a membership form for 2018/9 in October, hopefully there will be an option to do this online as well as on paper in future.

If you have any queries or helpful suggestions about the guidelines please email me - ntbc@jobentley.plus.com

Jo Bentley

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2018 No 4

MONTHLY SUMMARY APRIL 2018

7th June 2018



CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Mandarin	First record at Seaton Sluice! Two males N on 7th.
Red-crested Pochard	Male at Swallow Pond from 20th to 25th.
Black Scoter	Close views off Holy Island from 6th to 16th.
Ruddy Duck	Male first found at Holywell Pond moved to Swallow Pond on 22nd.
Glossy Ibis	First ever record for Holy Island on 29th which then moved to Druridge Bay.
Spoonbill	One in Druridge Bay area from 8th.
Avocet	Peak of 24 at Cresswell Pond.
Whimbrel	Peak of 51 at Widdrington Moor Lake on 28th.
Black-tailed Godwit	Peak of 72 at Druridge Pools on 6th.
Long-billed Dowitcher	Summer-plumaged adult at Grindon Lough from 17th.
Spotted Redshank	The wintering bird at Budle Bay stayed all month acquiring summer plumage.
Glaucous Gull	Several records still including a juvenile at Warkworth weir which stayed.
Iceland Gull	Singles still at St Mary's Island and Scotswood.
Great Skua	Singles on 28th and 30th at various localities.
Arctic Skua	One N at Seaton Sluice on 30th.
Black Guillemot	Non-breeding bird off Holy Island on 25th.
Great Grey Shrike	Wintering bird still at Prestwick Carr until 8th plus one on Holy Island on 11th.
Hooded Crow	One S at Ellington on 21st.
Waxwing	One still at Benton until 14th.
Firecrest	One on Holy island on 1st and 2nd.
White-spotted Bluethroat	Male at Newbiggin from 1st to 4th.
Black Redstart	High peak of 14 on Holy Island on 1st.
Wheatear	Peak of 33 on Holy Island on 27th.
'Channel Wagtail'	Hybrid present in Druridge Bay from 15th.
Water Pipit	Two still at Druridge Pools and one at Haughton Strother GP.
Hawfinch	Several records still at various localities through to 8th.
Lapland Bunting	Single record with one north at Old Hartley on 3rd.

CONTENTS

Data Manager Appeal

The Great Bird Race sets a day record for the county

A drake Garganey

Druridge Pools

Tim Dean

30th April



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 is in September

FIELD TRIPS Contact Steve Anderson

seaswan@btinternet.com

CLASSIFIED LIST**Brent Goose** *Branta bernicla*

Reports of dark-bellied *bernicla* race birds involved two N and one S at Seaton Sluice between 4th-6th (SSWT), and singles at Holy Island on 1st (RA *et al.*) and Newbiggin Beacon Point on 19th (AP).

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Five flew N at Seaton Sluice between 21st-24th (SSWT). Peak counts were 78 at Hauxley NR on 15th (HRS), 55 at Castle Island on 15th (DM/PJA), 25 at Linton Ponds on 22nd (CDH), and ten to 17 at Big Waters, Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough, Marden Quarry and West Ord. Five to eight were also at Holy Island, Low Newton, Newcastle Leazes Park and Prestwick Carr, and two to four at Bothal Pond, Howdon, Lynemouth, Spartylea and St Mary's Wetland. At Halton-Lea-Gate, four nests and 20 adults were noted on 27th (SW).

A Canada Goose

Howdon wetland

Colin Bradshaw

**Barnacle Goose** *Branta leucopsis*

One flew N at Boulmer on 9th (BS). At Harper's Heugh (near Budle Bay), four+ were noted on 8th (MSH) and 15 on 11th (DF). Singles were also at Big Waters, Castle Island, Earsdon-East Holywell and QEII CP on sporadic dates up to 28th.

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Three moved N and eight S at Seaton Sluice between 25th-28th (SSWT). Peak counts were 142 at Cocklawburn on 5th (MHu), 74 at East Holywell on 6th (MNC), and 33 at Haughton Strother GP on 20th (MR). Six to ten were also at Gosforth Park, Hauxley Reserve, Low Newton, Marden Quarry and Spartylea, and one to four at Arcot, Linton and Middle Ord Ponds, Druridge Pools, Lynemouth Flashes and the Tweed Estuary. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Bothal Pond	1	8	TD. Two to four day-old young on 27th.
Woodhorn Flashes	1	2	GB. On 28th

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Mobile flocks involved 138 NW at Holy Island on 16th (DF), 120 N there on 14th (STH) and 47 N on 1st (RA); and 110 NW at Stamfordham on 15th (EC). 1,200 were in the East Chevington area on 5th (TD), 950 at East Holywell on 3rd (MNC), 550+ at nearby Earsdon on 8th (MSH), 200-290 at Harper's Heugh and Widdrington Moor Lake, 120 at Hauxley Reserve up to 18th and 38 at Cocklawburn. The only reports after 18th were of singles at Big Waters on 26th and Woodhorn Flashes on 28th.

A Pink-footed Goose

Branton GPs

Chris Barlow

21st April

**White-fronted Goose** *Anser flavirostris*

Eight Greenland *flavirostris* race birds were at Prestwick Carr on 1st and 3rd (GB/PCF). Two un-raced birds were at Hauxley Reserve on 18th (CH).

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

14 at Seaton Sluice between 8th-28th including a group of eight on the sea on 21st (SSWT) and nine flew N at Ellington on 14th (TB). The largest counts included 135 at QEII CP (including adjacent fields) on 22nd (CDH), 52 at the Tweed Estuary on 12th (MHu), 43 at Killingworth Lake on 14th (LJM) and ten to 22 at Bolam Lake, Budle Bay, Druridge 'coal road flashes', Howdon and Woodbridge. Three to seven were also at Bothal and Linton Ponds, Castle Island, Grindon Lough, Newcastle Exhibition and Leazes Parks. The male of a breeding pair at Holy Island Lough aggressively chased off any Tufted Ducks and Black-headed Gulls that tried to settle on the water on 23rd (IK).

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

On 6th, 47 were at Derwent Reservoir on 6th (IFo) and 22 arrived from the south east at Holy Island (IK), 36 were at Druridge Pools on 8th (TB), a total of 36 moved N at Boulmer on 14th-15th (BS), 31 flew W at Derwent Reservoir on 16th (IFo) and 17 moved N at Seaton Sluice on 7th (SSWT). Groups of 14-19 were at Beal, Branton GP and High Buston on 4th-5th and 12 were at Caistron on 19th (JD). One to five were also at East Chevington, Low Newton, Whittle Dene Reservoirs and Yarrow Slake on sporadic dates up to 27th.



A Whooper Swan at Newton scrapes on 27th April by Tim Dean

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

29 flew N and 18 S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), 40 were at the Blyth Estuary on 5th (DM/LJM), 20-24 at Bell's Pond (MH) and Druridge Pools (TD), 13-19 at Castle Island (GB), Elswick (GB) and Hauxley Reserve (HRS), and nine at Low Newton (TD). Three to four were at Backworth Pond, East Hartford and Longhirst Flash, and one to two at Backworth, Bell's Pond, Big Waters, East Hartford, Hazlerigg, Lynemouth, Prestwick Carr, West Ord, Whitley Bay and Yarrow Slake. Further inland, one flew S at Corbridge on 26th (SW) and one was at Derwent Reservoir on 29th (IFo).



A Shelduck at Branton GPs by Chris Barlow 21st Apr

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

A very unusual record involved two drakes flying N at Seaton Sluice on 7th (SSWT) and two drakes were at Middle Ord Pond, Berwick on 15th (MHu). More typical were single pairs inland at Chirdon Bridge-Tarset (JR), Haughton Strother GP (MR), Hesleyside (TB/HG/ADMc/JR) and Redmire Bridge (JR/NA). Single ducks (possibly the same individual?) were at Big Waters on 15th (GB) and Newcastle Leazes Park on 16th (GB).

Garganey *Anas querquedula*

An unusual offshore record at Seaton Sluice on 20th involved a pair on the sea, with Common Scoters, that then flew S (SSWT). A pair at Longhirst Flash on 8th-9th (TF/JFa *et al.*) was followed by a drake at Druridge Pools on 10th and 14th (ADMc *et al.*). On 22nd, two drakes were at Druridge Pools and a pair were on the 'coal road pools' to the north (TF/JFa), and one to two drakes and one duck were at Druridge Pools between 28th-30th (TF/JFa/STH *et al.*). Single pairs were also at Bothal Pond on 24th and 27th (TD/TF/JFa), Newbiggin golf course on 24th and 28th (AP), Swallow Pond on 26th (GPK *et al.*) and Woodhorn Flashes on several dates between 21st-29th (AP). A drake was at Warkworth Lane Ponds on 28th (GB/LAR).

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

At Seaton Sluice, four flew N on 3rd and two N on 30th (SSWT). The latter two were also noted N at Newbiggin on 30th (STH). Druridge Pools held peaks of 25+ on 6th (MSH) and 19 (15 drakes) on 5th (TD). Other peak counts involved 19 at Swallow Pond on 7th (GPK), 12 at Newton Flash on 8th (TD) and nine at Monks' House Pool (*per* NNBC). One to two were also at Arcot, Bothal and Warkworth Lane Ponds, Big Waters, Holy Island, Prestwick Carr and Woodbridge. Display was noted at Swallow Pond on 6th (CDH). A pair were on the sea in Newbiggin Bay on 18th (CH).

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

One flew S at Seaton Sluice on 22nd (SSWT). Peak counts were 14 (seven pairs) at Druridge Pools on 19th (TD), 13 at Caistron on 19th (JD), ten at Linton Ponds on 22nd (CDH), five to nine at the Blyth Estuary (LJM), Bothal Pond (TF/JFa), Castle Island (DM/PJA), Druridge 'coal road flashes' (DM/PJA), Hauxley Reserve (HRS), Howdon (CB) and West Hartford (STH) and three to four at Arcot and Backworth Ponds, Ashington ('Cooper's Flashes'), Longhirst and Lynemouth Flashes, Prestwick Carr and Widdrington Moor Lake. One to two were also at Big Waters, Capheaton Lake, East Chevington, Haughton Strother GP, Holy Island (off 'excavations'), Low Newton scrape, Lynemouth, Swallow and Warkworth Lane Ponds, and Woodhorn Flashes.

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

Six moved N at Newbiggin on 30th (STH) and one S at Seaton Sluice on 1st (SSWT); 103 at Derwent Reservoir on 6th fell to 32 by 17th (IFo), 81 were at Big Waters on 4th (AJJ *per* GB), 66 were at Grindon Lough on 15th (MRS), 60+ at Druridge Pools on 5th (TD) dropped to six by 20th and two by 30th (TRD/JD), 20-21 were at Hauxley Reserve and Prestwick Carr, and ten to 12 at Widdrington Moor Lake and Yarrow Slake. One to three were also at Howdon, Low Newton and Meadow Haven (Berwick).

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

A total of nine flew N and five S at Seaton Sluice between 20th-28th (SSWT). Newcastle Leazes Park held 26 (mostly drakes) on 24th (GB), at least 11 pairs were at Derwent Reservoir on 6th (IFo) and ten to 14 birds were at Druridge Pools, Marden Quarry and the Tweed Estuary. Five to eight were also at Airy Holm Reservoir, Arcot and Bothal Ponds, Hauxley Reserve, Kielder Water, Newcastle Exhibition Park, Spartylea and Usway Burn. The only breeding reports concerned a duck with a new brood of 11 young at Derwent Reservoir on 23rd (IFo), and a predated egg at Holy Island on 22nd (MJC/ADM).

Pintail *Anas acuta*

Eight flew N at Seaton Sluice on 30th (SSWT) and a pair moved N at Boulmer on 14th (BS). At Druridge Pools, 12 were noted on 14th (TF/JFa) and two to six variously between 1st-24th (TB/MJC/MSH *et al.*). The first record for Howdon Wetland concerned a pair (CB) and singles were at Cresswell Pond and Grindon Lough.

Teal *Anas crecca*

Eight flew N at Seaton Sluice between 9th-30th (SSWT) and 14 flew SW at Derwent Reservoir on 17th (IFo). 156 remained at Howdon on 5th (CB), 110 were at Prestwick Carr on 3rd (GB), 72 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 13th (SR), 52 at Middle Ord Pond on 8th (MHu), 20-36 at Big Waters, the Blyth Estuary, Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough, Newton Flash and St Mary's Wetland, and 11-16 at Capheaton Lake, Castle Island, Elswick and St Mary's Wetland. One to six were also at Bothal and Linton Ponds, Castle Island, Derwent Reservoir and Hauxley Reserve.

Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina*

A drake was at Swallow Pond between 20th-25th (GPK *et al.*).

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

14 (11 drakes) were at Holywell Pond on 20th (STH), eight were at Swallow Pond on 24th (GPK), four to five at Arcot (LJM) and Bothal (TF/JFa) Ponds and Big Waters (GB), a pair at Cresswell Pond, singles at Killingworth Lake and, more unusually, at Newcastle Leazes Park on 18th (GB).

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

One flew N and three S at Seaton Sluice between 21st-28th (SSWT). Peak counts were 46 at Bothal Pond on 27th (TD), 38 at Swallow Pond on 24th (GPK), 29 at Haughton Strother GP on 3rd (MR), 21 at Killingworth Lake on 14th (LJM), and ten to 18 at Big Waters, Castle Island, Grindon Lough, Linton Ponds, Marden Quarry, Newcastle Exhibition Park and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Two to seven were also at Airy Holm Reservoir, Arcot, Cocklawburn and Middle Ord Ponds, Derwent Reservoir, Dinnington, Hauxley Reserve, Horncliffe, Howdon, Lynemouth Flash, Newcastle Leazes Park and 'Northumberlandia' (Cramlington).

Scaup *Aythya marila*

Four flew N at Seaton Sluice between 28th-30th (SSWT).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

At Seaton Sluice, 50 flew N and 47 S during the month (SSWT), 26 were at St Mary's on 7th (MSH), 11-18 at Cheswick Black Rocks, Cocklawburn and the Tweed Estuary, and five to eight at the Blyth Estuary and Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay).

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

One N at Seaton Sluice on 29th (SSWT) was the sole report.

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

At Seaton Sluice, 134 flew N and 83 S during the month (SSWT), 170 were at Cheswick on 17th (CH), 92 off Holy Island on 14th (MJC), 19 off Seaton Sluice (SSWT), and two to nine at Cocklawburn, Newbiggin, Old Hartley and Stag Rocks. More unusual were a pair on the River Tyne at Newcastle (under Metro bridge) on 15th (SW).

Black Scoter *Melanitta americana*

A drake at Holy Island on 6th (SR) and was reported on several dates between 8th-15th (MJC/ADM/BS *et al.*). Presumably the same drake was also off Cheswick Sands on 15th (CH).



The Holy Island Black Scoter at Holy Island by Mike Carr on 8th April

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

30+ were off Stag Rocks on 8th (BRS) and 14 flew S there on 11th (DF). Eight were at Holy Island on 1st (RA *et al.*). Singles were also at St Mary's on 8th (AC) and East Chevington regularly between 8th-18th (MH/AA/STH *et al.*).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

One flew N at Seaton Sluice on 7th (SSWT), 87 were still at the Tweed Estuary on 12th (MHu), 40 were at East Chevington on 8th (STH), ten to 16 at Bolam and Killingworth Lakes (TRD/JD/LJM), and Holy Island (RA *et al.*), and six to nine at Big Waters, Capheaton Lake, Cresswell Pond, Grindon Lough and West Ord. Three to four were also at Monks' House Pool (two pairs displaying; JPL) and New Water Haugh, and one to two at Caistron, Castle Island, Hauxley Reserve and Widdrington Moor Lake.

A Goldeneye displays to his mate

undisclosed site Northumberland

Chris Barlow



Goosander *Mergus merganser*

Singles flew N at Cresswell on 7th (MH) and S at Snab Point on 3rd (STH). A loose flock of 39 near Wylam on 13th contained 22 drakes (EC), 26 were at Close House on 14th (SW), 11 at Horncliffe on 9th (JDL), and three to five at Alnmouth, Derwent Reservoir, the Tweed Estuary and West Ord. One to two were also at Caistron, Carshope, Castle Island, East Allen Valley, Hesleyside, Lambley, Plessey Woods CP and Shield on the Wall.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

A total of seven flew N at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), 13 were at Budle Bay on 27th (CGK/GPK), five at Cresswell Pond on 11th (TB) and two to four at Castle Island, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Hauxley Reserve and Holy Island.

Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis*

A drake was at Holywell Pond on 20th (BD per STH), and perhaps the same drake was at Swallow Pond between 23rd-30th (GPK et al.).

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

The only report was nine at Sipton Burn (Allendale) on 19th (MJC).

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

15 were in the Simonside area on 27th (IRD) and five were in the Harthope Valley on 24th (TRD/JD).

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

Up to 50 were seen at Bewick Moor on 1st (BS) and 20 were counted up the Harthope Valley on 16th (STH). One to five were at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay), Carlcroft, Druridge Lane, Newham, North Charlton, West Woodburn and Whitfield Moor.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Four were at Newbiggin on 9th (MJC), three were at Needles Eye (Berwick) and pairs were seen at Arcot Pond, Backworth Pond, Bamburgh Castle Wood, Brier Dene Farm, Drift Inn Care (Cresswell), Ellington, Football Hole (Newton), Haughton Strother GP, Hemscotthill Links (Cresswell), Newbiggin and Windmill Lane (Cramlington). A single bird was at Chevington Moor.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

A total of ten were found in a Breeding Bird Survey square at Witton Hillhead (Rothbury) on 21st (PC). Between two to five were ever-present at Spartylea during the month with one nest found containing 16 eggs on 30th (CT). One to four were at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay), Castle Island, Swallow Pond and Valley Park (Cramlington).

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

The total for the month at Seaton Sluice was reported as "average" with 67 (45N and 22S) in, coincidentally, 67 hours of watching (SSWT). A visit to Holy Island on 8th yielded a total of 22 on the sea between Green Shiel Excavations-Emmanuel Head and a further single off East Shore (MJC/ADM). 22 were at Cheswick Sands on 15th (CH), 16 were still around Holy Island on 27th (SR) and one to six were widely reported from throughout the coast.

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

Seaton Sluice reported a monthly passage total of two, one N and one S (SSWT). Holy Island peaked at five on 11th (TF/JFa) and a partial summer-plumaged bird was at Cheswick Sands on 16th (CH).



A close view of a Great Northern Diver at Holy Island on 1st April by Mike Carr

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

Passage numbers were low all month until 30th when 200 were recorded flying N past Seaton Sluice in two hours (SSWT), 59 flew N at Annstead (Seahouses) (DF) and 23 N past Newbiggin in two hours early in the morning (STH). Non-passage reports included 115 at Nessend (Holy Island) on 29th (SR/SH), 24 at Cullernose Point, nine pairs on nesting ledges at Old Hartley cliffs and one to three at several other locations.

A Fulmar passes Cullernose Point
by Tim Dean on 27th April

**Manx Shearwater** *Puffinus puffinus*

The first record of the year was one N on 3rd, then five N between 28th-30th (SSWT). Four N at Newbiggin (STH) and two N past Annstead (DF), all on 30th, were the only other records.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Eight was the maximum monthly count at Swallow Pond (GPK) and five were at Gosforth Park and Linton Ponds. Arcot Pond held two pairs and four were also at Shield on the Wall and East Chevington. One to three were at Allerdean Grange, Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Caistron, Derwent Reservoir, Hauxley NWT, Holy Island Lough, Marden Quarry and Woodhorn Flashes.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Birds were at favoured breeding sites with several on nests by the end of the month. Four pairs were at East Chevington North Pool on 8th (STH), two pairs at Derwent Reservoir, three birds at Killingworth Lake and Whittle Dene Reservoirs and single pairs at Airy Holm Reservoir, Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Druridge Pools, Haughton Strother GP and Swallow Pond. Single birds were also sighted at Arcot Pond and Holywell Pond.

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

The wintering group at Stag Rocks still numbered five by 13th, in varying degrees of summer plumage (AA). Elsewhere, three were at Holy Island on 11th and one was at East Chevington North Pool.

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigrocollis*

The first returning birds were three at a site in the SE of the county from 20th (DLo/GPK). A single was present at a site further north on 29th (TB).

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*

A first-winter bird was in the Cresswell/Druridge Pools area on 29th and 30th (TF/JFa/STH/TB/TRD/JD) and it, or another, was at Holy Island Lough on 29th (AH).



The popular Glossy Ibis in flight at Cresswell
Jonathan Farooqi on 29th April

Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

One was first seen at Druridge Pools on 8th and remained in the area until the end of the month, visiting Hauxley NWT and Cresswell Pond (TB/MJC/TRD/JD *et al.*).

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

At Seaton Sluice a total of eight (five N and three S) was considered typical offshore movement for this month (SSWT). At least six nests were in the heronry at Howdon (CB), three birds were present during a WeBS count at the Tweed Estuary on 12th (MHu) and three were also at Derwent Reservoir on 29th (IFo). One to two were reported from eight other locations.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

The highest counts were three remaining at Boghouses (Cramlington) from last month and last seen on 8th (LJM) and three also at Druridge Pools on several dates at the end of the month (MJC/TF/JFa/JD). One to two were at Budle Bay, Furnace Bank (River Blyth), Gosforth Park NR, Holy Island causeway and Swallow Pond.

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

Monthly totals of 515N and 20S at Seaton Sluice were mainly from 28th, with birds starting to stream N thereafter. (SSWT). 425 flew N in one hour past Annstead (Seahouses) on 28th, 1762 were recorded flying N there on 30th (DF) and 2,300 per hour were reported from Berwick Pier on 30th (MHu). Other reports of varying numbers came from several other coastal viewpoints.

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Up to seven recorded daily at Seaton Sluice with no indication of major passage in a monthly total of 29N and 22S (SSWT). A minimum of 100 were at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 8th (BRS), the only other records being singles at Cullernose Point and the Tweed Estuary.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

No significant movements were recorded past Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). The largest counts were 18 in the Tweed Estuary during a WeBS visit on 12th (MHu) followed by 15 at Derwent Reservoir on 8th and 11 at East Chevington on 29th. Eight flew over Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 15th, five were on cliffs at Needles Eye (Berwick) on 19th and one to four were at several other locations.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetuss*

The first returning bird at Kielder was noted on 8th (CGK/GPK/PS). Pairs were noted from Mounces viewpoint (Kielder) on 18th (TB/HG/ADM) and at Kielder Waterside Park viewpoint on 22nd (DM/LJM). Single birds were noted at Derwent Reservoir on 9th, 14th and 25th (IFo), Tweedmouth on 20th (MHu), Haughton Strother GPs (Humshaugh) on 25th and one flew S at the Chevington Burn mouth on 26th (ADM).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Two birds were at Holy Island on 22nd (MJC/ADM) and a pair was noted at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 25th (DM). Single birds were at 22 sites including a bird in off the sea at Seaton Sluice on 15th (SWT).

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

A female which flew S at Winshields on 16th (SW) was the only record this month.



A juvenile Goshawk investigates an Osprey nest at Kielder
Joanna Daley on 15th April

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Five birds including the resident pair and three other females were observed at East Chevington on 16th (ADM/MH), with one to two birds noted on several dates from 4th (ADM *et al.*). A male and female flew S at Druridge Pools on 22nd (TF/JFa) and a female with a drooping leg was seen there on 8th (TB). A female was at Holy Island Lough on 23rd (IK).

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

A ringtail was at a confidential site on 8th (GGK/GPK/PS), a male was at Howick on 19th (JAR) and a ringtail flew N at Boulmer on 23rd (BS).

Red Kite *Milvus Milvus*

Single birds were at Derwent Reservoir on four dates (AA/IFo), Low Waskerley on 17th and 26th (IFo) and single birds were also at Ewart on 3rd (*per* NNBC), Swallow Pond (Wallsend) on 17th (GPK), flying SE at Morpeth on 22nd (ADM) and one flew SW at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 23rd (NFO) and at Carterway Heads on 25th (IFo).

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

On 27th nine birds were in the College Valley (MJC) and four birds were seen at Prestwick Carr & Shiremoor on 1st (PCF/CGK) and at Derwent Reservoir on 18th (IFo). Three birds were seen at Blagdon Hall on 20th (PC) and at Southernknowe (College Valley) on 30th (AWG). One to two birds were at 17 sites.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Two birds were either seen or heard at Prestwick Carr on 5th (PCF), St Mary's Wetland on 7th (MSH), Arcot Pond on 11th (LJM) and at East Chevington on 18th (STH). Single birds were also seen or heard at Arcot Pond, Backworth Pond, East Chevington, Gosforth Park and St Mary's Wetland.

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

The highest count was of eight birds at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 12th (DM) followed by four birds at Arcot Pond on 20th (DM) and three at Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 14th (IJ). One to two were at Arcot Pond, Castle Island, Leazes Park (Newcastle), Linton Pond, Spartylea and St Mary's Wetland.

Coot *Fulica atra*

32 at Swallow Pond (Wallsend) on 6th (CDH) was the highest count, followed by 16 at Killingworth Lake on 14th (LJM). 12 were at Bothal Pond on 27th (TD) and 10 birds were seen at Haughton Strother GPs (Humshaugh) on 3rd (MR) and at Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 14th (IJ). One to eight birds were at seven sites.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Coastal sites dominated reports with 67 at Hauxley NWT on 15th (HRS) and 33 at Newbiggin Beacon Point on 19th (STH). Six kilometres upstream from the Tweed Estuary, at West Ord, a count of 32 was made on 6th (MHu) with the same number counted at Low Newton on 8th (TD) and at Derwent Reservoir also on 8th (IFo). Humshaugh, Haughton Strother GP had 23 on 3rd (MR), 23 were at Lynemouth Flash on 6th (MSH) and 22 at Berwick Little Beach on 30th (MHu). Counts of ten to 20 were made at Boulmer Flash and Spartylea. Smaller counts came from Blyth Estuary, Benton, Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Castle Island, College Valley (Whitehall), Cramlington, Rockcliffe, Shotleyfield (Airy Holm Reservoir), Upper Coquetdale (Blindburn) and Upper Coquetdale (Buckham's Bridge).

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

While the count of 26 at Cresswell Pond from last month was not quite equalled, numbers were still higher than in recent years at this location with maximum counts of 24 on 18th and 22nd (AJR, IF). Cresswell counts varied greatly throughout the month from a minimum of five on 5th, up to the maximum given above and then down to nine on 28th. Blyth Estuary held 13 birds on 3rd which declined to ten by 14th (LJM), Druridge Pool reported two to four at intervals between 9th and 30th and two birds were seen on 24th at both Monk's House Pool and Longhirst Flash.

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

A low maximum count of 13 was made at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) on 9th (TF/JFa). Spartylea in Allendale had a peak count of eight on 1st (CT), Hauxley reported five birds on the 15th and four were seen displaying at Silloans, Redesdale on 8th. Other, smaller counts came from Arcot Lane, Bellshiel MOD range, Cramlington, East Hartford, Howdon, Lynemouth Flash, Prestwick Carr, Weetslade (Dudley) and Witton Hillhead, near Rothbury.

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus* March Bulletin revision

The largest count came from St Mary's with 210 counted on 18th (ASJ). Derwent Reservoir almost matched that with 200 on 11th (IFo). Other three-figure counts were of 170 at Cresswell Pond on 7th (MJC), 140 at Murton (Craggy Bog), near Berwick on 11th (MHu) and 110 at Acton Fell (Allendale) on 24th – a count which was made up of 55 pairs displaying (ASJ). Whittle Dene Reservoir had 87 on 12th (SR), 49 were in the Tweed Estuary on 9th (PRM) and 30 were at Bothal Pond on 19th (TD). Other sites with records were Brown's Bay (Cullercoats), Ellington, Grindon Lough, Harthope Valley (Carey Burn), Hauxley NWT, Howdon, Prestwick Carr, Spartylea and Tynemouth.

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

Reports were dominated by migration of Northern race birds along the coast. The largest counts were of 500+ on 7th at Backworth (CGK) and 174-186 at Goswick GC on 18th (MHu). Carraw (Haughton Common) had a count of 25 on 12th (TWi) and 12 were at Holy Island on 22nd (MJC/ADM).

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

A remarkable flock of 450 was seen flying N off the Excavations on Holy Island on 14th (MJC) and a high-tide roost at Budle Bay of 200 was present on 28th (CGK/GPK). A single bird was seen from the Berwick Coast Guard on 16th (MHu). These were the only reports.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Only six reports were received. Holy Island (The Ouze) had a count of 31 on 6th (IK) with two to four birds reported from Cresswell (Bell's Farm pond), Derwent Reservoir and Haughton Strother GP.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

While the largest count of five on 30th (MR) came from the North Tyne Valley, a report from the R Wansbeck of "a flock of about half a dozen flying over, one landing and being positively identified" was made on 26th (PG). Two pairs were observed north west of Alnwick on 5th (NFO), three were seen in the far south of the county on 27th (IFo) and a single was seen west of Ponteland on 7th (ALT). Other reports of singles came from the south east of the county and from a site north of Ovingham.

A Little Ringed Plover in the east of the county

Steve Barrett

14th April

**Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus*

Passage started in the second half of the month. The largest single count was of 51 at Widdrington Moor Lake on 25th (JFa/TF) and Seaton Sluice saw a total of 39 birds pass the Watch Tower from 20th to 30th with the highest single count of 18N on 25th (SSWT). That was matched by Hadston where 18 were seen in fields on 20th (STH/IFo). Twelve birds flew off north on the morning of the same day at Cresswell Pond (STH/IFo) and another dozen were reported from Budle Bay on 28th (GPK/CGK). Other counts varied between one and seven and came from Beal, Boulmer (Seaton Point), Cambois (offshore), Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Ellington (Chugdon Wood), Holy Island, Newbiggin (Beacon Point), Rockcliffe, Seahouses (Annstead) and Tynemouth.

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

From 15th onward two birds were seen displaying at Longhorsely Moor (AB/LB). However, nearly all large counts came from the coast with the largest count of 200+ made at Druridge Pools on 5th (TD). Counts at this location gradually declined to 54 by 19th. Other large counts came from Cresswell Pond on 18th when 72 were present (ASJ), the Blyth Estuary where 66 were counted on 14th (LJM) and from Prestwick Carr where 55 were on 9th (PCF). Twenty three birds were reported from the upper Blyth Estuary on 5th (DM). Counts of 16 and fewer came from Wallsend (Rising Sun CP), Castle Island (R Wansbeck), Cramlington (Northumberlandia), Grindon Lough, Hauxley NWT, Howdon, Longhorsley Common, Quickeningscote (Upper Coquetdale), Spartylea, Tweed Estuary, Whittle Dene Reservoirs and Witton Hillhead (near Rothbury).

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Counts of 252-350+ came from Holy Island (IK, TF/JFa) and a single bird was seen at Kitty Brewster (Blyth) on 5th (DM).

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Druridge Pools, with some birds visiting nearby Cresswell Pool, dominated all the larger counts of birds with numbers almost equalling the record counts of April last year. On 6th a total of 72 birds were counted (MSH) with about 50% of the birds on 7th in breeding plumage (MH). By the end of the month however, numbers were down to 12. Earlier in the month, the Rocket Field at Holy Island had a count of 21 on 1st (IK), 13 were at Grindon Lough on 15th (MRS) and seven were at Monks' House Pool on 30th (DF). Counts of three and fewer came from Hauxley NWT, Howdon, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower and R Wansbeck (Castle Island).

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

A group of 42 were feeding in fields with geese at Cocklawburn on 5th (MHu). The maximum recorded at Hauxley NWT during the month was 34 on 15th (HRS) and 33 were at St Mary's Island on 11th (DM). Other counts were 20 at Kitty Brewster (River Blyth Estuary) on 5th (DM), 15 at Stag Rocks on 1st (TD) and 15 at Newton Point on 27th (TRD/JD). A WeBS count recorded 14 at the River Tweed Estuary on 12th (MHu), six were at Cheswick Black Rocks on 23rd and two at Brown's Bay (Cullercoats) on 29th.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

The sole report was a single at Cresswell Pond on 25th (TB).

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

At Druridge Pools, one on 6th increased to seven from 14th-28th but only a single was reported on 29th (MSH/SRB/STH *et al.*). At Boulmer a moulting adult male was reported from the flash from 9th-29th (BS/AH/IK *et al.*). Other reports were of three males at Holy Island from 21st-22nd (SR/AH/IK), two at Grindon Lough on 18th (TB/HG/ADM) and one at Widdrington Moor Lake on 29th (TB).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

The only visible passage reported was a group of at least 50 flying N at Whitley Bay on 27th (PCF). The highest count received was from Newbiggin with a maximum of 40 on 4th and 105 on 19th (DLo/STH). The numbers reported from the Druridge Bay area in previous months had reduced, with 54 at Chevington Burn beach on 5th (TD) and 14 at Druridge Bay on 14th (SRB). Other records were 50 at St Mary's Island on 11th (DM), 40 winter-plumaged birds at Sandham Bay (Holy Island) on 6th (IK) and 30 at Budle Bay on 27th (CGK/GPK).

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

A huge count of 1,000 in a high-tide roost at Black Law (Lindisfarne) was made on 27th (IK). Elsewhere, the only reports were 20 at Cresswell Pond on 24th (TB), six at Mount Pleasant (upper Blyth Estuary) and singles at St Mary's Wetland and Druridge Pools (DM/TRD/JD). Birds were at Hauxley on 26th but no number was recorded.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

Passage was noted at Seaton Sluice with 18 N from 13th-18th (SSWT). In the Newbiggin area, a total of 46 was recorded on 19th (STH) and seven on 3rd (LJM). The wintering flock at Stag Rocks had declined with the only report received being 40 on 1st (TD). One-seven were at Berwick coastwatch, Boulmer, Cheswick Black Rocks, Holy Island, Newton Point, Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay), St Mary's Island and Seaton Sluice.

Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus*

A single was seen at Grindon Lough on 18th and 24th (TB/HG/ADMc/AJR).

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

On Holy Island, birds were reported from 1st-14th with a maximum of six on 1st (RA/MJC/ADM *et al.*). Singles were seen at Backworth, Comb (near Falstone), Derwent Gorge, Housesteads, Howdon, Newbiggin, St Mary's Wetland, Swallow Pond and a Tynemouth garden.

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyptes minimus*

A single was seen at Holy Island on 21st (IBDa/KDa).

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Arcot Lane Flash remained attractive with 41 recorded there on 9th (DM). Birds were at several localities on Holy Island with a maximum of 13 on 1st reducing to two by 22nd (RA/MJC/ADM *et al.*). Ten were seen at Prestwick Carr on 8th (PCF) and birds were present at Spartylea all month with a high of eight reported plus a nest with three eggs on 25th (CT). Six were at St Mary's Wetland on 7th (MSH) and singles were at Druridge Pools, Hauxley NWT and Sewing Shields.

Addition to March 2018 bulletin**Grey Phalarope** *Phalaropus fulicarius*

Three were at St Mary's Island on 4th March (AC/ASJ/IJ).

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Birds were noted on passage and in breeding areas with the first at Branton GP on 9th (IBDa/KDa). A maximum of four were at Derwent Reservoir from 15th (IFo), four were at Hedgeley GP on 21st (IBDa/KDa) and Lambley on 29th (MJC). Three were at Bothal Pond on 27th (TD) and two were at Charlton Mires (N of Alnwick), Cresswell Pond, East Allen Valley, Harthope Valley, Holy Island, Kielder Dam, Newton Point, Stannersburn, Tasset and West Ord (Berwick). Single birds were on the River Coquet at Bygate Cottages, Rothbury and Shillmoor and others at Haughton Strother GP, Hauxley, Northumberlandia (Cramlington), Smalesmouth (nr Kielder) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Presumed wintering birds were at Caistron and Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 19th (JD/SR). Two were at Longhirst Flash from 8th-10th with one on 21st (ADMc). Two were reported from the River Glen on 8th (per NNBC) and one was on Newbiggin Golf Course on 30th (AP).

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

The WeBS count on the River Tweed Estuary recorded 212 on 12th with 180 reported from Calot Shad on the River Tweed on 8th (MHu). Birds were reported roosting at St Mary's Wetland during the first half of the month with the highest count being 200 on 3rd (MSH/AC) but only 12 remained by 21st (IJ). Other large concentrations were 176 at Howdon on 3rd (CB), 158 in fields near the River Blyth Estuary on 14th (LJM) and a minimum of 150 at Druridge Pools on 5th (TD). Smaller groups were 46 at the upper Blyth Estuary on 5th (DM), 37 at Newton Flash on 8th (TD) and 30 at Hauxley on 26th (DLo). A single flock of 16 was at Haughton Strother GP on 13th (MR), six pairs at Grindon Lough on 22nd (AJR/MRS) and six at Derwent Reservoir on 9th (IFo). One to three were at Castle Island, Halton-Lea-Gate, Lynemouth Flash and Willington Gut (Wallsend).

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

The wintering adult, now moulting into summer plumage, was reported from 9th-30th at Budle Bay (GPK *et al.*).

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

Notable passage movements included 465 N in two hours at Seaton Sluice on 1st (SSWT), 380 N in one hour at Annstead on 28th (DF) and 1,750/hour N at Berwick Pier on 30th (MHu). A gathering of 450 was on the sea at Berwick, Needles Eye on 19th (MHu) and small numbers were recorded at five other localities. A more unusual inland record was a single at Haughton Strother GP on 20th (MR). At the Newcastle City breeding sites on 12th, 109 were on the Tyne Bridge, 54 on Quayside Buildings and 38 on Dean St. Railway Bridge with many more loafing on the river with some birds already paired up (DM).

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

At least 300 were on the Druridge Pools Budge fields on 9th (MSH) with smaller gatherings of 50-60 at Grindon Lough and Hauxley NWT (MRS/HRS) and 12-14 at Castle Island and Spartylea (DM/CT).

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

A single record only of an immature bird on Monks' House Pool from 28th-30th (DF).

Mediterranean Gull *Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus*

A maximum of seven birds of various ages, from adult to 1st-summer, were counted at Newbiggin on 19th (ST) and elsewhere one to three were seen at Amble Braid (CSa), Druridge Lane (TB), Druridge Pools (TD/MSH/NFO) and East Chevington (TF/JFa).

Common Gull *Larus canus*

The only significant movement observed at Seaton Sluice was 300 N in two hours on 6th (SSWT). Flocks of 124 were at Haughton Strother GP on 3rd (MR) and 100 at Prestwick Carr on 5th (PCF); smaller numbers elsewhere were 26 at East Chevington Burn mouth on 5th (TD), 14 in the Tweed Estuary on 12th (MHu) and four to six at Cramlington and West Ord (DM/MHu).

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

The only reports comprised 50 at Rockcliffe, Whitley Bay (IJ) and 14 in the Tweed Estuary (MHu)

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

The long-staying immature bird was again seen at Monks' House Pool on 1st (NFO) and 8th (DF). Two further reports of immature birds, probably the same individual, came from the River Coquet at Warkworth on 24th (CSa) and Widdrington Moor Lake on 28th (TB).

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoides*

Two reports of immature birds, possibly the same individual, came from St Mary's Island on 8th (AC) and the River Tyne at Scotswood on 14th (SW).

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

Counts of unaged birds were 387 in the River Blyth Estuary (LJM) and 356 in the River Tweed Estuary (MHu) and smaller gatherings of 30-70 were seen at Castle Island, East Chevington Burnmouth, Haughton Strother GP, Marden Quarry, Rockcliffe and St Mary's Wetland (IJ/MR/MSH/DM/TD). 37 on a factory roof at Davy Bank (Wallsend) comprised a small breeding colony (CDH). Elsewhere, up to 15 were recorded at eight inland and coastal localities.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

At Seaton Sluice 27 moved N from 3rd-5th but few were seen outside this period (SSWT). A flooded field at East Hartford held 12 on 11th (TB), 11 flew W at Haughton Strother GP on 23rd (MR) and elsewhere up to seven were recorded at Arcot Lane, Blyth, Castle Island, Cramlington, Exhibition Park, Newcastle Quayside (all DM) and at Marden Quarry, Hauxley NWT, Stannington and the River Tweed Estuary (MHu/TB/IJ/HRS); a small colony of seven were on a factory roof at Davy Bank, Wallsend (CDH).

Sandwich Tern *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

At Holy Island, 40/hour moved N on 8th (MJC/ADM) and the numbers of returning birds on the island built up quickly after the 7th with six on that date (IK/IBDa/KDa) rising to 30 on 14th and 120 at the roost on St Cuthbert's Island on 27th (IK/MJC *et al.*); further north, 14 were at Cheswick Sands on 15th (CH) and 12 at Cocklawburn on 23rd (MHu). Elsewhere, 12 were at Rockcliffe on 25th (IJ) and one to eight at a further eight localities.

Little Tern *Sternula albifrons*

The first returning bird was one at Newton Links on 24th (DF) and on 28th, sightings were recorded at three localities comprising four at Budle Bay (CGK/GPK), three at Black Law, Lindisfarne (IK) and two flying N at Annstead, Seahouses (DF).

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Only small numbers were noted at Seaton Sluice following the first single on 21st. (SSWT). A very early bird was at Boulmer on 8th (BS) and it was not until 19th that a further sighting of eight came from East Chevington (TD). Thereafter, until the month end, regular sightings of one to two came from East Chevington with two at Bamburgh Stag Rocks on 25th (DF) and 31 there on 27th (DF). The first inland record, from Whittle Dene Reservoirs, was recorded in the site log-book on 25th and a single was present on 27th (EC)..

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

The first arrival was a single at Boulmer on 21st (BS) followed on 23rd by one at Druridge Pools (NFO), at least one at Annstead, Seahouses (DF) and four at Cocklawburn, Saltpan Rocks (MHu). The only record at Seaton Sluice was three passing N on 29th (SSWT).

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

One flew N at Annstead on 28th (DF). Another bird, which lingered at Newbiggin in the early morning of 30th (STH), flew off N and was seen passing N at Seaton Sluice a little later (SSWT); probably the same individual was again recorded that day as it flew N at Annstead (DF).

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

On 30th, a single passed N at Seaton Sluice (SSWT).

Auk *sp*

From 28th-30th, 1,570 moved N including a maximum of 1,000 in one hour during the early morning of 29th; virtually no records before 28th (SSWT).

Common Guillemot *Uria aalge*

At least 200 were at Bamburgh, Stag Rocks on 8th (BRS) and 130 were on the sea at Needles Eye, Berwick on 19th (MHu). Smaller counts of 12 came from Cocklawburn and one to four were at East Chevington, Newton (Football Hole) and Rockcliffe.

Razorbill *Alca torda*

At Holy Island, 14 were on the sea off the Excavations (STH) and 14 were at Needles Eye, Berwick (MHU); One to four were counted at Bamburgh (Stag Rocks), Cocklawburn, Cullernose Point (BRS/MHu,TRD/JD) and a single at St Cuthbert's Island, Holy island fed inshore, an unusual record for spring (IK).

Black Guillemot *Cephus grylle*

A non-breeding bird was on the sea distantly off Nessend (Holy Island) on 25th (BS).

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

A single flew N at Seaton Sluice on 4th (SSWT) and at least six were at Stag Rocks on 8th (BRS).

Rock Dove *Columba livia*

The only report was of 11 at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 1st (DM).

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Chugdon Wood (Ellington) was the stronghold this month with counts of five to nine from 1st to 14th (TB). Five at Howick on 27th (TRD/JD), two to four at Spartylea all month and four at South Snods Farm on 29th. One to two were at five other locations.



A Stock Dove visiting a Woosington garden
John Littleton

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

There were gatherings of 350 at Kiln Pit Hill on 5th and Ilderton on 20th (IFo/SW) and 200+ flew east at East Hartford on 15th (LJM). 22 were found in a BBS square at Blagdon Hall on 20th, 18 at Holy Island on 8th and Witton Hillhead (Rothbury) on 21st with 14 at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) on two dates. One to 12 were at eight other localities.

Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*

A ringed bird (metallic ring 15BC15P on left leg) in gardens at Longhoughton on 30th was believed to have been an escape (BS).

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Five displaying males were at Callerton / Whorlton on 14th (MH), two to four at Spartylea all month (CT), two on bird table at Walkerville (Newcastle) on 30th (CDH) with singles at different locations in Whitley Bay on two dates.

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

The first arrival was at Swallow Pond (Wallsend) on 17th (GPK) with two at Holystone on 26th and College Valley on 27th (IJ/IBDa/KDa). From 21st singles were at Allendale, College Valley, Greenfield, Greenlee Lough, Cartington, Rothbury and Simonside.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Two were at Spartylea all month and at Butterwell Opencast on 1st and Humshaugh on 4th (CT/ADMc/TWi) with singles there regularly and at Holy Island. Singles were also at seven other widespread localities.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Two noted at Spartylea all month (CT) and singing at Dipton Wood on 29th (MJC). Singles were calling all month at Howick and Rothbury and one at Lambley on 29th.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

On 5th three were at Derwent Reservoir (IFo) with singles there regularly in the last week of the month and at Druridge Pools in the first half (TB *et al.*).

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

One was at Holy Island from 4th to 14th (ADM/MJC *et al.*)



A Long-eared Owl on Holy Island on 5th April by Mike Carr

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

The only multiple count was of two at Holy Island on 11th (SR) with a single there on 4th. One hunted the ash lagoon bank at Newbiggin on 7th, another came 'in off' heading W at Seaton Sluice on 13th and one hunted dunes at Chevington and Druridge on 16th and 20th. One was at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) on 23rd and another at Whitfield Moor on 30th.

Swift *Apus apus*

The first birds arrived on the 26th with one at Corbridge and four at East Chevington rising to eight there by 28th (MR/NFO/TF/JFa).

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Poorly reported with singles at Morpeth (R. Wansbeck) on 1st, Close House (R. Tyne) on 14th and Low Angerton (R. Wansbeck) on 25th (IRD/SW).

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Four was the peak at Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 15th and 17th (MNC), three at Howick on 14th (JAR) and on a 3hr BBS survey at Blagdon Hall on 20th (PC). Two were at Spartylea all month and Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 1st with singles at nine other widespread localities.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Two sang at Dipton Wood on 29th (MJC) with singles at Prestwick Carr all month, at Weetslade C.P. on four dates and at Rye Hill (Slaley) on 12th, R Tyne and Close House (Wylam) on 13th/14th, Ellington on 22nd, Harthope Valley on 24th, Derwent Gorge on 27th, Swallow Pond on 29th and Yearle.

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Three birds were at Holy Island on 14th (MJC) and also at Derwent Reservoir on 15th (IFo). Pairs or two birds were at Willington Gut (Wallsend) on 1st (CDH), Holy Island on 1st (RT *et al.*), Ellington on 6th and Pegswood on 8th (TB) and at Howick – Longhoughton Steel on 9th (MJC). Whittingham on 13th (MJC) and two birds were noted regularly throughout the month at West Hartford (TB). Two birds were displaying at Newcastle Airport on 8th (IF), two were also at Grindon Lough on 8th (PRM) and at Elsdon on 24th (JR). Single birds were at 19 sites during the Month.



A Kestrel wind hovers at St. Mary's: by Alan Jack on 9th April

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Two birds, a male and a female, were noted on Holy Island on 6th (IK/SR) and singles also noted on the island on six other dates throughout the month (MJC *et al.*). Single birds were also seen at Beadnell Point on 7th (DF), Whittingham on 17th (CW) and one flew through Harthope Valley on 27th (AJ).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Fenham-le-Moor on 11th had a pair (JDL) and single birds were at Newbiggin on 7th (AP), Holy Island on 1st and 14th (RA/MJC), Boulmer on 24th (BS) and at three inland sites on 11th, 16th and 21st.

Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

One at Gosforth Garden Village on 21st (MJC).

Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor*

The over-wintering bird was seen on three dates at Prestwick Carr till 8th (PCF/MH) with one at the Snook (Holy Island) on 11th (SR/TF/JFa).



The Holy Island Great Grey Shrike. Image by Jonathan Farooqi on 11th April

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

On a three-hour BBS at Blagdon Hall on 20th seven were found (PC), three at Blakehopeburnhaugh (Kielder) on 8th, Ellington on 15th and West Ord (Berwick) on 17th (AB/LB/TB/MHu). One to two were regularly at Ellington and Gosforth Park and 11 other locations.

Magpie *Pica pica*

All reports were from Whitley Bay with three at Marden Quarry on 14th and one to two at Brierdene from 8th to 21st (IJ).

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

A high count of 103+ at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 6th heading south to Gosforth Park roost at dusk (DM). On 20th a three-hour BBS at Blagdon Hall found 31 (PC), 30 at Prestwick Carr on 3rd (PCF), ten pairs at Old Hartley Cliffs on 11th (DM) and six to 16 at Spartylea all month (CT). One to eight were at five other locations.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

Nesting was in full swing with 14 at Cramlington Hall on 1st/7th with one more nearby on 16th (DM/LJM), five at Seaton Burn on 12th and 19 at 'The Blackbird' (Ponteland) on 22nd (DM). Four flew S at Seaton Sluice on 21st and two at Holy Island on 22nd.

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

Coastal movement was apparent with 170N and 51S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), 60 at R Blyth Estuary on 14th (LJM), 21 east at over Snook at Holy Island on 8th (MJC/ADM) and 18 north at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 19th and 11 on 3rd. 16 were at Crow Stone (MOD ranges) on 14th with one to nine at seven other locations.



A Carrion Crow by Alan Jack at St. Mary's

Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix*

One flew S at Ellington on 21st and similarly one S at Woodhorn on 25th (TB/AP).

Raven *Corvus corax*

Two were at Elfkirk (Kielder) on 18th (TB/HG/ADMc) and at Edlingham on 23rd (IBDA/KDa) with singles at Beanley Moor on 14th and Widehope on 23rd.

Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus*

One remained at Benton on 13th (GPK).

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

Up to 12 were at Spartylea during the month (CT), two nested in a garden box for first time at Woolsington on 20th (SRB) with singles at Gosforth Park, Northumberland Park (North Shields) and Marden Park (Whitley Bay).

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

Just two reports of singles at Bolam Lake on 5th (TRD/JD) and Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 18th (NFO).

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

On 25th and 28th three were at Longhorsley Common (AB/LB), two were at Prestwick Carr on 1st, Brierdene (Whitley Bay) on 21st and Branton GP on 22nd. Pairs excavating nest holes were noted at Longhorsley Moor, Longhoughton Quarry and Prestwick Carr. Singles were regularly at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) and five other locations.



A Willow Tit at Branton GPs

Mike Carr

22nd April

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

A BBS taking three hours found 12 at Blagdon Hall on 20th (PC), five to ten at Spartylea all month (CT), four to seven at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) (IJ) and four at Letah Wood, Hexham. Pairs were at nests at Longhorsley Common, Fulbeck (Morpeth) and Hartburn with one to two at three other locations.

Great Tit *Parus major*

At Blagdon Hall on 20th ten were found (PC), eight at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) on 8th (IJ), up to six at Spartylea (CT) with one to three at five other locations. Nest building noted at Hartburn Grange Farm, (Hartburn).

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Many singing birds were on Holy Island with 50 on 5th and 44 on 8th (MJC/ADM). Lower numbers were elsewhere with eight at St Mary's Island on 21st, seven on BBS at Witton Hillhead (Rothbury) on the same date, six at Newcastle Town Moor on 12th. One to five were at seven other locations.



A Skylark at East Chevington
Chris Barlow on 15th April

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

On 24th 230 were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs (SR) and 130 at Bothal Pond (TF/JFa), 80 AON at Haughton Strother on 10th, 65 at East Chevington on the same date, 30 at Bothal Pond on 26th and at College Valley on 27th with 28 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 4th. 10 to 23 were at Close House, Druridge Pools, Gosforth Park, Horncliffe, Seaton Sluice and Upper Coquetdale with one to nine at 14 other widespread localities.

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Generally late arrival, the first being one N at Gloucester Lodge Farm on 5th (DM/LJM), two at Haughton Strother on 6th (MR) with singles at Corbridge and Rothbury on the same date (EC/TRD/JD) then two N at Mootlaw on 8th (ALT). Records at Seaton Sluice commenced on 8th with small numbers recorded at many locations from that date building to peak counts of 80 at Derwent Reservoir on 29th (IFo), 40 at Druridge Pools on 24th and at Berwick on 26th (MJC), 35+ at Bothal Pond on 24th, 30+ at Arcot Pond on 25th and 23 at Holy Island on 22nd. One to 19 were at 21 other widespread localities.

A Swallow

Backworth

Alan Jack

29th April

**House Martin** *Delichon urbica*

The first and only record from that location was 3N on 8th (SSWT) with a single at Haughton Strother on 10th (MR) and five at Branton GP on 11th (IBDa/KDa), numbers remaining in single figures until 24th when 25+ were at Bothal Pond, 13 at Gosforth Park and 12 at Druridge Pools. The peak count was 30N at Berwick on 26th (MJC) with one to eight at 20 other locations.

Red-rumped Swallow *Hirundo daurica*

One was at Chevington North Pool on 26th (ADMc).

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*

A singing bird was heard at East Chevington on numerous occasions from 1st-21st (ADMc *et al.*).



The East Chevington Cetti's Warbler
Jonathan Farooqi on 15th April

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

Up to five were at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) mid-month (IJ), four at Lincoln Hill (Humshaugh) on 29th and at Spartylea throughout and three at Allenheads on 21st. Pairs were nest building at Close House (Wylam) on 14th and Tynemouth on 7th while further pairs were reported from Arcot Grange, Barns Park and Valley Park (all Cramlington), Branton GP, Ellington, Howdon, Marden Quarry and Old Railway Line (Rothbury).

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

The first record of the year was from Holy Island on 1st, followed by singles at Corbridge on 6th, Backworth and Monkseaton on 7th, Low Newton on 8th and East Chevington and Mootlaw Quarry (Ryal) on 9th. Some 17 singing males were at East Chevington on 21st, while numbers at Holy Island peaked at 27 on 22nd (MJC/ADM), when 15 were also at Branton GP and 13 at Longhorsley Moor. Nine were singing at Arcot Pond on 20th, rising to 14 by 28th and up to eight birds were at Spartylea throughout. Counts of six to seven came from Blagdon Hall, Prestwick Carr, Weetslade and Witton Hillhead (Rothbury), while four were noted at Caistron, Holystone, Howdon and Linden Hall. One to three were reported from a further 26 localities.

A Willow Warbler sings

Backworth

27th April

Alan Jack



Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Peak counts from Holy Island were 17 on 1st, 14 on 12th, 36 on 14th and 18 on 19th (MJC/ADM/RA). A BBS count at Blagdon Hall produced ten on 20th, while nine singing males were heard at Harthope Valley on 20th and at Plessey Woods CP on 24th. Counts of seven singing birds came from Arcot Hall GC, Choppington, Cramlington (Brockwell-Westwood area) and Wooler, while on the coast six were at Bamburgh Castle Wood on 12th and at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) on 21st and 29th; six were also reported from Arcot Pond. Up to five were at Castle Island and four at Callerton, Close House (Wylam) and Longhorsley Moor, with one to three at a further 48 widespread localities.



A Chiffchaff on Holy island on 1st April by Mike Carr

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

The only report of this declining species was a singing male at a sensitive woodland site in the south of the county on 27th.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Three singing birds at East Chevington on 20th rose to 15 by 27th (STH/IFo/NFO). Another was heard at Druridge Pools on 20th and singles were at Branton GP and Prestwick Carr on 21st and Gosforth Park NR and Newton Pool on 24th. By the end of the month, four were at Arcot Pond on 28th, two at Newton Pool and singles at Bradford Kaims and Holy Island on 27th and two at Druridge Pools on 30th.

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

One at East Chevington on 22nd was the first arrival, increasing to two (singing) by 29th (TF/JFa/STH). Another was at Holy Island on 29th.

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

The regular Cramlington study area produced the first bird of the year, at Arcot Pond on 18th; by the end of the month numbers in the Cramlington area had increased to 17 'reeling' males (*per* STH-various observers). Singles were at East Chevington and Prestwick Carr on 19th, with seven at the latter locality by 21st. Two were noted near Newcastle Airport on 30th and at Widdrington Moor Lake on 29th with singles also at Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Druridge Pools, Holy Island and Linton Pond on 22nd and Cullernose Point on 27th.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

A singing male was at Humshaugh from 5th-8th and over-wintering birds were again noted at Newbiggin on 3rd and 13th and at Gosforth Garden Village on 18th; others in gardens at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 12th, North Shields on 15th and Tynemouth on 8th may also have been an over-wintering bird. Birds were reported widely from mid-month, including up to eight at Branton GP on 22nd, seven at Castle Island on 15th, six at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) on 21st and five at Blagdon Hall, Plessey Woods CP, Twizell Woods and Wooler from 19th-27th. Up to three were noted at Holy Island on seven dates from 11th-28th, three were at Horncliffe on 20th and three at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 21st, while one to two reported from a further 37 localities included a pair gathering nest material at Swallow Pond on 29th.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

Two at Blagdon Hall and one at Haughton Strother GP (Humshaugh) on 20th were the first of the year, followed by singles at Branton GP on 23rd and Berwick Castle on 28th.

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

One at Holy Island on 14th was the first of the year (MJC/SRB), numbers here increasing to six by 19th (ADM). One to two were at Druridge Pools from 24th-29th, while singles were reported from Alnmouth on 25th, Arcot Pond from 18th-20th, Budle Bay on 28th-29th, Cramlington (Brockwell area) on 29th, East Chevington from 19th-25th, Northumbria University on 25th, Prestwick Carr on 21st, Spindleston on 29th, St Mary's Island on 19th, Stobswood Pools on 26th and West Hartford on 29th.

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

The first was at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 13th (TWi), followed by further singles at East Ord (Berwick) on 15th and Newton Red House on 18th. In the Cramlington area, five were at Brockwell-Westwood Grange on 29th and four at Arcot Pond on 28th (LJM/DM). Two to three were singing at Druridge Pools from 22nd to the month end and two were at Ellington on 20th. Singles, mostly in song, were reported from Boulmer, East Chevington, Haughton Strother GP (Humshaugh), Holy Island, Linden Hall, Newbiggin, Prestwick Carr, Shilbottle, Sionside (Belford) and Swallow Pond.

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapilla*

A very approachable individual was at Holy Island (Straight Lonnen) on 1st (ADM), with presumably the same (a male) on the Crooked Lonnen on 2nd (BS).

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Holy Island witnessed a 'fall' which peaked at 49 on 1st (RA *et al.*); 16 were noted here on 4th, 13 on 14th and six on 8th and 12th. Elsewhere, five were at Elwick on 5th, three at Bamburgh on 8th and singles at St Mary's Wetland on 1st and in a Tynemouth garden on 6th and 12th. A singing male was at Valley Park (Cramlington) from 6th to the month end.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

A total of 13 were noted during a three-hour BBS visit to Blagdon Hall on 20th (PC). Eight were counted across Holy Island on 1st and five to six were at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) from 15th-29th. Five were singing at Longhorsley Moor from 22nd-29th, two were at Spartylea all month and at Marden Quarry on 14th and a bird was nest-building at Old Hartley on 6th.

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Eight were singing in Plessey Woods CP on 24th (LJM). Two pairs were nesting in Jesmond Dene from 19th and four were at Letah Wood (Hexham) on 24th and at Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 17th. Counts of two singing birds came from Arcot Hall GC, Northumberlandia (Cramlington) and Twizell Woods and a pair was at Marshall Meadows (Berwick); two were also reported from Bolam Lake, Chugdon Wood (Ellington) and Horncliffe. The bird reported from Budle Bay in March was last seen in the area on 9th April, while elsewhere singles were at Arcot Pond, Cheswick House, Cramlington Hall, Derwent Gorge, Druridge Pools, Gosforth Park, Holystone, Humshaugh (nest-building), Leazes Park, Mitford (carrying food), Scots Gap and Wallsend Park.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Counts of six came from Dipton Woods and Plessey Woods CP (MJC), while three were at Bamburgh Castle wood, Gosforth Park NR and Holystone; three territories were identified along a short stretch at Allen Banks. A pair was nesting in the rotten eaves of a Public Convenience at Allenheads on 21st, and two were at Spartylea on 19th. Singles were noted at Beanley Plantation, Howick, Ilderton, Rothbury (Old Railway line), Thrunton Woods and Wallington

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

A feeding flock of 37 was at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 27th and a pair was nest-building here on 19th (BS). Up to 20 were noted at Spartylea throughout the month and ten to 12 were at Brierdene on 29th and nearby St Mary's Wetland on 21st.

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

At Holy Island the peak count was five on 1st (RS *et al.*) with a further two here on 14th and singles on 8th and 19th. In the Cheviots, up to five were noted at Hawsen Burn (Harthope Valley) and a singing male in the College Valley by 27th. Elsewhere, a male was at Rising Sun CP (Wallsend) on 3rd, with two males here on 15th. On the coast another male was at St Mary's Island on 10th and one at Boulmer on 16th, while in breeding areas a singing male was at Steel Rigg on 11th and one at Sipton Burn (Allendale) on 29th.

A Ring Ouzel on Holy Island
Mike Carr on 1st April



Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Peak counts from Holy Island were 92 on 1st, 135 on 5th, 50 on 8th and 81 on 14th (MJC/ADM/RA). Elsewhere on the coast 10-11 were at Newbiggin on 3rd and 5th, four to eight at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) on various dates from 8th and six at Marden Quarry on 14th. Twelve were noted during a three-hour BBS visit to Blagdon Hall on 20th, up to six were at Spartylea throughout, five at Longhorsley Common on 9th included nest-building and four were at Weetslade on 20th.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

Some sizeable flocks were noted early in the month, the largest of which was 200 at Elsdon on 1st (TRD/JD). A foraging flock of 180 was at Derwent Reservoir on 6th and 120+ were at Branton on 5th. Another flock of around 120 was near Kiln Pit Hill on 15th, with a peak of 64 at Holy Island on the same day, this latter site holding 36-39 on 1st and 4th respectively. In the west of the county, 50 were at Sewing Shields on 12th and 40 at Haughton Strother GP (Humshaugh) on 3rd, while a further 35 were at Derwent Reservoir on 18th. Elsewhere, 32 were at Middle Ord (Berwick) on 8th, 30 flew over Causey Park on 7th and 16 were at Greenlee Lough on 15th. Four to five were reported from Bothal Pond, Chugdon Wood (Ellington) and Prestwick Carr. The final records of the month were on 19th, when 20 were at Carterway Heads and three at Derwent Reservoir and at Holy Island.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

The largest gathering was ca.100 at Hedgeley GP on 5th (NFO). On Holy Island peak counts were 30 on 4th, 80 on 5th and 39 on 14th. Elsewhere, 70 were noted at Swallow Pond on 7th, 20 at Elsdon on 1st, Corbridge on 6th and Sewing Shields on 12th, while 18 were at West Ord (Berwick) on 6th and ten at Carterway Heads on 6th. One to nine at a further five localities included the final record of the month as a single flew out to sea at Boulmer on 19th.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

An influx on Holy Island, together with other thrushes produced 41 on 1st (RA *et al.*), while 18 were noted here on 5th and 15 on 14th; also on the island a pair were feeding young in a nest on 24th (IK). Eight were noted at Bamburgh Castle Wood on 12th, up to four were at Spartylea all month, four were at Howdon on 5th and four were singing at Plessey Woods CP on 24th. One to three were reported from a further six localities.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Six and four were at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 14th and 15th respectively (TB). Two pairs were on territory at Leazes Park on 12th and one pair likewise at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 6th. A pair had a nest with chicks at Spartylea from 1st. Two were also reported from Longhorsley on 5th, Marden Quarry on 14th and Swallow Pond on 24th, while a single was noted at Haymarket (Newcastle) on 3rd. On Holy Island, two were noted from 1st, 5th and 8th and singles on 14th and 22nd.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Large numbers arrived at Holy Island during the first week, with peak counts of 217 on 1st, 40 on 4th, 101 on 5th and 45 on 8th (RA/MJC/ADM) and a further 33-34 from 12th-14th. Elsewhere, at Newbiggin, 15 were noted at the Ash Lagoon on 4th and five + at Spital on 5th, nine were at Elwick on 5th and six at Bamburgh and five at Brierdene on 8th. Four were at Spartylea all month at Marden Quarry on 14th.

Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica cyaneola*

An immature male was at Newbiggin on 1st (TB).

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

The first of the year were on 19th when a pair visited a nest box at Letah Wood (Hexham) and a singing male was at a sensitive site in the south of the county. Numbers at these localities rose respectively to three singing males on 24th and two males and a female on 27th. Two pairs were at Low Carrith (Hesleyside) on 27th (JR). There were two territories at Morralee Woods (Allen Banks) on 22nd, both of which involved natural nesting sites, with nest-building at one (STH) and three singing males were at Allen Banks on 29th (MJC). Three singing males were at Dipton Woods on 29th and one sang briefly at Wallington on 26th.

**Black Redstart** *Phoenicurus ochruros*

A significant and extended 'fall' occurred during the first two weeks of the month, beginning on 1st when 14 were on Holy Island (RA *et al.*), four close together in a Newbiggin garden (BS) and one at Craster. Two were at Holy Island and one at Tynemouth on 2nd; on 5th, four were on Holy Island and singles at Berwick (to 6th) and East Chevington. Singles followed at Amble Braid on 7th and Holy Island on 8th, numbers at the latter locality rising to five by 14th. One to two were at Boulmer on 11th-13th, another was at Lynemouth on 13th and finally a single at Holy Island on 15th.

A Black Redstart
Holy Island
Mike Carr
14th April

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Early arrivals were both males, at Airy Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield) and Plessey Checks on 9th. Counts of three singing males came from Cartington on 27th, Dipton Wood on 29th and Letah Wood (Hexham) on 24th (CW/MJC/AJH). Further singing males on breeding territories were two at Derwent Gorge on 27th and singles at Allen Banks, Holystone North Wood, Howick Hall, Humshaugh, Netherwitton, Wallington, Whittingham, Widehope and Witton Hillhead (Rothbury).

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

All reports were of single males in breeding territory on 27th, at Barrow Scroggs (Upper Coquetdale), College Valley, Halton-Lea-Gate and Hawsen Burn.

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

Reports were much reduced after the spell of hard weather in March. On Holy Island two were noted on 1st and two pairs were back on breeding territories by 23rd (RA/IK). Two singing males were at Cresswell Pond on 13th, with a female there on 6th. A pair was at nearby Druridge Pools on 19th and singles were reported from Blyth (Gloucester Lodge) and Elwick on 5th, Hauxley on 26th and St Mary's wetland on 3rd.

Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Peak counts from Holy Island were 31 on 22nd, 33 on 27th and 18 on 28th (MJC/ADM/SR) with one to eight on a further seven dates. Ten at Cresswell Pond on 24th increased to 25 by 25th, with up to seven here on several other dates. Elsewhere on the coast, seven were at Boulmer on 13th, six at St Mary's Wetland on 21st, four at East Chevington on 20th, Newbiggin (Beacon Point) on 9th and Newton Point on 27th and three at Newbiggin (Quarry Cottage) on 1st and Tynemouth on 14th. In breeding areas four to five were at Usway Burn (Upper Coquetdale) on 14th-21st. One to two were reported from a further 20 localities.

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

Four were observed at Lambley on 29th (MJC). Pairs seen at seven river sites during the month and single birds were at eight other river sites. Among these, young were being fed in the nest at Wooler and Plessey Woods.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

A maximum of 26 were at Spartylea with birds present all month (CT). Two to six were in gardens at Cullercoats, Tynemouth and Morpeth during the month.

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

35 were noted at Chugdon Wood on 13th (TB). 20 were at Haughton Strother on 30th (MR). Up to 12 all month in a Morpeth garden, including a pair nest building (TD). 11 were at Holywell Pond on 10th and ten at Cresswell on 12th (ASJ). Eight were seen at Carterway Heads on 19th (IFo). Six at Branxton on 20th (SW). One to eight were found at nine further sites.



A Tree Sparrow in Janet Dean's Rothbury garden
1st April

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

On 1st a count of 21 was made across Holy Island (RA *et al.*). Eight were at Brier Dene on 8th, with six there on 21st (IJ). Eight were singing in Holywell Dene on 9th (ASJ). One to five were at five other sites.



A Dunnock on April 5th at Craster by Steve Barrett

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

Five were noted at Hoppen Kiln Flash on 28th (CGK/GPK). Four were counted at Druridge Pools on 18th and at Haughton Strother on 20th (CH/MR). One to two were seen at a further nine locations during the month.

A Blue Headed / Yellow Wagtail known as "Channel Wagtail" was observed at Druridge Pools on 18th and 19th and at nearby Hemscott Hill on 25th and 29th (STH/CH/TB).



A "Channel Wagtail" at Bell's Farm by Jonathan Farooqi on 28th April

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Two pairs noted at Staward Gorge on 22nd (STH). One to two were at 18 further sites as far apart as Newcastle Grey Street and Upper Coquetdale.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

12 to 20 were present on Holy Island on four dates between 1st and 20th (RA *et al.*). 11 at Howick on 6th (JAR). Nine were seen at Haughton Strother on 6th (MR). Six plus flew N. on 3rd at Old Hartley (MSH/ASJ). One to six were at ten further sites during the month. Numbers appeared to be well down in upland breeding areas at Coquetdale and Breamish Valley near the month's end (ASJ).



Above a Grey Wagtail at Roughter Linn by Chris Barlow on 21st April and left a Pied | Wagtail at Rothbury on 26th April By Janet Dean

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba alba*

Good numbers observed on Holy Island with 25 feeding along a tide line on 22nd and 18 noted on 16th (STH/MJC/ADM). Inland, 17 at Haughton Strother on 20th. Three here on 6th and four on 13th (MR). Five to nine were seen at Cresswell Pond between 9th and 25th. One to two were present at a further nine sites during the month.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

200 plus flew N. at Old Hartley on the morning of the 3rd. 90 also passed Seaton Sluice that day (MSH/SSWT). 120 were counted at Holy Island on 5th with 112 on 8th, 96 on 14th (MJC/ADM). 31 were feeding at Prestwick Carr on 5th (MH). 14 were at Haughton Strother on 3rd and 6th (MR). 14 flew N. at Newbiggin on 9th. One to nine were at ten other sites, including two in display flights at Newcastle Town Moor on 12th (DM). Numbers in upland breeding areas at Allendale, Coquetdale and Breamish Valley were thought to be well down on recent years, after the very cold spells during March, by the end of the month (ASJ).

A meadow Pipit

St. Mary's

Alan Jack

9th April

**Tree Pipit** *Anthus trivialis*

The first reports were of two displaying at Low Alwinton on 19th (MKi). A single in Harthope Valley the following day (AA). Three were at Dipton Wood on 21st increasing to six by 29th (AJH/MJC). Two birds were at Barrowburn on 27th (AB/LB). Singles at Widehope and Beanley on 23rd.

Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta*

Two were at Druridge Pools on 1st with birds present there on 5th and 16th (MSH/TF/JF). One was inland at Haughton Strother on 3rd. It had been present since the previous week (MR).

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

A large total of 52 was counted across Holy Island on 1st including two *Littoralis* birds. 26 counted along N. and E. shores on 8th (RA/MJC/ADM). 16 counted between Howick and Longhoughton Steel on 9th and 13 at Newbiggin on 3rd(MJC). Eight at Boulmer on 1st and seven on 13th. One to two at seven further sites. Further *Littoralis* birds found at St. Mary's Island (2) and Newbiggin during the month (AC/MJC).

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

16 on 1st were on Holy Island, with 29 on 5th and 13 on 8th (MJC *et al.*). A total of 18 singing males was a good count at Blyth G.C. on 17th (SJL). Up to 12 were at Spartylea during the month (CT). One to 11 also seen at a further eight sites during April.



Two finches from Holy Island by Mike Carr

5th April



Top: a Chaffinch and below: a Brambling

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

Four males and a female were at Rothbury on 2nd (TRD). Two on Holy Island on 11th (TF/JF). A single also there on 1st and 5th. Further singles this month were noted at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin), Corbridge, Humshaugh, Tweedmouth, Whittingham, Spartylea and a female at garden feeders in Tynemouth throughout the month.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Six were at Hulne Park on 1st (CSa). Singles were found on Holy Island on Straight Lonnen on 6th and in the village on 8th (SR/MJC/ADM). One was also at Edlingham on 14th (Pha/AHa).



A Hawfinch on Holy Island

Mike Carr

8th April

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

12 were at Rothbury on 2nd (TRD/JD). Three pairs were in Holywell Dene on 10th and at Longhorsley Common on 9th and 28th, carrying nest material (AB/LB/ASJ). Six were at Scotswood on 14th (SW). Seen commonly elsewhere, with one to four at 24 further sites this month. A large female of the northern race was found at Straight Lonnen (Holy Island) on 9th and seen again on 12th. This represents the first spring island record in 23 years (IK/ADM).

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

In five days of cycle rides around Cramlington from 12th, a total of 42 singing birds were recorded (SJL). 25 were at Swallow Pond on 10th (GPK). Ten were recorded on two dates in Brier Dene (IJ). One to eight were seen at a further 11 locations.

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*

A minimum of 78 were present at Hemscott Hill (Cresswell) on 13th, with 45 there on 4th (MJC). 15 were reported from here on 3rd (STH). Nine were along the old coal road at East Chevington on 20th (STH/IFo).

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

Large flocks of 120 were still at Ellington and Garleigh Moor on 25th and 20th respectively (TB/TRD/JD). 100 were at Snods Edge on 29th (IFo), 66 at Elwick and 60 at Howick on 5th (MJC/JAR). 40 were at Weetslade on 20th and at Holywell on 24th (IJ/ASJ). 30 noted at Holy Island on 30th (ADM/MJC). Elsewhere, one to 20 were at three further sites.

Common Redpoll *Carduelis flammea*

Four plus were seen at Leaplish (Kielder) on 8th (PS/CGK/GPK). A single was on Holy Island on 1st (RA *et al.*).

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis caberet*

A flock of 26 flew S at Humshaugh on 20th (SW). 20 seen at Rothbury on 2nd (TRD/JD). 12 were at Beggar's Rigg on 14th (MKi). Up to six seen during the month at Spartylea (CT). Noted as being common during the month's final week at Simonside, Wingates and near Longhorsley, with many singing males evident (ASJ). One to five were seen at a further seven sites during the month and a male at garden feeders in Morpeth on 2nd (TD).

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

A flock of 40 was seen at Beanley Plantation on 23rd (TRD/JD). Five were at Haughton Strother on 20th (MR). Two at Thrunton Woods on 7th. A single was at Hotbank on 4th (TWi).

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Eight to 15 were observed all month at Spartylea (CT). 12 were at Brier Dene on 8th and ten were seen on 15th (IJ). Eight were found on Holy Island on 1st (RA *et al.*). One to four were at four other sites.

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

Birds present at Humshaugh in the first two weeks of the month, were counted variously at 50 to 250 (TWi). 18 were noted at Rothbury on 2nd (TRD/JD). Up to eight at Spartylea during the month (CT). One to five at six further sites, including a pair at garden feeders in Morpeth until 17th (TD).

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

12 were in a Corbridge garden on 3rd (MR). Nine were at West Ord on 13th (MHu). Eight were singing in 8km between Linden Hall and Croftside on 21st and seven singing between Lough House and Todburn on 26th (IFO/ASJ). Six singing near Holywell Pond on 28th and five singing at Backworth that day. Five also singing in the Breamish Valley on 29th (ASJ). Six were at Prestwick Carr on 14th and Weetslade on 20th (IJ/PCF). One to five were seen at a further ten sites during the month.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Across Holy Island on 8th 21 were singing (MJC/ADM). 15 noted here on 1st and 18 on 14th (MJC/RA). On 11th, nine were seen feeding along a tideline on the island (STH). Ten seen at Prestwick Carr on 19th (PCF). Eight were at Elwick and Holy Island on 5th (MJC). In Upper Coquetdale breeding areas, seven had arrived back by 21st (JR/NA). Five were singing at St. Mary's on 7th and 10th and at Arcot on 28th (MSH/ASJ/DM). One to four were noted at another ten sites.



A male Reed Bunting on Holy Island

1st April by Mike Carr

Lapland Bunting *Emberiza lapponicus*

The sole record this month was of one flying N. at Old Hartley on 3rd, calling (MSH).

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Single birds were seen on 2nd at Holy Island and flying N. at Snook on 5th and 8th, and at Bamburgh Castle on 12th (BS/MJC).

ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN**Escapes****Turtle Dove** *Streptopelia turtur*

One at Longhoughton on 30th was presumed to be an escape as ringed with a red metal inscribed ring.

Hybrids

No sightings

Birds of Unknown Origin

No sightings

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

R.Ahmed, A.Allen, N.Anderson, S.R.Barrett, D.G.Bell, D.H.W.Blair, T.Blake, C.Bradshaw, A. & L.Brun, M.J.Carr, P.Charleton, M.N.Coates, E.Crabtree, A.Curry, T.Daley, I.B. & K.Davison (IBDa / KDa), T.R. & J.Dean, I.R.Douglas, T. & J.Farooqi (TF / JFa), I.Fisher, P.C.Fletcher, D.F.Forshaw, I.Forsyth (IFo), H.Galley, P.Gilbert, A.Hall, C.D.Hampton, P.H. & A.Hanmer (PHa / AHa), C.Hartley, M.Henry, A.J.Hewitt, M.S.Hodgson, S.T.Holliday, M.Hutcheson (MHu), A.Janes, I.Johnson, I.Kerr, M.Kirby (MKi), C.G.Knox, G.P.Knox, S.J.Laing, J.D.Lough, D.Lovatt (DLo), J.P.Lumby, A.J. & S.V.McCormick, L.J.McDougall, A.D.Mclevy, A.D.Mould, D.McKeown, N.F.Osborne, A.Priest, A.J.Richards, J.Richardson, M.Richardson, S.Rippon, J.A.Roper, C.Saunders, M.R.Smith, B.Steel, R.Stevens, P.Stewart, A.L.Todd, C.Tudge, S.Westerberg, T.Wiffen (TWi), C.Wright.

Alnwick Wildlife Group (R Poyer), Bamburgh Ringing Station, Hauxley Ringing Station, North Northumberland Bird Club, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

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

This bulletin was compiled by Graeme Bowman (Geese to Mergansers), Steve Laing (Red Grouse to Cormorant), Trevor Blake (Hawks to Falcons), Tom Brewis (Oystercatcher to Godwit), Clive Hampton (Turnstone to Redshank), Eddie Crabtree (Kittiwake to Puffin), Tim Dean (Escapes, Hybrids and Unknown Origin, List of Contributors, Highlights), Peter Fletcher (Doves to Larks), Mike Richardson (Tits to Stonechat), Alan Jack (Dipper to Buntings).

Data Manager is Tom Brewis.

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 records for the month to ntbc.records@googlemail.com

Please email for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and grid references: Please use of standard location names and 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

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 online resource for anyone interested in birds. There are:

Photo Galleries – Here you can view hundreds of photos of birds from Northumberland, Newcastle and North Tyneside. Members are encouraged to contribute their own photos. Simply send them to galleries@ntbc.org.uk

Sightings – Here you can view reports of birds recently reported in the County. Anyone who would like to contribute and post sightings to this page, please email sightings@ntbc.org.uk Please note this section is moderated, so there may be a short delay before your record appears.

There are also County Checklists, Records Committee updates, Information on important Surveys, useful articles and reports on Bird ID and Overseas Birding Trips....and much more...

Please submit any other new content for the website to the main club email address at ntbcorg@gmail.com

New content such as Birding Trip Reports etc., is always welcome and very much appreciated.

To find out more please visit www.ntbc.org.uk

DATA MANAGER

Tom Brewis wishes to step down as Data Manager for NTBC due to personal commitments. He has performed the role admirably and NTBC are very grateful for his commitment to the role and especially his personal interaction with members. He is happy to stay in place until a replacement can be found. The role would be ideally suited to a retiree wishing to take on a challenge! Dick Myatt left excellent written instructions to take the online submissions from members & convert into a master spreadsheet for the bulletin authors. Hence all that is required is a knowledge of spreadsheets & a desire to help the club in an interesting role.

Please could anyone interested in taking over contact Tim Dean via email to t.r.dean@btinternet.com

Thanks

The Tim Cleeves Memorial BIRD RACE MAY 2018

The account of 'NO SLEEP til Beadnell' squad

At some point at Tim's wake I remembered that, being both inclined to idleness, he and I had discussed doing a sponsored all-day sea-watch together. With the phrase 'Be More Tim' in my mind and the beer talking, I suggested to some of the birders at the wake that we should do a May bird race to fundraise for Tyneside Mind, in memory of Tim. The looks I received ranged from drunkenly enthusiastic to sceptical. Nevertheless I managed to get a team of top birders together: Duncan Watson (driving), Iain Johnson (supplies), Kevin Bayes (voice of reason). And I have been accused of being a bit of a clipboard-waver at times. What could possibly go wrong? Other than being thrashed by the other team being assembled of course. This seemed very likely: none of us four get out of coastal North Tyneside very often and being 'Not From Round Here' we had no idea where some of the scarcer breeding birds were. However, after a few recces and some cunning 'accidental' conversations with The Enemy, we had a plan. On a spreadsheet! At this point the propaganda war started, with talk of multiple strategy meetings, scouts, drones, drones-that-destroy-other-drones....it was getting a bit competitive.

We set off from North Tyneside well before midnight on 12th May and were at our first stakeout at East Chevington just in time to hear... not very much. It was cold and given the slow spring we were having, a low score already seemed likely. This feeling intensified after an hour waving a torch around at our Little Owl site, which resulted in the hurried exit of two cars from a nearby secluded track (sorry), and then the approach of a police car with blue lights flashing, though this turned out to be paranoia on our part. Two of us then managed to miss a Barn Owl that flew in front of the car, though we managed to see it in the torch light once we leapt out and seconds later Little Owl was finally in the bag too. The Rockcliffe Rovers were already tweeting about a clearly stuffed Long-eared Owl they'd stuck on a post and photographed but still, we were in the game.

Things improved as it got light, with an extraordinary dawn in Allendale looking out over the moors and down the valley at an awesome weather inversion. For us townies the dawn chorus was deafening, with breeding waders calling all around and then lekking black grouse bubbling away, though the grouse were hard to hear over a 50-strong herd of sheep that ran over to us for a lengthy bleating medley as soon as we left the car. Not helpful! Allen Banks did a decent job with woodland birds, mostly thanks to Duncan's sharp hearing. The road to Plenmeller offered both male and female Black Grouse wandering around in the road – in bird race terms 'old hat' by 0530 though! - and a Short-eared Owl. The fog obligingly lifted at Grindon to allow us to get American Wigeon and a few other waterbirds, the Dotterels at Hallington were spankingly good even though we didn't have time to get the scopes up, and Beacon Hill did us proud with tricky scrubby passerines and Green Woodpecker. Our hundredth bird came up at 1038 with Crossbill, but soon we were fretting about what we hadn't seen. Where on earth were we going to see a Jay now? Or a Sparrowhawk? And where had all the Lesser Whitethroats that were merrily singing during the week gone?



The Sleepless Team ignore a glossy Ibis

Still, Lindisfarne next, the best birding in the county, bring it on...hold on, where's all the mud? Yep, we managed to arrive too late at the Holy Island causeway: the addition of Herring Gull, though welcome, was not really what we were after. However we managed to eke a few ducks and waders out at Fenham and then Budle Bay, where we jammed into a hunting Sparrowhawk that helpfully then flew past a foraging Little Tern! From there, after a lengthy period of indecision and with time rapidly ticking on, we ditched our original plan to head towards the Cheviots and birded down the coast. This went pretty well, scooping up all the seabirds and a few extras like Wood Sandpiper and Little Egret, until we got to the Glaucous Gull-free Amble Braid. We even saw The Enemy at Amble, also dipping the Glaucous Gull and looking as frazzled as we were. The afternoon took a further downturn at East Chevington, where our second attempt at the likes of Cetti's Warbler and Water Rail was equally unsuccessful as the first. Even the Marsh Harriers weren't showing. We'd already been birding for 18 hours, it was getting cold, we were knackered, close to giving up...and then Iain picked up the male Marsh Harrier skimming the reeds. 135 with 6 hours still left. And according to Whatsapp the Glauc was back at Amble. Come on

Drive-by Glauc under the belt, cue a rousing chorus of Mr Cleeves' song ('He's big/He's White/He eats a Load of Sh* %e/Glaucous Gull, Glaucous Gull'), we headed down to Druridge. Birds came thick and fast: Black-tailed Godwit, Shoveler, Garganey, Glossy Ibis (which flew in to say hello a few yards away, see selfie photo), Ruff and Little Stint on the magical Haul Road pools, Red-throated Diver and Manx shearwater offshore, Pochard on the deep pool. 146 with 4 hours and three decent stakeouts nearby. Well I say decent. The clearly-wild Barnacle Goose at QEII showed rather too well (hmmm...), but Linton Lane was nearly silent, the Willow Tits that had shown so well in the week a distant memory. However, Black-necked Grebe and Ruddy Duck at Swallow Pond took us, unbelievably, over the previous record. Was 150 possible?

In a word, no. We couldn't hear Water Rail anywhere, ditto Long-eared Owl, and we were starting to grizzle. Bird racing is literally that, a race: drive quickly, walk quickly, see bird quickly or not at all, walk quickly back to car...you don't stop. Caffeine and food keep you going (one team member managed to put on three pounds in a day)...but only so long. At our last stop, at Holywell Pond, we all ended up propped up on fences and screens with our eyes closed, so we called it a day just before 2230. 149 felt like a decent effort and went way beyond our expectations – but was it enough?

Looking back, the race was really hard work, but it took us to some amazing places, and the total is testament to the great variety of habitats and birds that we are so lucky to have in Northumberland – and that Tim loved so much. If we'd had more daylight, we could have got to The Cheviot and Kielder too. Needless to say Jay, Lesser Whitethroat *et al* have capered merrily around our feet on subsequent birding trips, but there's always next time. At the following day's meet there was talk of a repeat competition in 2019. Madness, surely? Still, the more the merrier...fancy it?

Martin Kerby

The account of the winners - ROCKLIFFE ROVERS

'Rockcliffe Rovers' (a nod to TRC's other interests) gathered chez Curry just before midnight. Alan was keeper of the list, Mike Carr was logistics supremo, Chris Knox was health and safety officer - and my job was to stay awake and drive the car.

First stop was the donkey field at nearby Hartley for a singing Grasshopper Warbler. We drew a blank. It was cold and overcast and nothing was singing – not even a Robin under the street lights. Down the Bee Hive road and, at last, our first tick of the day – a plaintive Lapwing call in the darkness. Further down the road we struck gold – a Long-eared Owl on a roadside post that sat still for 10 minutes. A calling Tawny Owl at Holywell and we were on a roll – but not for long. We tramped various byways of North Tyneside for Little Owl to no avail, only succeeding in spotlighting a roosting Woodpigeon!

Prestwick Carr seemed a better bet. Not really – distant Sedge Warbler and Curlew was all we could hear. And we bumped into a strange group of men at 02.00 – our first sighting of 'the opposition'.

Time to head west. With just six species after four hours in the field, we arrived at Dipton Wood for the dawn chorus. Skylark

was the first songster at 04.15 and then new species started coming thick and fast (and Mr Curry moved from clipboard to notebook... We'll come back to that). Pied Fly and Redstart were in the book before it got fully light, various warblers, the thrushes, Nuthatch, Green Woodpecker, Treecreeper, Jay and Crossbill. Some tough ones already nailed. On nearby clearfell there was Tree Pipit and Yellowhammer.

The moors were beckoning – we cut through Hexham and headed for Allendale. A fabulous roadside Short-eared Owl told us it was going to be an owl day.

At the bridge over the Sipton Burn, Mike allowed us our first coffee at 07.00 as we scanned the surrounding area. Ring Ouzel obliged and two calling Cuckoos flew overhead together. Three male Black Grouse were lekking at Swinhope Shield. Moorland across the valley gave us Wheatear, Golden Plover and the expected upland waders – and another Short-eared Owl. Now we followed the River Allen down to Tynedale and picked up Wood Warbler, Common Sandpiper and Goosander. And Grindon Lough delivered the dependable male American Wigeon consorting with a female Eurasian Wigeon. But no sign of the Red-necked Phalarope that had been around all week.

Eastwards towards Tyneside via Hallington and the lingering Dotterels. Such a shame to tick and run! Yellow Wagtail was here too. Into Newcastle with our sights set on Ring-necked Parakeet. No luck but at least we finally scored Dunnock! And our first Swifts of the day. Crawling through Tyneside traffic we reached Wallsend Swallow Pond. Three handsome Black-necked Grebes and Pochard but no sign of the elusive Ruddy Duck. However, we finally secured Greenfinch, our final finch of the day at lunchtime. No time for lunch though – the long haul up the coast was about to begin. But first there were stops on the Blyth and Wansbeck estuaries with three LRPs at Castle Island and a big dog that wanted Mike's past.

Druridge had a lot to offer but the birds didn't give themselves up without a struggle. The touching distance Glossy Ibis had gone AWOL just as we arrived at the now famous coal road flashes but Little Stint was a bonus. Mike Hodgson and Tom Cadwallender were on hand to offer advice and encouragement. 'Any idea where we can see Stonechat?' 'No, we haven't seen any at the coast for months.' (We then had two within five minutes of this conversation). A quick scan of the sea yielded Red-throated Diver close in. And Mike H then saved the day with the ibis – only visible from the Druridge Pools hide as it hid behind rushes.

Up to Chevington and the Marsh Harriers duly obliged – and our only Little Egret of the day flew over the sluice. But no Cetti's singing – or Gropper.

Hauxley was next – scoping Coquet Island from the nearest point on land. There were all three auks on the sea – and Roseate Terns shimmering over their nestboxes on the island. Alan scoped up roosting Purple Sandpiper and Turnstone too.

The tide was falling but Amble Braid yielded just one more tick – a solitary Bar-tailed Godwit which was gratefully received by the other team too. Them again! Our second and final meeting of the day – they were heading south and we were off up north. And this is when the county WhatsApp group gave us real time information we could respond to. Mark Welfare had seen Little Terns at Alnmouth and Martin Kerby had publicised the Wood Sandpiper at Foxton Bends. We diverted to pick up the terns, Common Scoter and the Wood Sand (thanks Tom!) plus a flypast Greenshank. But only Mike saw the Sparrowhawk so it didn't make it on to the list. (Strict rules – at least three team members have to see/hear a bird).

As we headed towards Seahouses, we realised we were in the 130s. (Red Kite, Peregrine and Raven had been logged earlier at sites beside public footpaths). Could we get near the 148 record set by Steve Holliday, Maurice Hepple, Stef McElwee and Bob Gadjus back in 2006? It was worth a try - we still had plenty of daylight.

Seahouses gave us Rock Pipit and Shag; Stag Rocks yielded Sanderling but nothing else. Surely the exposed mudflats at Budle Bay had something more? The long-staying Barnacle Goose was out of sight but Mike delivered a solitary Brent Goose in its stead – and look at those smart summer plumaged Grey Plovers! Blimey we're on 142 now – where can we get any more new birds?

It's approaching 20.00 so the long haul in and out of the Harthope Valley would be unwise. We headed for the Ingram Valley instead. Spotted Flycatcher had been reported earlier in the day by Alan Jack so maybe we could find it. It was still singing at 20.30 beside the café at Ingram AND there were Whinchats further down the valley. 144 – we still need four to equal the record. Nearby gravel pits yielded Goldeneye - and Hedgeley nature reserve had a single male Ruff in his finery feeding in a field of sheep! 146 – better get back to Druridge across country for the most dependable Barn Owls in the county at Cresswell Farm. By 21.30 it's cold and grey and the Barn Owls have other plans tonight. What about the Little Owls down the road then? No show here either. Oh wait, Alan's got one perched up. 147 – just one away from equalling the record. What now? Chevington for the Cetti's - and we still haven't heard a Gropper all day. Back at the sluice. (Weren't we here earlier? It's all become a blur now). No Cetti's, no Gropper. But there's a squealing Water Rail! 148 – we've made it to the summit.

It's dark now, cold, misty. Nearly 23.00 as we drive out of Chevington – and a Barn Owl flies up on to the fence by the entrance. 149! The Holy Grail.

So can we go home now? No – let's try for Woodcock and that blasted Gropper up on Beacon Hill. We arrive at 23.30 – it's raining seriously now and, at last, we decide to ease up.

Time to go home. We've beaten the record and, amazingly, the other team has also notched up 149 species today! We are all winners.

Postscript

Remember how 20 hours previously the keeper of the list changed his 'listing technology' from clipboard to notebook? Well, four species went un-noted at that crucial juncture giving the Rovers a final score of...153. Rather satisfying for Northumbrian birders: that total eclipses both the Durham (150) and Cleveland (152) day list records.

It's now the new target to beat - and a realistic target at that. The Rovers didn't log Gropper, Lesser Whitethroat, Marsh Tit, Willow Tit, Woodcock – or Sparrowhawk! Between us the two teams saw 161 species on the day with long-staying rarities boosting the total – and WhatsApp contributors supplying up-to-the-minute gen. On another day if you throw in a few lingering winter visitors, a Spoonbill and another couple of waders, then a county day list of 160 is not beyond the realms of possibility. You just need all your ducks in a row – particularly Ruddy Duck.

The 24-hour bird race was great fun but it also had a more serious side. Ann Cleaves and her daughters have a Just Giving page raising funds for Tyneside Mind in memory of Tim. It's not far off £5,000 now - so if you fancy sponsoring the bird race teams, here's the link: <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/ruth-raynor1>

PS from Editor

I will add the race spreadsheet to the electronic bulletin . Sorry you hard copy readers, but it's too long to print out.



Two extra images from April.

Above a female Garganey by Janet Dean from Druridge Pools on 30th April
and below a White wagtail by Mike Carr from Holy Island on 22nd April



Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2018 No 5

MONTHLY SUMMARY MAY 2018

4th July 2018



Supplement



A Turnstone at Druridge Coal Road by Colin Bradshaw on 18th May



Above: the Glossy Ibis from Druridge Coal Road by Jonathan Farooqi on 7th May
and below: the Warren Mill Little Bittern by Chris Barlow on 5th May





Two Alan Jack images.
A Lapwing in Allendale on 14th May and a Meadow Pipit at Plashetts on 28th May





Two Skylarks

Above: at Allendale on 14th May by Alan Jack and
below: at East Chevington on 13th May by Tim Dean





Above: a Marsh Warbler in the Vicar's garden on Holy Island on 27th May by Jonathan Farooqi
and below: a Sedge Warbler at Druridge Pools by Chris Barlow





Above: a Grey Wagtail in Upper Coquet valley on 10th May Janet Dean and
below: a cock Bullfinch at Howdon on 27th May by Colin Bradshaw



Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2018 No 5

MONTHLY SUMMARY MAY 2018

4th July 2018



CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Egyptian Goose	Three seen at Druridge Pools on 4th. Unusual influx from further south.
Garganey	Up to four drakes and a female at Druridge Pools. Drakes at Castle Island and Swallow Pond
American Wigeon	Male back at Grindon Lough from 5th.
Quail	One singing near Budle Bay on 5th.
Glossy Ibis	A first-summer stayed all month at Druridge showing extremely well.
Spoonbill	Singles from mid-month at Newton, Cresswell and Druridge.
Little Bittern	Only fourth record since 19th century. One at Waren Mill on 4th and 5th.
Dotterel	Six on bare field at Hallington from 8th to 13th. Unusual lowland party.
Curlew Sandpiper	Up to three at Cresswell and Druridge from 21st.
Little Stint	Singles at Boulmer and Druridge.
Pectoral Sandpiper	Adult at Druridge from 26th.
Long-billed Dowitcher	Summer-plumaged adult still at Grindon Lough until 6th.
Red-necked Phalarope	The presumed returning female was back at Grindon Lough from 9th.
Wood Sandpiper	Singles at several localities.
Spotted Redshank	The wintering bird at Budle Bay stayed until 1st.
Glaucous Gull	Last month's juvenile at Warkworth weir stayed until 13th.
Iceland Gull	Juvenile flew W at Ross on 6th.
Great Skua	Single N at Newton on 17th.
Arctic Skua	Six individuals seen during month.
Hobby	First summer seen on Holy Island on 30th.
Red-backed Shrike	Small influx late in month.
Blyth's Reed Warbler	One singing at Newton Pool on 26th. First Spring record for county.
Marsh Warbler	Several sightings late in month.
Icterine Warbler	One singing at the Snook on Holy Island on 25th and 26th.
Rose-coloured Starling	Adult at Castle Island and then Ashington from 17th to 19th.
Red-breasted Flycatcher	Female or Immature male at Snook on Holy Island on 26th and 27th.

CONTENTS

Andy Mould makes a Fitbit birding challenge.

Tripod for sale.

A photographic **supplement** (electronic bulletins only).

The popular (and
much photographed)

Glossy Ibis

Druridge Coal Road

Tim Dean

8th May



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 is September 13th.

FIELD TRIPS

Contact Steve Anderson seaswan@btinternet.com

CLASSIFIED LIST

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

11 pale-bellied *hrota* race birds were at Fenham Flats on 20th (MJC). Un-raced birds involved 15 birds at Fenham Flats on 13th (BS) and one at Budle Bay on 12th (CGK *et al.*).

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

On 31st, two flocks totalling 90 birds flew N at Tynemouth (DRW), 50 flew N at Seaton Sluice (SSWT) and five to ten N at Cramlington (STH) and Holy Island (ADM), and 28 flew W in off the sea at Berwick (MHu), while 11 flew N at Cambois on 25th (STH). Peak counts were 71 at Grindon Lough on 24th (PRM), 51 at Castle Island on 25th (PG), 40 at Linton Ponds on 3rd (STH), and 24-26 at Capheaton Lake and Druridge Pools. Five to 11 were also at Branton GP, Catcleugh Reservoir, Coanwood Pond, Greenlee Lough and Warkworth, and two to three at Arcot and Bothal Ponds, Halton-Lea-Gate, Plenmeller Common, Shieldbridge and Spartylea. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Druridge Pools	5+	22	STH/LJM. Brood of 5 on 7th, 4 broods, 22 young on 26th, and 5 broods, 17 young on 29th
Branton GP	4	22	LJM. On 22nd
West Stobswood Pool	3	13	MSH. On 20th
Haughton Strother GP	2	11	MR/SW. Brood of 5 on 13th, and 2 broods, 11 young on 21st
Hedgeley GP	2	8	LJM. On 22nd
Dinnington	1	8	PCF. On 5th
St Mary's Wetland	1	6	MSH. On 15th but later reduced to three young
Warkworth weir	1	6	MSH. On 12th
Grindon Lough	1	5	PRM. On 18th
QEII CP Lake	1	3	LJM. On 27th
Big Waters	1	1	GB. On 17th
Cresswell Pond	1	1	LJM. On 29th
Wansbeck Business Park	1	1	LJM. On 19th

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

One flew N at Tynemouth on 31st (DRW). Three were at Budle Bay on 25th (GPK) and one there on 11th (GPK), and singles at Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough and QEII CP and Widdrington Moor Lakes on various dates all month.

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Four flew N at Seaton Sluice between 4th-15th (SSWT). Peak counts were 146 at Haughton Strother GP on 31st (MR), 60 at Ellington on 27th (TB), 25-42 at Big Waters (GB), Coanwood Pond (PRM), Grindon Lough (PRM), Newbiggin GC (STH), and 12-19 at Branton GP, Druridge Pools and Plenmeller Common. One to eight were also at Bothal, Linton and Middle Ord Ponds, Halton-Lea-Gate, Hedgeley GP, Holy Island, Pithouse Fell (Slaley), Spartylea and Wark. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Derwent Reservoir	10	37	IFo. On 5th. Lower than average for the site.
Haughton Strother GP	5	25	MR/SW. On 31st. First broods (10 and 5 young) noted on 13th
Druridge Pools	2	7	MSH. On 17th
Branton GP	--	26	LJM. On 22nd
Wark	1	7	SW. On 26th
Bothal Pond	1	6	TD. On 11th
Hedgeley GP	1	5	LJM. On 22nd
Craggside	1	3	MJC/EFC. On 17th
East Chevington	1	3	TRD. On 8th
Spartylea	1	2	CT. On 1st

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

20 were at Hauxley Reserve on 4th (MK), two at Branton GP on 5th (DM/ALT/HD), and singles at Capheaton Lake on 5th and Haughton Strother GP between 29th-31st.



A Greylag at Tosson during a BBS by Mike Carr on 15th May

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

16 flew W and then N at Tynemouth on 6th (DRW) and nine flew S at Ellington on 4th (TB). Peak concentrations were 184 at the Tweed Estuary on 17th (MHu), 83 at QEII CP Lake (LJM), 69 at Killingworth Lake on 17th (LJM), 21-28 at Bothal Pond, Budle Bay, New Water Haugh and Warkworth, and six to 12 at the Blyth and Wansbeck Estuaries, Castle Island, Druridge Pools and Grindon Lough. Two were on the sea off Seaton Sluice on 15th (SSWT) and, unusually, a pair was at Derwent Reservoir on 21st (one day only; IFo). One was found dead on the road next to Paddy Freeman's Lake, Jesmond and another there was injured and taken into care by the RSPCA (MJCo). Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Big Waters	2	14 (7,7)	GB. On 30th. One brood came from 'Little Waters'
Woodhorn Flashes	1	8	GB/LAR. On 26th
Alnwick Gardens	1	6	DF. On 25th
Branton GP	1	6	SRB. On 24th
Holywell Pond	1	6	LJM. On 28th

Pairs with nests were also noted at Howick, Linton Ponds, Shield on the Wall, Wansbeck Business Park and Yarrow Slake.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Three adults were at Kielder Water on 7th (PRM), two adults were at Druridge Pools-'coal road pools' between 14th-30th (TB/TF/JFa *et al.*), and singles at Budle Bay between 18th-31st (MSH/CGK/GPK), East Chevington between 3rd-10th (TB/STH *et al.*), Haughton Strother GP on 9th (MR), Low Newton scrape on 4th (STH), Ross on 6th (BS), the Tweed Estuary on 17th (MHu), and Whittle Dene Reservoirs all month (SR/MJC).

Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiacus*

Three were at Druridge Pools on 4th (TD).

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

A monthly total of nine N and 24 S at Seaton Sluice was a May record for the site (SSWT) and two flew S at Newbiggin on 13th (GB). Budle Bay held 80 on 14th (CGK) and 119 on 31st (MSH), 31 were at the Blyth Estuary on 13th (GB), 24-26 at Druridge Pools-'coal road pools' (IRD/LJM), and 11-13 at Castle Island and Charlton Mires. Six were at Ellington and three to four at Brier Dene Farm, the Tweed Estuary and West Stobswood Pool. One to two were also at Bell's and Bothal Ponds, Berwick Little Beach, Big Waters, Branton GP, Cocklawburn and West Ord.

Shelduck breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods/crèches	No. of young	Observer/notes
Druridge Pools	1	12	IRD. On 30th
Blyth Estuary	1	11	STH/PJA. On 29th
Cresswell Pond	1	8	LJM. On 29th
Monks' House Pool	1	6	DF. On 23rd. Later dropped top 5 young

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

A pair was at Wark on 6th (PRM), two drakes were at Haughton Strother GP on 3rd (MR) and two were at Ridley Stokoe on 1st and 7th (TRD/JD/PRM), and single drakes were at Catcleugh Reservoir on 10th (PRM), Chirdonburn Bridge on 5th (MNC) and Ridley Stokoe on 26th (PRM). Single ducks were at Newcastle Leazes Park on 2nd (GB) and Northumberland Park, North Shields on 7th (MNC).

Garganey *Anas querquedula*

Four drakes and a duck were at Druridge Pools on 20th (TF/JFa), and one to three drakes and one duck were noted there and the 'coal road pools' regularly all month. One to two drakes and a duck were at a flash pool at Newbiggin golf course between 2nd-5th (AP). Single drakes were also at Castle Island on 6th (GB) and Swallow Pond on 9th (per CGK).

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Most were at Druridge Pools where numbers peaked at a minimum of 12 (eight drakes) on 4th (TD). Five were at Monks' House Pool (JPL), and one to two at Arcot, Bothal and Linton Ponds, Castle Island and Grindon Lough. More unusual were three N at Acomb on 5th (MR), a pair at the Tweed Estuary on 2nd (MHu) and a drake at Airy Holm Reservoir on 16th (IFo). Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods/crèches	No. of young	Observer/notes
Druridge Pools	1	4	DM/GB/LAR. Four young on 26th but down to 2 young by 28th (still present on 30th)

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Peak counts were 20 at Druridge Pools on 29th (TRD/JD), five to eight at Bell's and Linton Ponds (GB/CDH), Castle Island (DM/PJA), Howdon Wetland (CB), and three to four at Big Waters, Bothal Pond, Caistron, Capheaton Lake and East Chevington. One to two were also at Budle Bay, Swallow Pond, West Sleekburn and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. More unusually, a pair were on a pool at the Snook (Holy Island) on 21st and 28th (GB/ADM/LAR).

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

At Grindon Lough, up to 25 were noted during the month and included a peak of 22 (18 drakes) on 24th (PRM), 12 (including two pairs) were at Plenmeller Common on 5th (MK), ten drakes at Derwent Reservoir on 27th (IFo), and seven at Budle Bay between 11th-31st (CGK/GPK). Four to five were also at Coanwood Pond, Druridge Pools and Widdrington Moor Lake, and one to two at Hauxley Reserve and Monks' House Pool. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Derwent Reservoir	2	14 (9,5)	IFo. Brood of 9 on 27th and new brood of 5 on 31st

In addition, a female with nine eggs was noted at Park Burn (near Coanwood) on 6th (MG).

American Wigeon *Anas americana*

A drake was again at Grindon Lough, being noted frequently between 5th-24th (ALT/DM/PRM *et al.*) and was noted paired with a female Wigeon by several observers.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

61 drakes were at Derwent Reservoir on 30th (IFo), 20-38 birds were at Castle Island, Greenlee Lough (MRS), Ladyburn Lake (LJM) and West Ord (MHu), and ten to 16 at Arcot Pond and the Tweed Estuary. Breeding data were as follows (all new broods unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Derwent Reservoir	12	111 (13,12,12,11,11,10, 9,8,8,7,6,4)	IFo. Various broods between 7th-26th.
Branton GP	4	32	LJM. On 22nd
Castle Island	3	16+	GB. On 26th
Alnwick	3	11	MJC. On River Aln below castle, on 31st.
Newcastle Leazes Park	2	21 (11,10)	GB. Brood of 11 on 9th and new brood of 10 on 21st. Down to 10 and 9 young by 24th
Airy Holm Reservoir	2	20	IFo. Brood of 8 on 16th and brood of 12 on 21st
Haughton Castle	2	15 (8,7)	SW. On 15th.
QEII CP Lake	2	13	LJM. On 27th

Druridge Pools	2	10	LJM/MSH. From 8th
Cupola Bridge	1	14	DM. On 5th
Spartylea	1	13	CT. On 1st
Morpeth	1	12	GB. On 6th
Holy Island	1	11	MJC. On 25th
Killingworth Lake	1	11	LJM. On 17th
Linton Ponds	1	11	GB. On 19th
Big Waters	1	9	GB. On 17th
Capheaton Lake	1	9	GB. On 12th
St Mary's Wetland	1	9	MSH/AC. On 9th
West Ord	1	9	MHu. On 20th
Bothal Pond	1	8	TD. On 26th
Cresswell Pond	1	8	MK. On 26th
East Chevington south pool	1	8	LJM. On 15th
Grindon Lough	1	7	PRM. On 16th
Howick	1	7	JAR. On 14th.
Middle Ord Pond	1	6	MHu. On 20th
Coanwood Pond	1	3	PRM. On 23rd
Hedgeley GP	1	3	LJM. On 22nd

Teal *Anas crecca*

Two flew N at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), 18 were at Grindon Lough on 1st and one to six there between 3rd-24th (PRM *et al.*), three pairs at Druridge on 4th (TD) and one to four there and the 'coal road pools' up to 25th (TRD/JD/PRM). One to two were also at Big Waters, Howdon, Plenmeller Common, Spartylea, Woodhorn Flashes and Warkworth Lane Ponds on scattered dates between 6th-27th.

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

11 (ten drakes) were at Holywell Pond on 15th (TRD), and three at Bothal Pond on 26th (TD), St Mary's Wetland on 14th (MK) and Swallow Pond on 1st (LJM). One to two were at Arcot and Cresswell Ponds, Houghton Strother GP, Killingworth Lake and Woodhorn Flashes.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Peak counts were 23 at Houghton Strother GP on 21st (MR), 20+ at Cresswell Pond on 8th (MSH), and ten to 17 at Arcot and Bothal Ponds, Capheaton Lake, Grindon Lough, West Stobswood Pool and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Six to nine were also at Castle Island, Derwent Reservoir, Howdon, Linton Ponds, Middle Ord Pond, Northumberland Park (North Shields), and Shield on the Wall, and one to three at five further sites.

Scaup *Aythya marila*

A drake N at Hauxley on 5th (SW) was the sole report.

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 41 N and six S (SSWT), and 14 flew N at Newbiggin on 30th (STH). Peak counts were 60 off Newbiggin Beacon Point on 31st (STH), 47 (drakes) at North Blyth on 17th (STH), and 14 at the Tweed Estuary (MHu). Seven to nine were also at the Blyth Estuary and off Seaton Sluice. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods/crèches	No. of young	Observer/notes
Budle Bay	1+	23+	GPK. Brood of 5 young on 20th and then a crèche of 23 young (and four ducks) on 31st (GPK).

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

One flew N with five Common Scoters at St Mary's on 9th (MSH/AC).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 78 N and 52 S, including 50 N on 26th (SSWT). Offshore, 150 were at Stag Rocks on 5th (ALT/HD/DM), 50 were off Hauxley Reserve on 6th (GB), 30 off Seaton Sluice on 9th (SSWT), and three to six at the Long Nanny Estuary, Newbiggin and Warkworth.

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

A duck flew N at Stag Rocks on 9th (DF). A pair were off Hadston on 4th (MK) and off Hauxley Reserve on 6th (GB).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Two were at Bothal Pond on 1st (TF/JFa) and Widdrington Moor Lake on 3rd (STH), and singles at the Breamish Valley, Cresswell Pond, New Water Haugh and the Tweed Estuary on scattered dates between 2nd-22nd. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods/crèches	No. of young	Observer/notes
Confidential site	3	25 (14,7,4)	TRD/JD. From 22nd.

Two drakes (adult and first-summer) were at the above breeding site on 12th (TRD/JD).

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

A total of 12 flew N at Seaton Sluice on 3rd-4th (SSWT) and one flew N at Blyth Harbour on 23rd (STH). A count of 78 at West Ord on 2nd contained 90% drakes (MHu), 16 were at St Cuthbert's Island, Holy Island on 29th (ADM), and 12 were at the Tweed Estuary on 25th (PRM). Three to five were also at Allenbanks, Castle Island, Catcleugh Reservoir, Hexham and Shilmoor, and one to two at Allen Banks, Allerwash, Big Waters, Blackhopeburnhaugh, Corbridge, Cupola Bridge, Dilston Mill, Druridge Bay, Kielder Forest, Kitty Brewster, Meldon, Twizel, Wark and Warkworth.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Five flew N at Seaton Sluice on 4th (SSWT), and on 13th, five flew N at Boulmer (TRD/JD) and Holy Island (ADM), and one N at Newton Point (JEd). Seven were at Budle Bay on 3rd (CGK/GPK) and two drakes there on 21st, four at Hauxley Reserve on 5th (GB), and one to two at Castle Island, Cocklawburn, Holy Island and Widdrington Moor Lake.

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

The highest count was seven at Sipton Burn on 7th (MJC). There were several reports of lekking behaviour, presumably reflecting the late start to spring this year. Four males and one female were present at a lek at Swinhope Shield (Allendale) on 5th (DRW/MK), with three males also there on 12th, and two males were also observed lekking at Middle Hope (Allenheads) (DRW) and Carrshield on 5th (MK). A male and female were at Plenmeller on 5th and 12th (DRW/MK) and one to two birds were at Ropehaugh (East Allendale), Small Burns Moor (Allendale) and Spartylea.

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

A minimum of 14 were on Plenmeller Common and at least ten at Winnows Hill (Slaley) on 18th (PRM) and Blanchland Moor on 5th (DM). Nine were at Hawsen Burn, eight at Pithouse Fell, six at Sipton Burn and four at Shield Bridge (Allendale), all on 5th (DM/ALT/HD). One to three were at Halton-Lea-Gate, Harthope Valley, Stublick Bog and Whitfield.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

Two pairs were at Plenmeller Common on 18th (PRM) and one to three birds were at Allen Banks, Breamish Valley, Harehaugh, Harthope Valley, Haughton Strother GP, Hawsen Burn, Longhorsley Moor, Lough House (Heighley Gate), Ninebanks, Parmontley Hall and, finally, on the A1 at Roseburgh when one almost flew into a moving car through an open driver's side window (ADM)!

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Apart from three at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 12th (MK), most sightings were of two birds or pairs at Bell's Farm (Cresswell), Bewick Moor, Drift Cafe (Cresswell), Druridge Bay, East Chevington, East Fleetham, Ellington, Haughton Strother GP, Hemscott Hill, Lynemouth, West Ord, and Widdrington. Singles were at Capheaton and Nedderton (Bedlington).

Quail *Coturnix coturnix*

One near Budle Bay sang until mid-morning on 6th (CGK/GPK/RA).

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

Between two to eight were at Spartylea all month and six were at Stublick Bog on 6th (CT).

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

The monthly total of 25 (15N, ten S) at Seaton Sluice included a maximum site May day count of 14 (five N, nine S) on 4th (SSWT). Seven, including three in summer plumage, were in Druridge Bay on 5th (SW) and sightings of one to two birds came from Boulmer, Newbiggin, Newton, Rockcliffe, Spittal Bay (Berwick) and St Mary's.

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*

One was on the sea in Druridge Bay on 11th (MK).

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

A monthly total of seven N came from Seaton Sluice, all between 16th-27th and included a record site May day count of four N on 16th, all in summer plumage. Singles were reported from Boulmer, Cheswick Sands, Newbiggin and Stag Rocks.

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

Passage numbers at Annstead (Seahouses) were ten N on 14th, 37N on 16th and 21N on 26th (DF). Similar numbers at St.Mary's with ten N in one hour of the morning of 16th and 19N in an hour on 22nd (MSH). 15N passed Newbiggin in one hour on 30th (STH). 26 nests were occupied at Needles Eye (Berwick) (MHu) and 25 birds were on cliffs at Cullercoats (MNC). 15 were at Cullernose Point, two at Newton and two in the Tweed Estuary.

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

Very low numbers were reported from Seaton Sluice with a monthly total of 35 (29N and six S) in 31 hours (SSWT). 11 flew N at Annstead on 16th, followed by six on 26th (DF). One to four were sighted from several other locations.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

The highest count was five at Holywell Pond on 20th (MSH). Two pairs were at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) and Low Newton, four birds were at Hedgeley GP and Linton Ponds whilst two or pairs were at Big Waters NWT, Howick and Shield on the Wall. A further pair, with nesting material, was at Buston Links (Alnmouth) and singles were at Arcot Pond, Bamburgh, Castron, East Chevington, Gosforth Park, Grindon Lough, Holy Island Lough and Laverock Hall Farm Pond (Blyth).

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Widdrington Moor Lake held three pairs, including two nests, in a total of seven birds by 19th (MK) and Haughton Strother GP supported a breeding pair with a brood of two and two further birds by the end of the month (MR). Three pairs were at Derwent Reservoir all month (IFo), Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) peaked at two pairs (TF/JFa/GB/TD) as did Big Waters NWT. Three were at East Chevington North Pool. Pairs were also at Airy Holm Reservoir, Arcot Pond, Druridge Pools, Killingworth Lake, Ladyburn Lake and Swallow Pond. One was on the sea at Beacon Point (Newbiggin).

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigrocollis*

The regular breeding site in SE Northumberland held three birds throughout the month (CGK/GPK/TRD). A single in summer plumage was at Widdrington Moor Lake on 2nd (TF/JFa/TRD/JD). One, still in largely winter plumage, was at Druridge Pools on 1st (DF) and, likely the same bird, remained in the area being sighted at East Chevington North Pool on 3rd (STH), Druridge Pools on 4th (TB/TD), and East Chevington again on 4th (MK), 5th (DM) and 6th (GB). A further report of a single bird in summer plumage came from Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) on 27th (TB).



A rare breeder, a Black-necked Grebe
Photographed in Northumberland by Chris KNOX

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*

The first-winter bird for last month remained in the Druridge Pools area throughout and was well appreciated by many observers.

Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

Two were in Budle Bay on 19th (*per* CGK) and one at Low Newton scrape on 13th constituted possibly only the third record for that area with previous records in 2009 and 2012 (TRD/JD). One arrived at Cresswell Pond on 24th and alternated between there and Druridge Pools until the end of the month (SRB/TB/TF/JFa *et al.*).

Little Bittern *Ixobrychus minutus*

Only the third county record this century was initially reported on 4th May by holiday makers in Waren Mill campsite (Budle Bay) who thought it may be a Squacco Heron. Subsequently located on morning of 5th at Warren Burn (CGK/GPK) where it was confirmed as a female and well-watched, photographed and appreciated by many until dusk. A world lifer for some, a UK lifer for many and, with fortunate timing, an opportunity for one bird race team to connect with "the coolest bird in the county - and our first major rarity in 28 years of spring bird racing" (DM).



Two images of rare waders at Druridge.
Top: the Little Bittern at Warren Mill by Jonathan Farooqi on 5th May
and bottom: the Druridge Glossy Ibis by Chris Barlow on 6th May

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

The Tweed Estuary peaked at nine on 25th (PRM) and six were at West Ord (Berwick) on 2nd. Up to three large chicks were visible in nests at Warkworth mid-month (MSH/IK/ASH) and one to four birds were at Allen Banks, Arcot Pond, Branton GP, Carshope, Castle Island, Catcleugh Reservoir, Derwent Reservoir, Dilston Mill, Druridge Pools, Hauxley, Holy Island, Holywell Dene, Linton Ponds, Plenmeller Common, Rockcliffe, Southfield Green (Cramlington), Valley Park (Cramlington), Wark and Whitfield.



A Grey Heron takes to the air at Amble weir
Chris Barlow on 5th May

Great White Egret *Ardea alba*

One was flying S over the coal road at Druridge on 15th (ADMc).

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Apart from two at Beal Point (Lindisfarne NNR) on 2nd (ADM), only lone birds were observed at the AIn estuary, Druridge Pools, Fenham-le-Moor, Foxton Bends, Haughton Strother GP, North Seaton and Warkworth.

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

Passage was insignificant until mid-month when numbers increased dramatically on 16th with Annstead (Seahouses) reporting around 1,450 per hour heading N (DF) and only slightly lower numbers from Seaton Sluice (SSWT) and Berwick Pier (MHu) on that date. Steady but noticeably reduced passage continued thereafter with reports of varying numbers coming from several other coastal viewpoints.

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Only seven were recorded between 3rd-4th at Seaton Sluice (SSWT), five were on an offshore island at Low Newton on 13th (TRD/JD) and four roosted at Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 13th. Needles Eye (Berwick) held three nests on 24th. One in Blyth Harbour on 23rd was colour-ringed Green IXB and had been ringed as a chick on the Isle of May on 11/06/17. This was the first reported sighting of the adult bird (STH). One was at Cullernose Point (Craster).

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Only small numbers were recorded at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). The largest counts were 25 in a low-tide roost at New Water Haugh (R Tweed) on 2nd (MHu), 15 at East Chevington on 24th, 14 in Blyth Harbour and ten at Derwent Reservoir. One to nine were at Arcot Pond, Castle Island, Killingworth Lake, Linton Ponds, Meadow Haven (Berwick), and the Tweed Estuary.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetuss*

Two birds flew by Mounces viewpoint (Kielder) at close range on 1st (TRD/JD) and two birds, including a female sat on the nest, and a male fishing over the reservoir were at Leaplish (Kielder) on 7th (PRM). A bird flew N at East Chevington on 2nd (SR), single birds were noted at Derwent Reservoir on several dates from 3rd (IFo). A bird flew in off the sea at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 9th before flying off S (AP) and on 10th a bird was seen circling over the Power Station at Lynemouth before flying off inland along the River Lyne (AP). It was picked up 10 minutes later flying NW over Widdrington Moor Lake (TB). At Morpeth on 12th a bird was soaring over the observer's garden before drifting off SE. Other single birds were seen at Haughton Strother GPs (Humshaugh) on 14th (MR), Budle Bay on 20th (GPK) and one flew East at Winnows Hill (Slaley) on 24th (AJ/AJN/ASH/TW).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Only single birds were noted this month from over 16 sites including a female on several occasions and a male on 20th at Southfield Green (Cramlington) (DE).

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

A bird soaring overhead at Warenton on 12th (NNBC) was the only record of this secretive species.

Harrier sp

A bulky-looking harrier, possibly a Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*, flew N in the distance at The Snook (Holy Island) on 6th (ADM).

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

A female/juvenile was noted at Ramshaw Fell on 7th (MG); also on the 7th a female was at Swallow Pond (Wallsend) (GPK) and a male was seen at Druridge Pools (TB). A female type was noted at Warkworth dunes on 8th (CSa) and a male was at East Chevington on the same day (EC/JSB/ASH/IK).

Red Kite *Milvus Milvus*

All records came from the south of the County with single birds at Derwent Gorge on 1st and 11th (EC/JSB), Carterway Heads on 1st (IFo), Derwent Reservoir on 3rd, 16th and 27th (IFo), Spartylea on 6th (CT) and one S over Coanwood Pond on 23rd (PRM).

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

On 19th seven birds were between Beacon Hill and Blackpool Farm (Longhorsley) (ASJ) and five were seen at Prestwick Carr on 12th (PCF). One to two birds were seen at over 20 sites.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Birds were heard squealing at Gosforth Park NR and East Chevington on 5th (DM/HD/ALT) and at Big Waters NWT on 13th (GB). A bird was flushed from the edge of the pond at Arcot Pond on 17th (AA).

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Birds were seen at Benton, Castle Island, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Howick, Jesmond Dene (Newcastle), Leazes Park (Newcastle), Spartylea and West Sleekburn with broods noted at Benton, Druridge Pools, Howick, Leazes Park (Newcastle).

Coot *Fulica atra*

19 birds and three nests were at Grindon Lough on 23rd (MRS/PRM), 14 birds including 5 young were at Bothal Pond on 26th (TD). At Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 21st an adult was seen with a single brood of one small young and other adults were seen with broods of five and four young (GB). On 23rd at Haughton Strother GP's (Humshaugh) there were eight adults and broods of seven, four and three young (MR). 15 young were also noted at Killingworth Lake on 17th (LJM). One-two birds were at six sites including a scarce bird at Derwent Reservoir on 22nd (IFo).

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Evidence of breeding came from a range of sites with two birds alarming at Craster on 5th (AWG), a probable nester feigning a wing injury at Widdrington also on 5th (GB), a pair at Wark (North Tyne) on 10th (PRM), another pair at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) on 11th (TD), two pairs at Humshaugh, Haughton Strothers GP on 17th (MR), six pairs at Plenmeller Common on 18th (PRM), on the same day two pairs near the Cupola Bridge over the R Allen (PRM), a large juvenile at Branton Pools on 22nd (LJM) and, both on 23rd, a pair at Halton-Lea-Gate and Coanwood Pond (PRM). The largest counts were 55 at Berwick, Spittal Cliffs (MHu), 26 at Cresswell Pond on 6th (DM), 24 at North Blyth staithes on 25th (STH) and 6-18 were seen at Spartylea throughout the month (CT). Other records came from Berwick (West Ord), Boulmer Haven, Castle Island, Corbridge, Cramlington, Grindon Lough, Killingworth Lake, Linton Ponds, Mootlaw Quarry (Ryal), Stag Rocks (Bamburgh), Tweed estuary and Widdrington.

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

With two exceptions, all records came from Cresswell Pond and Druridge Pools with all reports of breeding coming from the former. The first evidence of breeding was recorded on 8th when a bird was noted on eggs (MSH). This was followed by a report of "several nests" on 14th (IRD), three nests were reported on 17th (CH) and an increase to five birds on nests by 24th (TF/JFa). The largest count was of 14 at Cresswell Pond on 17th (CH). The only other sites with records were at Humshaugh, Haughton Strothers GP on 3rd (MR) where two birds were seen and at Woodhorn on 6th where four birds were seen on 6th (AP), while, just beyond our recording area, two birds were seen on the south side of the R Tyne, opposite Elswick, on 14th (GB).

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

The stand-out record was of 105 pairs with many chicks evident at Allendale Acton Moor on 11th (ASJ). Fourteen pairs were reported from Hepple on 8th, many with young (ASJ), four young were seen just south of Big Waters Reserve on 13th (GB), nine fledged birds were at Boulmer on 13th (BS), over 20 pairs were counted at Plenmeller Common on 8th (PRM), chicks were seen at The Snook on Holy Island on 20th (MJC) and another 20+ pairs were recorded at Halton-Lea-Gate on 23rd. At Lynemouth Flash a total of four young were seen attended by three pairs on 17th (MSH). Two broods with a total of three young were seen at Druridge, Coal Road Flashes on 29th (LJM). Further records involving evidence of possible

breeding were a pair at Grindon Lough on 3rd (PRM), six birds at West Chevington on 4th when their "behaviour suggested nesting but present in the field were four corvids" (AWG), a pair near Fontburn on 5th (TD), six pairs at Blanchland Moor on 5th (DM), four pairs at Pithouse Fell on 5th (DM), two pairs at Shield Bridge, West Allendale on 5th (DM) and a pair at Sipton Burn, East Allendale (DM). Ten birds were seen displaying at Longhorsley, nr Muckley on 6th (AB/LB), five or more pairs were at Slaley, Winnows Hill on 18th (PRM), also on 18th two pairs at Grindon Lough (PRM) were recorded and a pair was seen driving off an intruder at Howdon (CB) on 18th. Other reports came from Alnham (Coppath Burn), Barney Craig (West Allendale), Newcastle (Longbenton) and Stublick Bog.

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

There were only four records. These were a displaying bird at Blanchland Moor on 5th (DM), a late passage bird in breeding plumage on 7th at Seahouses, Annstead (DF), a bird flying over The Snook (Holy Island) on 13th (ADM) and on 18th a pair were reported from Plenmeller Common (PRM).

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Birds were still on spring passage with the largest count of 95 coming from Fenham-le-Moor on 20th (MJC). A count of 55 was made at Budle Bay on 14th (CGK) and one of 45 near St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) on 21st (ASH/AN). Smaller counts came from Druridge Pools and St Mary's.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Over 200 birds were counted at Budle Bay on 14th (CGK/GPK), 187 were in the Blyth Estuary on 17th (STH) and 180 flew over the Excavations on Holy Is. on 27th (TRD/JD). Approximately 150 were seen at Druridge on 22nd (TRD/JD) and on 10th there were 99 birds at Boulmer (BS). A further count of 48 late "Icelandic" migrants were noted at Berwick Little Beach on 27th (MHu), 26 were at the Amble Braid on 12th (MSH) and 26 in the Tweed Estuary on 27th (MHu). Smaller counts came from Cocklawburn (Berwick), Derwent Reservoir, East Chevington, Grindon Lough, Haughton Strothers (Humshaugh), Hedgeley GP, Low Newton, Seahouses (Annstead) and St Mary's.



A Ringed Plover at Druridge
by Colin Bradshaw 15th May

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

A pair were seen throughout May at a site in the south of the county and another site north of Hexham reported a count of five with three chicks by the month's end. Reports came from a further ten sites distributed over a wide area.

Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus*

Hallington Reservoir played host to six birds in the early half of the month (RA, PRM, TRD/JD, ASJ, AA).

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

A significant passage was evident in the first few days of the month with 33-45 birds seen both in flight and in fields at East Chevington North Pool on 4th (MK, DM). On the previous day a count of 20 was made at Widdrington Moor Lake (AJ/ASH) and a total of 14 were recorded flying north from Seaton Sluice Watch Tower between 1st and 16th (SSWT). Counts of seven or less came from Blyth, Boulmer, Branton GP, Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, East Chevington (South Pool), Hauxley NWT, Holy Island, Howick, Low Newton, Newbiggin (Quarry Cottage), Newton (Long Nanny), St Mary's and Warkworth Old Water.

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Records involving breeding evidence came from Nunnykirk, Wingates on 1st (AB/LB), where a pair were displaying, from near Whitfield where a pair were seen on 3rd (PRM), from near Longhorsely on 6th when another pair were seen displaying (AB/LB), from Acton Fell on 11th where 26 birds displaying were seen (ASJ), from Plenmeller Common on 18th when 12 pairs were seen (PRM) and, on the same day, at Slaley, Winnows Hill, where ten pairs were noted (PRM). Other records with breeding evidence reported were seven pairs at Halton-Lea-Gate on 23rd (PRM), four pairs at Coanwood Pond on 23rd (PRM), two pairs at Grindon Lough on 18th (PRM), two pairs singing and displaying at Alnham, High Knowes on 28th (AB/LB) and a pair at Great Whittingham on 5th (DM).. Further records came from Blanchland Moor; Druridge Pools; Elsdon; R Blyth (Kitty Brewster), Shotleyfield (Airy Holm Reservoir), Slaley (Pithouse Fell), Spartylea, Stublick Bog, Tweed Estuary, Upper Coquetdale (Clennell), West Allendale (Barney Craig) and West Allendale (Shield Bridge).

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Sixty birds were counted on the mud flats near St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) on 26th (MJC) with a peak count of 11 at Budle Bay on 3rd (GPK). Other records came from R Blyth (Kitty Brewster), Cresswell Pond and Newbiggin (Beacon Point).

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

The highest count came from Boulmer on 6th where 19 birds were seen flying S (BS). The majority of other records came from Druridge Pools and the nearby Coal Road flashes with a maximum count of 18 on 2nd (TF/JFa) and on 5th (DM). Eleven birds were reported from Holy Island on 13th (AH), eight were at Humshaugh, Haughton Strothers GP on 25th (MR), eight were at Widdrington Moor lake on 28th (MK) and two were at Budle Bay on 7th, including a 1st-summer *islandica* sp (GPK/CGK). A single in full breeding plumage was seen at Derwent Reservoir on 5th (IFo).

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

The Coal Road Flashes at Druridge were popular with several wader species including Turnstones. Three were seen on 21st, increasing to a high of 15 on 30th all in fine summer plumage (MSH/TB/IRD *et al.*). Beacon Point (Newbiggin) attracted 14 on 3rd (STH) and ten were at Low Newton on 13th (TRD/JD). At Stag Rocks, eight were recorded on 15th (IRD), five were at Cocklawburn on 4th and one at Hauxley NWT on 5th.



One of the summer-plumaged Turnstones at Druridge coal road
Tim Dean on 2nd May

Knot *Calidris canutus*

A rare May record for Seaton Sluice was four S during the month. Two were reported from Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 18th (STH), two were at Budle Bay on 26th (CGK/GPK), two at the Coal Road Flashes (Druridge) on 26th (DM/PJA) and a single at Hauxley NWT on 5th (GB).

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

Birds were present all month in the Druridge Pools/Coal Road Flashes area with five on 1st reducing to two by 28th (DF/TRD/TB *et al.*). Single males were at Boulmer on 3rd (BS) and Hedgeley on 12 (ASJ).

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

As with other waders, birds were attracted to the Coal Road Flashes at Druridge with the first report of two on 20th (TF/JFa), three on 21st-22nd (MSH/GB) and a single on 24th (TB/STH/IFo). Two were also at Cresswell Pond on 20th (TB/STH).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Passage N at Seaton Sluice involved 49 on 16th (SSWT). The highest count this month was 175 in the wader roost at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 2nd (AP). Lower counts were received from various locations including 44 at Cocklawburn on 10th (MHu), 35 at Budle Bay on 11th (CGK/GPK) and 33 at East Chevington on 8th (TRD), 26 at St Mary's Island on 17th, 24 in full summer plumage at Chevington Burn on 30th (AJ), 23 at Annstead on 7th (DF) and 20 at Low Newton on 12th (TD). At Druridge, 14 were on the beach on 4th TD) and a maximum of three at the Coal Road Flashes from 22th-30th (TF/JFa/IRD/TRD/JD). The highest count from Holy Island was 13 on the North Shore on 28th (GB) and three-nine were at the River Blyth Estuary, Monks' House shore, Newbiggin and Sandham Bay (Holy Island).



A Sanderling at St. Mary's
3rd May
Alan Jack

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Few large concentrations were noted as birds departed for breeding grounds, with a maximum of 26 counted on the River Blyth Estuary on 17th (STH), although this had decreased to seven by the month end (MK/STH/PJA). Birds were present at the Coal Road Flashes (Druridge) from mid-month with a high of 25 recorded on 22nd (TF/JFa *et al.*) but only three by 29th (TRD/JD). Other double-figure counts came from Boulmer with 20 on 31st (TRD/JD) and Amble Braid with a minimum of ten on 12th (MSH). At Grindon Lough two-eight were seen between 1st-24th (PRM/STH/GB/MSH). Elsewhere, four were at Cresswell Pond and singles were at Derwent Reservoir, Haughton Strother and Newbiggin.



A Dunlin reflects at Holy Island
Mike Carr
11th May

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

The largest count came from Seahouses at high tide with 60 on 12th (MK) and the stronghold of Stag Rocks holding 55 on 15th decreasing to five by 23rd (DF/AA *et al.*). Annstead held 11 on 16th (DF) and one-five were at Boulmer, Low Newton, Newbiggin and Seaton Sluice.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

As with other waders, this species favoured the Coal Road Flashes (Druridge) with one on 12th increasing to three by 21st and down to a single by 27th (CB/MSH/TF/JFa *et al.*). Two were present at Longhoughton Steel on 14th (BS) and Newbiggin on 16th (AP) and a single was at Boulmer from 12th-15th (BS).

Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos*

A scarce spring record involved one at the Coal Road Flashes from 26th-30th (TB/TRD/JD *et al.*).

Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolapaceus*

A single was seen at Grindon Lough on 3rd and 5th (PRM/AA/TF/JFa *et al.*).

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Five were at Winnows Hill (Slaley) on 31st (JFa) and two were at Craggside, Harwood Forest, Linnels and Spartylea. Singles were reported from Beanley Wood, Debdon (Rothbury), Harehaugh, Harthope Valley and Pithouse Fell (Slaley).

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

At Acton Fell, 13 displaying birds were reported on 11th (ASJ). Birds were present all month at Spartylea with a maximum of eight seen during the month (CT). Three pairs were at Winnows Hill (Slaley) on 18th (PRM), four displaying birds were at Prestwick Carr during the month (STH/PCF) and three at Pithouse Fell (Slaley) on 5th (DM). Pairs and 'drumming' birds were at Alnwick Moor, Blanchland Moor, Coanwood Pond, Greenlee Lough, Grindon Lough, Harthope Valley, Longhorsley, Plenmeller Common and Sipton Burn. Singles were at The Snook (Holy Island) on 6th and 31st (ADM).

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*

The regular returning female was at Grindon Lough from 9th-16th (MSH/PRM/STH).

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Birds were well established in breeding areas with a few late migrants on the coast. Ten were in Upper Coquetdale on 5th, nine in the Breamish Valley on 12th and seven at Hepple on 26th (all ASJ). Derwent Reservoir held four on 8th and 12th (IFo) and two pairs were at Cupola Bridge (River Allen) on 18th (PRM). One-two birds were at Allen Banks, Allerwash (South Tyne), Alnwick, Bardon Mill, Branton GP, Bywell Bridge, Corbridge, Chollerford, College Burn, Derwent East, Grindon Lough, Halton-le-Gate, Harthope Valley, Hedgeley GP, Ridley Stokoe, Shillmoor, Stakeford, Tarsset Burn, Twizel, Wark and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. The first young were noted at Shillmoor on 27th (JR). Coastal migrants included three at Cresswell Pond on 3rd (AJ/ASH), two at both the River Blyth Estuary and River Tweed Estuary and singles at Big Waters, Castle Island, East Chevington, Hauxley, Holy Island, Low Newton and North Seaton-Cambois.

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

The large wintering flocks had dispersed with the maximum number reported being 22 at Budle Bay on 2nd (GPK). Inland, the highest counts were 18 at Hedgeley GP on 4th (IBDa/KDa) and 12 at Grindon Lough on 16th (PRM). Six were at Spartylea all month, three pairs at Halton-Lea-Gate and two pairs at Winnows Hill (Slaley). Single pairs were at Backworth, Coanwood Pond and Shieldbridge (West Allendale). Single birds were seen at Blanchland Moor, Haughton Strother, Greenlee Lough and Stublick Bog. The maximum count from the popular Coal Road Flashes (Druridge) was five on 22nd (TF/JFa).

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Light spring passage was noted with two reported at Druridge Pools from 5th-18th (SW/GB *et al.*). The Coal Road Flashes attracted singles on 14th and 19th (MSH/TF/JFa/GB). Other locations attracting single birds between 9th-17th were East Chevington, Foxton Bends, Low Newton Scrape and Newbiggin.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

The wintering adult lingered until 1st (GPK).

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

A light spring passage was apparent during the month with two being the highest count at The Coal Road Flashes (Druridge) on 26th (STH/DM/PJA). Singles were at Backworth Pond, Boulmer, Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Foxton Bend, Hedgeley GP and Hepple on various dates between 10th-30th.

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

At Annstead (Seahouses) on 16th, 1,170 were counted moving N at a rate of 935 per hour (DF) although no movement of this species was recorded further south at Seaton Sluice where significant auk passage was taking place (SSWT); at Newton Point 177 flew N on 12th (DF). At Berwick Needles Eye 1,174 active nests were counted on 24th when 320 birds were on the sea below the cliff (MHu) and nesting was also recorded at Howick (JAR). Counts elsewhere comprised a maximum of 79 in the River Tweed Estuary (PRM/MHu) and 19 at Newbiggin (STH).

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Castle Island held 53 on 26th (DM/PJA), 16 were at Spartylea all month (CT) and 13 at Greenlee Lough (MRS). One or two were recorded at four other localities.

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

Three flew N at Beacon Point, Newbiggin in half an hour on 23rd (AP). Single adults were at Druridge Pools on 19th and 30th (TF/JFa) and a single immature lingered on the flooded fields north of Druridge Pools from 14th until the month end, seen by many observers; single immature birds were also at Cresswell Pond and at Newbiggin on three dates between 7th-26th (AP/CDH). Further north, single immatures were recorded on three dates from 4th-18th at Fenham Flats, Long Nanny and Monks' House Pool (CDH/BS/NNBC).

Mediterranean Gull *Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus*

An immature was at Boulmer on 3rd (BS) and single adults at Budle Bay, Hauxley and Newbiggin on dates between 16th-26th (CGK/GPK/MK/TB).

Common Gull *Larus canus*

Movement N was noted at Annstead (Seahouses) and Craster on 14th and 18th with 30-35 2nd-summers at each locality (DF). At Sandham Bay, Holy Island 70 were recorded on 28th (MJC) with one to ten at four coastal sites and one on Plenmeller Common.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

Budle Bay held 20 on 5th (DMALT/HD) and up to seven were at Grindon Lough, Linton Ponds and in the River Tweed Estuary.

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

An immature bird frequented Amble Braid and the River Coquet at Warkworth from 1st-24th (many observers) and on 26th an immature, possibly the same individual, was recorded on the Battery Rocks at Tynemouth (DRW).



A Glaucous Gull at Warkworth weir by Tim Dean on 2nd May

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoideus*

An immature was recorded flying over Harper's Heugh (Ross) on 6th (BS).

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

A total of 1,194 was in the River Tweed Estuary during a WeBS on 17th (MHu) with 560 there on 25th (PRM), 142 at Holburn Lake on 3rd (CH) and 71 on Castle Island on 26th (DM/PJA). Four to 12 were at three suburban localities and other records were of breeding birds, comprising a total of 113 nests in the Blyth Harbour/Estuary (STH/LJM), 22 at Needles Eye, Berwick (MHu) and eight at Wallsend, Davy Bank CDH).

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

Counts of ten to 30 came from Alwinton (Upper Coquetdale), the Breamish Valley, Derwent Reservoir and the River Tweed Estuary (ASJ/MHu/JR/IFo) with seven in Jesmond Dene (MJCo) and one to four at Airy Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield), Castle Island, Grindon Lough and Wark. Breeding records comprised a total of 41 nests in the Blyth Estuary/Harbour (STH/LJM).

Sandwich Tern *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

Three moved S at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 5th (DM) but the highest count at Seaton Sluice was 145S on 10th as the main influx took place (SSWT) and a gathering of 139 was recorded at St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) on 12th (ADM). The highest double-figure records elsewhere were 65 at Tynemouth on 7th (DRW), 61 at Cheswick Sands on 20th (CH) and 72 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 31st (STH) with 20-30 at East Chevington, Low Newton and the River Tweed Estuary. One to two were at three other sites.

Little Tern *Sternula albifrons*

The first record of the month was three at the Long Nanny on 4th (STH) where numbers increased to 13 on 11th (NNBC) and 15 on 12th (TD). Elsewhere along the coast, on many dates from 9th-31st, one to four were noted at Alnmouth, Annstead (Seahouses), Bamburgh, Beacon Point (Newbiggin), Buston Links Beach, Druridge Bay, Holy Island and Monks' House (DF/STH/CSa/TB/MJC/TRD/JD/ADM).

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*

The first sighting of the year was one feeding offshore at East Chevington burn mouth on 8th (TRD). One or two were seen elsewhere in Druridge Bay from 10th-15th (TF/JFa/TB) with ten at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 18th (STH), at least 11 feeding offshore at Boulmer on 16th (BS) and 32 in the tern/gull roost at Beacon Point on 23rd (AP).

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

The Seaton Sluice observers recorded 12N on 16th but otherwise only small numbers overall. On the nest platform at the Royal Quays (North Shields) numbers built rapidly with 12 on 5th rising to 42 on 9th (ASJ) and the roost at Beacon Point, Newbiggin held 24 on 18th (STH). The breeding colony at the North Blyth staithes held 23 birds on 25th and by 30th ten pairs were on nests (STH). At Holywell Pond five pairs were on nests by 20th (MSH) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs held 14 birds on 15th with 13 on the raft on 29th (SR/EC). One to six were recorded elsewhere from 1st onwards at Arcot Pond, Big Waters, East Chevington, Gosforth Garden Village, Haughton Strother GP, Holy Island, Howdon, Killingworth Lake and Swallow Pond,

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

A single was on the East Chevington north pool on 2nd (TRD/JD) with one on the beach at the nearby burn mouth on 26th (DM) and on 4th, 150 were around the Long Nanny dunes nesting site at Newton (STH). At Annstead (Seahouses) ten flew S on 14th and at least 20 moved N on 16th (DF).

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

An uncommon spring sighting was a Black Tern at Swallow Pond on 27th which flew up high to join a second bird, calling as they flew off (ASJ *et al.*).

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

The only record was a single moving N at Newton Point on 17th (Jed).

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

Sightings, all of birds moving N, comprised three at Seaton Sluice on 26th (SSWT), two at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 26th (AP) and singles at Newton Point on 12th, Annstead (Seahouses) on 14th and Bamburgh on 23rd (all DF).

Auk *sp*

Significant auk movements were recorded on 16th, 22nd and 25th when, during short periods of observation, rates of passage N were 300 in one hour and 248 and 317 in 15 minutes respectively (MSH). At Seaton Sluice, the maximum passage rate of Guillemot/Razorbill was 660/hour N during the period 25th-27th (SSWT).

Common Guillemot *Uria aalge*

On 16th, a 'huge' passage of Guillemots was recorded at Seaton Sluice when a total of 5,225 were counted moving N in five hours with a maximum rate of 1,600 per hour (SSWT). Large movements were also seen in the Berwick area on 13th, 26th and 27th with rates/hour N of 330, 700 and 750 respectively (MHu). At Rockcliffe, Whitley Bay, 200 were recorded on 25th (IJ), at least 60 were at Stag Rock, Bamburgh on 24th (MSH) and 50 at Newbiggin on 13th (GB). Elsewhere, single-figure counts came from five other localities. At Berwick Needles Eye on 24th, 238 nests were occupied with 260 birds on the sea (MHu).

Razorbill *Alca torda*

The large auk movement on 16th included 350 N in five hours at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). At Rockcliffe 100 were recorded on 25th (IJ) with up to five at Cambois, Cullernose Point and Stag Rocks. The auk colony at Berwick Needles Eye included 42 active nests on 24th (MHu).

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

Two hours' watching at Newbiggin on 30th produced 23 moving N in two hours (STH) and 20 were identified in the large auk movement N at Seaton Sluice on 16th (SSWT). Elsewhere, up to seven were seen at four widespread sites.

Rock Dove *Columba livia*

Eight were at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 12th (DM) and present in Jesmond Dene on 7th.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Ellington was the hot spot with eight at Chugdon Wood on 8th and seven found around the town on 5th with five there on 4th and 24th (TB) and at Jesmond Dene on 20th (MJCo). Four were at Spartylea all month and one sang at Rothbury throughout with one to two at eight other locations.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

On 20th 22 were at the Snook (Holy Island) (MJC), eight at Jesmond Dene on the same date, up to six at Spartylea during the month and four to five at three other locations with four over the sea at Seaton Sluice on 15th.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Five pairs were at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) all month (BS) with five at East Benton Farm on 17th and up to four at Spartylea during the month.

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

Well reported with six the high count on a BBS at Tosson Hill on 15th (MJC), five at Derwent Reservoir on 28th (ASJ) with four seen there on 22nd (IFo) and also at Allendale on 14th and Harwood Forest on 30th (ASJ/STE). Three were at Alwinton, Catcleugh Reservoir, Halton le Gate, Harthope Valley and Simonside with two at six other locations and singles at a further 26 widespread localities.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Two were seen all month at Spartylea (CT) and only one pair this year on Holy Island hatching two young mid-month (IK). One (of presumably a pair) seen hunting regularly at Cresswell and Druridge Pools with singles also at Buston Links (Alnmouth), Hareshaw Common (Bellingham) and Widdrington Moor Lake on 2nd, Humshaugh and Brocolitia on 5th, Warkworth Lane (Ellington) on 6th, Shawdon Hill on 10th, Harthope Valley, Low Newton and Howick on 17th, Butterwell Opencast Site on 19th and Prestwick on 31st.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Two pairs were found at Harwood Forest on 30th (STE), three at Craggside (Rothbury) on 20th (SW), two seen or heard at Spartylea all month (CT) and calling at Howick on 12th (JAR). Singles called at Rothbury all month and at 12 other widespread localities.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Singles were seen regularly at Druridge from 4th to 18th (TB *et al.*), Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) on 10th (ASJ), Swallow Pond (Wallsend) on 12th (DRW/MK) and Derwent Reservoir on 20th (IFo).

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

Three were at Butterwell Opencast site on 19th (TF/JFa), a female with calling juvenile at Debdon (Rothbury) on 31st (TRD/JD) and one to two at Holy Island from 6th to 21st (ADM/MJC). One was at a site in mid-Northumberland from 18th to 21st, Earsdon on 12th and Shillmoor (Upper Coquetdale) on 27th.

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Four hunted at Plenmeller Common on 5th (MK/DRW) with three there on 18th (PRM). Singles were at Holy Island on 6th & 8th, Acton Moor (Allendale) on 12th and Langley on the same date.



A Short-eared Owl eyes up Mike Carr

Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*

At the regular location Winnow Hill (Slaley) three were present on 31st with two males churring on 18th (JFa/PRM). A male churred at Harwood Forest on 30th, this being the fourth consecutive year the site has been occupied (STE).

Swift *Apus apus*

A rain shower brought 100+ low at Branton Lakes on 22nd (LJM), 56 fed over the Tweed at West Ord on 27th (MHu), 55 over the Holywell Dene on 23rd (ASJ), 30 at Lynemouth on 23rd (TB), 25 at Cullercoats on 20th and 20 at Killingworth Lake on 17th (ASJ). 21 north at Seaton Sluice on 30th was the only recorded movement (SSWT). One to 14 were at these and 26 other locations.

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Low numbers again this month with one at Chollerford on 3rd, Low Ford (Morpeth) on 6th, Hartburn (Meldon) on 7th & 17th, Haughton Strother GP (Humshaugh) on 14th and 17th Branton GP on 23rd and Jesmond Dene on 27th.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Four were at Tilhill (Dipton Wood) on 5th (DM/ALT/HD) with two pairs feeding young in nests at Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 8th (MNC) and a pair with two young at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 24th (TB). More than three were at Cupola Bridge (Whitfield) on 18th (PRM) with two at Spartylea all month and Ridley Park (Blyth) on 19th. Singles were at ten other widespread localities and feeding young at Howick on 31st.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

All reports were of singles, generally calling at Nunykirk on 4th, 12th and 19th, Dipton Wood on 5th and 12th, Sidwood on 6th and 15th, Close House on 6th, Allen Banks on 9th, Harthope Valley on 11th, Catcleugh on 15th, Wingates on 19th, Ellington on 21st, Comb (Falstone) on 26th and Harwood Forest on 30th.

Falcon sp

A small falcon sp was flying E in the distance on 29th (ADM) possibly the Merlin that was seen at Chare Ends later on.

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Four were at Plenmeller Common on 18th (PRM) and three birds were seen at Holy Island on 6th (ADM) and a female with two fledged young were at Haughton Strother GP's (Humshaugh) on 25th (MR). Pairs were at Ellington and Druridge Pools on 10th (TB), Halton-Lea-Gate on 23rd (PRM), Holy Island on 25th (MJC) and the River Tweed Estuary on 25th (PRM). Single birds were at 14 sites throughout the month.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Only three records, all from Holy Island with unsexed birds on 6th (CT/SR/AH) and at the Lough on 29th (ADM).

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

A first-summer bird flew W through the Snook car park (Holy Island) on 30th (TF/JFa).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Two birds, an adult and a 2nd calendar year bird, were noted regularly in Budle Bay throughout the month (CGK/GPK). Two fledglings were on a crag face at a confidential site on 31st (ALT/DM/HD). Single birds were at Holy Island on 8th (ADM), East Ord (Berwick) on 13th (MHu), flying S at Tynemouth on 20th (DRW), Boulmer on 25th (BS) and at Yearle on 28th (SVM/AJM).

Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

On 2nd 15 flew into the grounds of Haggerston Castle followed by five more (JPL). Four was the high count at Gosforth Garden Village on 11th with a pair defending a nest hole there on 10th (MJC). Singles visited feeders at Spindleston on 2nd and in garden at Longhoughton on 7th.

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*

A small passage with male and female at Low Newton on 13th (KDa *et al.*), a male and female also at separate locations on Holy Island on 27th (TF/JFa/TRD/JD). A single male at Holy Island on 25th was regarded as a different bird from that found later (SR) and a single female was at Hauxley Dunes on 26th (DM/PJA/BB *et al.*).

A Red-backed Shrike
Holy Island
26th May
Jonathan Farooqi

**Jay** *Garrulus glandarius*

Five were at Harwood Forest on 30th (STE), four at Winnows Hill (Slaley) on 1st (IFo) with three at Dilston (Corbridge) on 4th and Haughton Strother GP on 9th. Two were at Whitfield and Jesmond Dene with singles at six other locations.

Magpie *Pica pica*

Just two reports of four at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) on 20th (IJ) and Jesmond Dene on the same date (MJCo).

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

More than 120 fed in a field at Monkseaton on 23rd (MSH), around 60 at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) during the month (BS), up to 16 seen all month at Spartylea, 16 at Stublick Bog on 6th (CT). One to five were at four other locations.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

A single bird (possibly tamed) came regularly to feed at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) (BS) and one was at Stublick Bog on 6th (CT).

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

A good spring passage noted at Seaton Sluice with 70N, 2S (SSWT) and 20 circled then moved N at Newbiggin point on 3rd (STH). 62 in small groups at Beacon Hill (Cramlington) on 12th (DM), 15 at Crowstone (Dudlees) on 19th (JR/NA) with two to five at Jesmond Dene, Stublick Bog and Whitley Bay. A nest containing three eggs and newly hatched chick was at Green Shiel (Holy Island) on 20th (MJC).

Raven *Corvus corax*

On 12th 20 fed on a hillside at Thirlmoor (Upper Coquetdale) (JR/NA), 19 including a flock of 17 at Makendon on 10th (TRD/JD) with a pair there on 14th (JEd). Two were at Kimmerston on 16th and Widehope on 20th with singles at six other upland locations and Holy Island on 2nd.

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

Two to six seen at Spartylea all month (CT), three at Jesmond Dene on 20th (MJCo), two nesting in a garden box for first time at Woosington on 15th (SRB) and an adult feeding a fledgling in a garden at Fulbeck (Morpeth) (TD).

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

A pair were present all month at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) (ASJ/GB) and seen carrying food on 21st (STH) with singles at Nunnykirk on 4th, Fontburn area on 5th and Derwent Gorge on 29th.

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

A pair was at Linton Lane on 11th (MK) with pairs at two locations near Longhorsley on 15th and 17th seen delivering food on 27th & 28th (AB/LB) and a pair at Alnwick Moor on 23rd had four young (BP). Singles were at Linton Ponds on 3rd & seen nesting on 5th, Prestwick Carr on 3rd and singing at Big Waters NWT on 21st. A pair nested in a conventional tit box at Whinney Hill Farm on 25th and one was seen carrying food at QEII CP on 27th.



A Willow Tit at Longhorsley by Andrew Brunt on 26th May

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Five to ten were seen all month at Spartylea (CT) with two pairs at Fulbeck (Morpeth) hatching 8 & 9 eggs around the 24th (TD). Four were at Stublick Bog on 6th with one to two at Craster, Jesmond Dene, feeding youngster at Howick, nesting at Longhorsley and Whitley Bay.

Great Tit *Parus major*

At Spartylea there were four to six all month (CT), three at Jesmond Dene on 27th, two at Stublick Bog on 6th and one at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) on 20th.

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

A total of 163 singing birds was counted over 3 hours at Otterburn Ranges on 26th with 58 at Yardhope on same date and 53 between Plashetts and Throckrington on 28th (ASJ). On Holy Island 43 were found singing at four locations on 20th (MJC), 21 at Wanneys, 13 at St Mary's Church (Warworth) and 11 in the Holywell area. One to two also at Alwinton, Longhorsley Moor, Stublick Bog and West Chevington.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

Around 350 were at West Ord (Berwick) on 2nd (MHu), 120 at Twizell (nr Berwick) on 11th (TRD/JD) and 15 pairs at Wark (N.Tyne) on 5th rising to 20 pairs by 27th (PRM). More than 20 noted at Linhope (Upper Breamish Valley) on 18th, around 20 at nest colony at Spetchels (Ovingham) on 25th at Newbrough on 5th and 15+ at Budle Point on 15th. Two to 12 were at ten other locations. Apparently occupied nests increased to 92 at Haughton Strother GP by 17th (MR).

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

A total of 33 were found at four locations at Holy Island on 20th (MJC), 25 at West Ord (Berwick) on 2nd (MHu) and 25 flew south at Chollerford on 3rd (TWi) with 20 at Killingworth Lake on 1st (GB) and Holy Island on 12th (ADM). Five pairs were nesting in outbuildings at Arcot Hall GC on 28th and at Shillmoor on 12th with one to ten at eight other locations.



Hirundines collecting mud at
Ingram

Top: a Swallow and right: a House
Martin

by Alan Jack on 12th May



House Martin *Delichon urbica*

Around 20 were at housing adjacent Holywell Pond on 28th (LJM), 18 recent arrivals at Haughton Strother GP on 29th (MR), 15 at Jesmond on 23rd and Arcot Pond on 30th (AJN/LJM) with 10 at Allen Banks on 5th, gathering mud at Ingram on 12th and at Spartylea all month. One to nine were at 13 other widely spread localities.

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*

The bird reported from East Chevington throughout April was still present to at least 26th (TRD/JD *et al.*).

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

Family parties were noted at Arcot Lane and Castle Island towards the end of the month. Up to four were at Spartylea throughout and at Cramlington (Craggside School) on 8th. Three were reported from Halton-Lea-Gate and Jesmond Dene, two's at Chollerford, Howdon, Nunnykirk and Tynemouth and singles at Brierdene (Whitley Bay), Cramlington (Valley Park), Harthope Valley and Twizel.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Passage at Holy Island produced 13 on 2nd, 14 on 5th and 18 on 6th with counts of one to six on a further seven dates from 8th. In breeding areas a 7km stretch in the Heighley Gate-Beacon Hill area produce an impressive count of 72 singing males on 19th (ASJ), while a further 36 were singing in young plantations at Wingates on 26th and 22 in the Breamish Valley on 12th (ASJ). In the Fontburn area 13 were noted on 5th, ten were singing at Winnows Hill (Slaley) on 28th, nine at Halton-Lea-Gate, eight at Prestwick Carr and seven at Longhorsley Moor. Six (including a nest) were at Spartylea all month, five were in song at Howdon, up to four at Grindon Lough, three at Langley Castle, Longhorsley and Stublick Bog and one to two at a further 11 localities.



A Willow Warbler at Howdon by Colin Bradshaw on 12th May

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Birds were noted at Holy Island on 14 dates from 6th-28th, with peak counts of seven on 12th, eight on 26th and 12 on 28th (MJC/ADM *et al.*). Five were singing at Longhorsley Moor on 3rd and four at Cramlington (Valley Park) on 7th, Jesmond Dene on 27th and Tweed Estuary on 25th. Three were at Cocklawburn Pond on 4th, three singing at Howdon on 27th and one to two were at College Valley, Cramlington (Dam Dykes), Craster, Halton-Lea-Gate, Langley Castle and Wark (North Tyne).

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

Singing birds were heard from 1st at Crooked Oak (near Derwent Reservoir), Derwent Gorge, Harthope Valley, Holystone, Morallee Wood (Allen Banks), Sidwood and Spindleston, the latter thought to have been taken by a Sparrowhawk.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

There were good counts from Arcot Pond with 12 singing males on 12th (DM/ALT/HD) and from Prestwick Carr where 11 were found over 1km (PCF). Eight were singing at Gosforth Park NR on 5th, seven at Low Newton on 28th included five singing and six were in song at Cresswell Pond on 11th. Up to six at Holy Island on various dates may have included some passage birds, with five singing at the Lough and singles at Crooked and Straight Lonnen, Chare Ends (singing) and The Snook. Up to four were singing at East Chevington and three at Annstead, Buston Links, Cocklawburn and Haughton Strother GP (Humshaugh). One to two were noted at Aydon (Corbridge), Beanley, Branton GP, Cambois, Druridge Pools, East Cramlington LNR, Howdon, Lambley Mine, Longhorsley, St Mary's Island, Wark (North Tyne) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.



A Sedge Warbler at Howdon by Colin Bradshaw

Blyth's Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus dumetorum*

One reported from Newton Pool on 27th (IBDa) will, if accepted, be the first county record since 2013.

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Up to four were noted at Holy Island Lough during the month, with a peak count on 8th (MJC). Four were singing at Ladyburn Lake (Druridge Bay CP) and at least three at East Chevington also on 8th and three were in song at Newton Pool on 4th and QEII CP on 27th. Elsewhere up to two singing birds were at Bates Minewater Treatment Works, Big Waters, Cresswell Pond and St Mary's Island and singles at Arcot Pond, Branton GP, Castron, Druridge Pools, Killingworth Lake and Linton Ponds.

Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris*

At least two birds were on Holy Island at the end of the month. One resided in the Vicar's Garden from 26th-29th, while another was singing at the end of the Straight Lonnen on 27th and perhaps the same bird in song at the Lough on 28th (MJC/ADM/TF/JFa/KDa/TRD/JD/SR/AH/MK/IK). Another was heard singing at Druridge Bay CP on 27th (TF/JFa).

Icterine Warbler *Hippolais icterina*

One was singing at Holy Island (Snook) on 25th-26th (MJC/TF/JFa).

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

Two were reeling at Bamburgh on 1st, up to two at East Chevington throughout and Prestwick Carr from 20th-31st. Singles were also noted at Arcot Lane, Arcot Pond, Beacon Hill (Longhorsley), Breamish Valley, Brocolitia, Buston Links, Cambois, Castle Island, Cresswell Village, Druridge Pools, Fontburn, Gosforth Park NR, Hauxley NR, Monks' House Pool, Newton Pool, Warkworth Lane and Widdrington Moor Lake.

A Grasshopper Warbler reels at Castle Island by Tim Dean on 15th May



Below: a male Blackcap in the Harthope Valley by Paul Casells on 19th May

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Eight were in Jesmond Dene (seven localities) on 7th (MJCo). Seven were singing at Spindleston on 4th and six likewise at Druridge Bay CP on 8th and QEII CP on 27th. Four males and two females were found at Longhorsley Moor on 17th and a pair with four very recently fledged young was at Newbiggin (Mound) on 26th. Counts of five singing birds came from Bedlington CP, College Valley, Dilston (Corbridge) and Lucker, while four were in song at Houghton Strother (Humshaugh) and four birds were at Brierdene (Whitley Bay). One to three were noted at Holy Island on six dates and one to two at Beanley, Cramlington (Whitelea Chase and Valley Park), Cupola Bridge, Halton-Lea-Gate, Longhorsley, Tweed Estuary and Wark (North Tyne).



Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

Well-reported this month with a peak count of nine at Wingates on 19th (ASJ). Five were reported from the Harthope Valley on 17th and there were counts of four from Beacon Hill (Longhorsley), Beanley, Breamish Valley, Derwent Gorge (including a pair feeding a nest) and Muckley Farm (Longhorsley). Counts of three came from Cartington, Twizel and Waren Mill, while two were noted at Airy Holm Reservoir, Branton GP, Carterway Heads, Derwent Reservoir, Fontburn, Holy Island (20th), Holystone, Longhorsley Moor and Spartylea. Singles were reported from a further 22 localities.

A Garden Warbler sings

Wingates

Alan Jack

5th May

**Lesser Whitethroat** *Sylvia curruca*

Three were singing at Howdon on 11th (CB) and two at Hadston on 4th, while two were noted at Prestwick Carr on 5th. Singles were reported from Alcan, Bamburgh, Cambois-North Seaton, Cramlington (Barns Park), East Chevington (South Pool and access road), Holywell, Longhirst Flash, Linton Pond, Newbiggin, Wansbeck Estuary and West Chevington.

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

Arrival in the Whitley Bay area was suggested as approx. ten days later than usual. On the Whitley Bay-Holywell wagonway 15 singing birds on 1st had increased to 19 by the end of the month (ASJ). At Prestwick Carr 12 were found over a distance of 1km on 12th and on the same day 11 were singing in the Breamish Valley. Counts of eight singing males came from Arcot Pond on 12th and Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 5th, while six were in song at Newbiggin (Ash Lagoons) on 22nd. Three pairs were noted at Tynemouth on 17th. Six at the Tweed Estuary included four singing birds, five were singing at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) and four at Druridge Pools and at St Mary's Wetland. Counts of three came from Arcot Land, Howdon and Twizel while one to two were reported from a further 19 localities.

A Whitethroat

East Chevington

Tim Dean

8th May



Goldcrest *Regulus regulus* Three at Jesmond Dene, one to two at Cramlington (Barns Park and Valley Park) and singles at Castle Island and Exhibition Park (singing) were the only reports.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

High counts of singing males were 16 at Holywell Dene on 30th (ASJ) and 14 in the Breamish Valley and 13 at Bedlington CP on 12th. Four were noted at Brierdene (Whitley Bay), three at Jesmond Dene, two at Spartylea and one at Stublick Bog.

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Singles were in four areas of Jesmond Dene on 20th (MJCo). Two were reported from Arcot Hall GC, Cupola Bridge, Low Carrith and Warkworth and singles at Bedlington, Bedlington CP, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Halton-Lea-Gate, Leazes Park and Rothbury. Another bird at Allen Banks removed the wing casings and legs from a Cockchafer before carrying it off to nestlings.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Four at Dipton Woods on 5th was the highest count (DM/ALT/HD). One passed food to another at Crooked Oak on 1st and a bird entered a nesting crevice at Acomb on 26th. Elsewhere, two were at Warkworth Lane Ponds on 6th, while singles were noted at Allen Banks, Derwent Reservoir, Halton-Lea-Gate, Harthope Valley, Morpeth, Nunnykirk and Swallow Pond.

Rose-coloured Starling *Pastor roseus*

An adult at Castle Island on 17th (PG) was relocated at nearby Ashington on 18th-19th (TB/TF/JFa).



A splendid Rose-coloured Starling
Ashington
Jonathan Farooqi on 19th May

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

200+ at West Hartford on 16th were all adults (LJM), while nearby many family parties were noted in the Cramlington area. About 50 were noted at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 31st and pairs with young were seen in this area throughout the month. A Pegswood BBS produced 42 on 6th (a top three bird for the square). A flock of 26 utilised feeders at Tynemouth on 27th, eight were at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) on 20th and four at Jesmond Dene on 7th. In addition to the above successful breeding was also reported from Howick, Fulbeck (Morpeth) and Spartylea.

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

In the Harthope Valley six males and a female were noted at Hawsen Burn on 9th (MJC) and one was at New Burn on 8th. Four (including two singing males) were at Sipton Burn (Allendale) on 7th and a pair occupied territory at Greensheen Hill (Holburn) on 3rd.

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

A BBS count at Pegswood produced 34 on 6th (one of the top three birds for this square-TD). On the coast 17 were at Holy Island on 20th and seven on 28th (MJC/ADM). Up to six were at Spartylea throughout, six at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) on 20th, five at Stublick Bog on 6th and four at Jesmond Dene on 20th. A juvenile was being fed at Howick from 10th-17th and a male with a completely bald head (exposing the ear cavities) was at Spital (Newbiggin) on 26th.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

A late inland bird was at Wooler on 7th (DF). On Holy Island two were noted on 20th, 27th and 31st and singles on a further five dates from 25th-30th (MJC/ADM/SR/AH/STH).

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

A late migrant was at Holy Island on 26th (MJC).

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

An excellent count of 17 in the Breamish Valley on 12th included nine in Ingram Village alone (ASJ); also in the Breamish Valley a pair were seen with four large young on 22nd (LJM). Seven were singing at Holywell Dene on 31st and five were at Jesmond Dene on 27th. Elsewhere, up to four were at Spartylea through the month, three were singing at Monkseaton, three at Stublick Bog and two at College Valley.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Four, including three fledglings were at Spartylea all month (CT), three in Jesmond Dene and two at Halton-Lea-Gate, Leazes Park and Muckley (Longhorsley).

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

The first was at Holy Island on 4th, followed by singles on 6th and 12th and one to five daily from 24th-31st with a peak on 29th (ADM/NJC *et al.*). Three pairs were at Lordenshaw on 19th, four at Sidwood on 19th and four at Warren Mill on 29th. Elsewhere, one to two were reported from Beacon Hill (Longhorsley), Blakeburnhopehaugh (Kielder), College Valley, Etal, Harthope Valley, Harwood Forest, Halton-Lea-Gate, Holystone, Ingram, Lucker, Rothbury, Spartylea, Spindleston, Stamfordham and Widehope.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Four to six at Holy Island from 26th-31st included an adult feeding two juveniles in the Vicar's Garden. Six were at Jesmond Dene on 20th and two at Briedene (Whitley Bay), Spartylea and Stublick Moor.

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Migrants were at Holy Island on 25th, 26th (two) and 30th. In breeding areas up to seven were noted at Allen Banks (five males and a pair at a nest hole on 11th-ASJ). Four singing males and a female were reported from a sensitive site in the south-east of the county on 1st, three males were at Nunnykirk on 4th and two males and a female at Dipton Woods on 12th. Elsewhere, singles were noted at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 6th, Branton GP from 10th-12th, Holystone on 5th, Langleeford on 17th, Letah Wood (Hexham) on 26th and Moralee Wood on 5th.



A Pied Flycatcher
Nunnykirk
Tim Dean on 4th May

Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva*

A female/first-summer was at Holy Island (Snook) on 26th-27th (TF/JFa *et al.*).

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

A female at Holy Island (Snook) on 13th was the only record this month (ADM/IBDa/KDa).

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

After a slow start decent numbers began to arrive during the first week of the month. Seven pairs were located at Wark (North Tyne) on 5th (PRM) and nine singing males were in the Nunnykirk area by 7th (ASJ). Holystone Woods held at least six on 7th and there were counts of three singing males from Beacon Hill (Longhorsley), Haughton Strother (Humshaugh), Ryle (Whittingham) and Sidwood. Two were noted at Allen Banks, Cartington and Dipton Woods and a pair was at Derwent Reservoir. Singles were reported from Benridge Moor, Derwent Gorge, Doddington, Harthope Valley, Haughton Castle (Humshaugh), Prestwick Carr, Rothbury, Swarland, Twizel, Wallington Hall and Widehope. Single migrants were at Holy Island on 6th, 28th and 31st.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

The peak count from Upper Coquetdale was 12 males on 5th (ASJ). In the Cheviots, eleven (nine males and two females) were in the Breamish Valley on 12th, up to nine in the Harthope Valley and two in the College Valley. Five singing males were at Tosson Hill and three at Cartington on 15th and singles at Bewick Moor and Ryle (Whittingham). On the coast one to two were reported from Holy Island on 6th and 27th-31st and another at St Mary's Island on 27th.



A Whinchat
the Harthope Valley
Paul Cassells on 19th May

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

Peak monthly counts were six at Holy Island (Sandham Bay - pair with four fledged juveniles) on 28th (MJC), two pairs at Low Newton, a pair feeding young at Hawsen Burn (Harthope Valley), three at Beanley Moor and Bewick Moor, two at Buston Links, Druridge Links, Howick, Simonside and Yardhope (Otterburn Ranges) and singles at Bamburgh, Cartington, Hethpool (College Valley), Long Nanny, Newbiggin, Warkworth Gut and Widehope.

Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Holy Island witnessed an influx during the first week of the month, beginning with nine on 2nd and rising to a peak of 77 by 6th (ADM *et al.*). During the same period seven were at Budle Bay on 6th, five at Seaton Sluice on 4th and three at Hemscott Hill (Cresswell) on 5th. Inland, six passage birds were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 4th and three breeding pairs in Upper Coquetdale on 5th. Three were at Simonside Hills on 10th and at Stublick Bog on 6th with one to two at a further 12 inland and nine coastal localities.

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

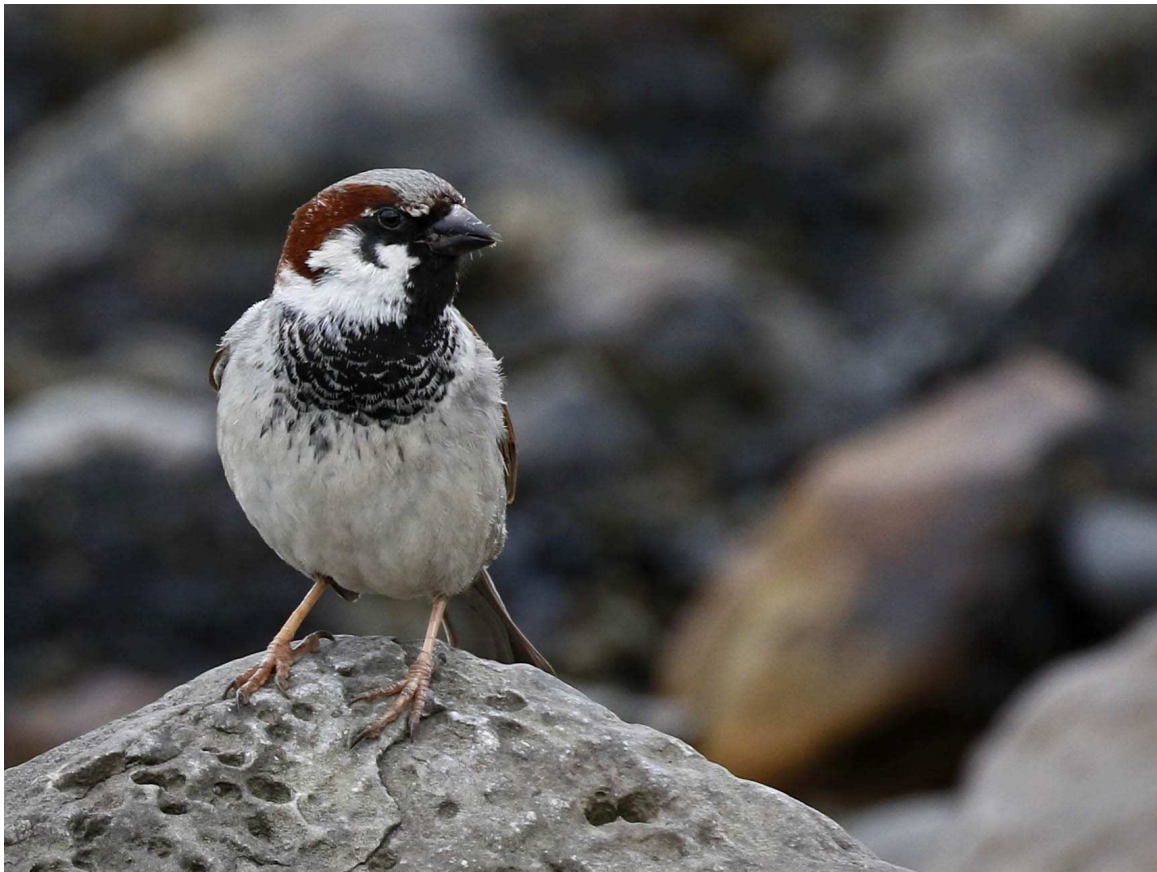
Two pairs found on 5th at Dilston Mill N.R. with territorial disputes noted (DM/ALT/HD). Singles were seen this month at six sites. Fledged juvenile birds noted at Breamish Valley (2) and Upper Coquetdale (1) in the last week (ASJ).



A Dipper in the Harthope Valley
19th May by Janet Dean

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Holy Island village held by far the biggest count this month, with 150 noted, including juveniles (MJC). A BBS square at Pegswood on 6th revealed 59 birds (TD). One to 16 were at four further sites. Fledged young being fed by parents at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 30th (RS).



A cock House Sparrow on Holy Island
Mike Carr on 20th May

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

Small numbers recorded this month with 12 at Haughton Strother on 3rd the largest count (MR). Five were at Holywell Pond and Cresswell on 15th (TRD). Elsewhere, one to two seen at 15 sites. Two in Upper Coquetdale at Alwinton on 7th were noteworthy (TD).

Dunnoek *Prunella modularis*

A pair feeding young in a nest at a Marden Estate garden during the month (ASJ). One to four recorded at just three other sites.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava flavissima*

Five were counted on 15th at Whittle Dene and at Wark on 26th, with a single at Wark on 6th and two birds on 15th and three on 5th (SR/SW/PRM). Four noted at Whittle Dene on 15th and Druridge Pools on 20th. Two also noted at the latter site on several dates and at the nearby Coal Road flash pools.

Singles were seen at a further 12 locations during the month.

Yellow/Blue Headed hybrid known as "Channel Wagtail" found at Hemscott Hill on 4th and 7th and at Widdrington on 5th (TB/GB).



A Yellow Wagtail at Druridge by Colin Bradshaw on 7th May

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Pairs or two males were seen at six sites this month, with a pair feeding young in a nest at a stream at Great Tosson on 19th (ASJ). Singles seen at 13 widespread sites from Gosforth Regent Centre to Harthope Valley.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

Nine noted across Holy Island on 20th (MJC). Poorly recorded in breeding areas, with numbers along the Upper Coquet valley considered to be very low this month, with only three birds found on 5th and two on 10th (ASJ/AWG). At Chirdon Burn, four fledged young noted on 5th (JR). A pair were at Arcot Hall G.C. on 28th (DM). Single birds were at four other sites during the month.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba alba*

A minimum of five were at Warkworth Beach on 3rd (STH). Three were at The Heugh (Holy Island) on 5th (IK). Two seen at Hemscott Hill on 1st and Haughton Strother on 3rd. Single birds were at three other sites during May.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

A three-hour tour of the Otterburn Ranges with several areas walked, resulted in a minimum count of 147 birds perched, displaying in song flights, or feeding young in nests on 26th. A further 27 counted that day in the Yardhope area of the Ranges (ASJ). On 28th, 48 were counted, mainly being in pairs, with much display noted between Plashetts and Thockrington (ASJ). 25, including some birds feeding young were noted at Snook (Holy Island) on 20th and 20 counted on Tosson Hill (Simonside) on 15th, where few had been present earlier in the month (MJC/ASJ). 17, including nine displaying, were in fields at St. Mary's Island by 29th, where only three present on 5th, indicative of a late arrival this year (ASJ). 15 plus were noted at Bewick Moor on 16th, including three nests containing four eggs (MJC/KB). One to six seen at a further six sites.

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

Seven at Dipton on 7th and four at Wingates on 19th were the largest counts this month (MJC/ASJ). Two were at Beacon Hill, Blakehopeburnhaugh and Sidwood during the month (ASJ/TB/TRD/JD), and single birds seen at 11 further sites.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

A male was song flighting regularly during the month at Cullercoats and two at Tynemouth Pier on 6th (ASJ). One at North Blyth staithes on 17th, with two there on 25th (STH).

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Up to eight were present all month at Spartylea, with seven at Stublick Bog on 6th (CT). Six noted across Jesmond Dene on 27th (MJCo). A pair fed young at Crooked Lonnen (Holy Island) on 28th (MJC/ADM). One to four seen at three other sites.

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Four pairs noted in Holywell Dene on several dates during the month. Two pairs were at Beacon Hill and at feeders at Howdon on 27th and four were at Brierdene on 20th (ASJ/CB/IJ). Three males came in to garden feeders at Rothbury all month (TRD/JD). One to two were at a further 13 sites, including unusually, one at St. Mary's Wetland on 15th.



A Female Bullfinch from Howdon by Colin Bradshaw on 27th May

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

Only two reports this month, with five at Brierdene on 20th and up to four all month at Spartylea where a nest was found.

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

Unusually large flocks for May involved 100 at Ellington on 2nd and 40 at Holywell on 11th and 34 at Cocklawburn on 30th (TB/ASJ/MHu). On 20th at Holy Island, 23 were counted across the island and included a female incubating four eggs in a nest in marram grass at Snook (MJC). Gorse bushes at Holywell held four nesting pairs on 11th (ASJ). Two to six were noted at four other sites.

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis caberet*

Observed in good numbers in breeding territory on 19th, with seven at Beacon Hill, nine at Wingates and 15 plus at Simonside, where display/song noted at each site (ASJ). Up to six were in the Spartylea area all month (CT). Four at Grindon lough on 24th and one here on several dates, song flighting noted here on 5th (PRM/DM *et al.*). Display seen also at Dipton Wood and Branton Gravel Pits (DM). One to two were at four further sites.

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

12 were at Widehope on 9th with 13 seen here on 14th (MK/JD). 12 at Holystone on 22nd and ten flew E over Rothbury on 26th (TRD/JD). Six were noted in two groups at Harwood on 31st (STE). Five at Catcleugh on 15th and four at Craggside on 17th (CW/MJC/EFC). One to three were seen at three other sites during the month.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Between eight and 15 seen at Spartylea during the month (CT). Nine at feeders in a Marden Estate garden on 14th with lesser numbers all month (ASJ). Five at Brierdene on 20th (IJ). One to three noted at seven further locations.

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

A maximum of eight at Spartylea until 19th (CT). One to two at four other sites.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

Nine were seen at Beacon Lane (Cramlington) on 12th, including six singing males (DM). Seven singing males were at Holywell on 2nd, Breamish Valley on 12th and in the Beacon Hill area on 19th (ASJ). Three were at Big Waters on 27th (GB). A pair were at Newton Red House all month, with the male singing and coming into the garden (PG). One to five were at six other sites.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

On 20th at Holy Island, 27 were counted including 13 singing males at The Snook and five singing at The Lough (MJC). Eight were found at Arcot Pond on 12th (DM). Seven males singing at Upper Coquetdale on 5th and six at St. Mary's on 1st, five at Holywell on 2nd (ASJ). Six in song at Q.E.11 C.P. on 27th and four at Ladyburn Lake on the 8th (LJM). Three at Longhorsely Moor and Haughton Strother during the month. One to two were at eight further sites this month.

ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN**Escapes**

No sightings

Hybrids**Hooded Crow x Carrion Crow** *Corvus cornix x Corvus corone*

A hybrid crow was seen with Carrion Crows at Beacon Pt, Newbiggin on 11th (AP). Although these species interbreed widely it is still unusual for them to turn up in Northumberland as far south of the hybridisation area.

Birds of Unknown Origin

No sightings

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

R.Ahmed, A.Allen, P.J.Allott, N.Anderson, S.R.Barrett, M. & R.J.Bentley (MB / RB), T.Blake, J.S.Booth, G.Bowman, K.Bradley, C.Bradshaw, A. & L.Brunt, E.F.Carr, M.J.Carr, M.N.Coates, M.J.Cook (MJCo), E.Crabtree, A.Curry, T.Daley, I.B. & K.Davison (IBDa / KDa), T.R. & J.Dean, H.Dodds, I.R.Douglas, J.Edwards (JEd), S.T.Elliott, T. & J.Farooqi (TF / JFa), P.C.Fletcher, D.F.Forshaw, I.Forsyth (IFo), P.Gilbert, M.Green, A.Hall, C.D.Hampton, P.H. & A.Hanmer (PHa / AHa), A.S.Hart, C.Hartley, M.S.Hodgson, S.T.Holliday, M.Hutcheson (MHu), A.S.Jack, A.Janes, I.Johnson, M.G.Kerby (MK), I.Kerr, C.G.Knox, G.P.Knox, J.P.Lumby, P.R.Massey, A.J. & S.V.McCormick, L.J.McDougall, D.Mckeown, A.D.Mclevy, A.D.Mould, A.J.Newson, R.Philpott, A.Priest, J.Richardson, M.Richardson, S.Rippon, J.A.Roper, C.Saunders, M.R.Smith, F.Southern (FSO), B.Steel, R.Stevens, A.L.Todd, C.Tudge, D.R.Watson, T.Watson, S.Westerberg, T.Wiffen (TWi), C.Wright.

Alnwick Wildlife Group (R Poyer), Bamburgh Ringing Station, Hauxley Ringing Station, North Northumberland Bird Club, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

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

This bulletin was compiled by Graeme Bowman (Geese to Mergansers), Steve Laing (Red Grouse to Cormorant), Trevor Blake (Hawks to Falcons), Tom Brewis (Oystercatcher to Godwit), Clive Hampton (Turnstone to Redshank), Eddie Crabtree (Kittiwake to Puffin), Tim Dean (Escapes, Hybrids and Unknown Origin, List of Contributors, Highlights), Peter Fletcher (Doves to Larks), Mike Richardson (Tits to Stonechat), Alan Jack (Dipper to Buntings).

Data Manager is Tom Brewis.

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 records for the month to ntbc.records@googlemail.com

Please email for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and grid references: Please use of standard location names and 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

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 online resource for anyone interested in birds. There are:

Photo Galleries – Here you can view hundreds of photos of birds from Northumberland, Newcastle and North Tyneside. Members are encouraged to contribute their own photos. Simply send them to galleries@ntbc.org.uk

Sightings – Here you can view reports of birds recently reported in the County. Anyone who would like to contribute and post sightings to this page, please email sightings@ntbc.org.uk Please note this section is moderated, so there may be a short delay before your record appears.

There are also County Checklists, Records Committee updates, Information on important Surveys, useful articles and reports on Bird ID and Overseas Birding Trips....and much more...

Please submit any other new content for the website to the main club email address at ntbcorg@gmail.com

New content such as Birding Trip Reports etc., is always welcome and very much appreciated.

To find out more please visit www.ntbc.org.uk

FITBIT CHALLENGE

Inspired by a Twitter 'tweet' from Ross Ahmed on 27th May 2018, in which he revealed he'd walked 21.41km around Holy Island in search of migrants, in the process covering 26,228 steps and burning off 1,161 calories, I thought I'd give it a go myself!

So, on 29th May, armed with my wife's Fitbit in my pocket, I set off around The Snook before 05:00h, on my usual route. Chare Ends, the excavations, the Lonnens, Lough, Harbour, Heugh and village all followed. Bird-wise it was a relatively quiet day, in a good month, although a female Merlin whistled right past me as I stood on the embankment near The Lough, more intent on chasing the small flock of Starlings ahead of her, and the Marsh Warbler showed very briefly in the Vicar's Garden again.

By teatime, I'd done a couple of laps of the village and was nearing in on Ross's total. At this point, I must admit to my only bit of 'creative thinking'. The only regular site I like to cover, but hadn't, was Chare End gardens, but I thought if I took the 'scenic route' back to my car, by re-walking the Straight Lonnens and around Chare Ends again, that should add a few more steps! And so I finished on 36,725 steps, 24.51 kms (15.23 miles) and burnt off 3,598 calories. As long as no-one tells Ross of my slight indiscretion near the end, I should hopefully get away with that!

I arrived home quite pleased with my efforts, only for my wife to point out that the pie, pasties, two bags of crisps, 'Snickers' bar, coke and water I'd consumed on the way round would probably have un-done any benefits gained!

A fun day and I was surprised at how much ground we all cover in pursuit of birds. But even 24 kms should be easy to beat on a late autumn day when I also take in the Castle and entire shoreline in search of rare wheatears.....I might give it another go in late October/November!

Andy Mould

FOR SALE

Swarovski AT101 Tripod with Swarovski DH101 Head - New, boxed and unused. £250

Complete 29 Volumes of British Wildlife Magazine - first 3 are bound. Great condition. £150

All proceeds will go to Pancreatic Cancer Research.

If interested email: stevelowe01@zoho.com

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2018 No 6

MONTHLY SUMMARY JUNE 2018

5th August 2018



CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

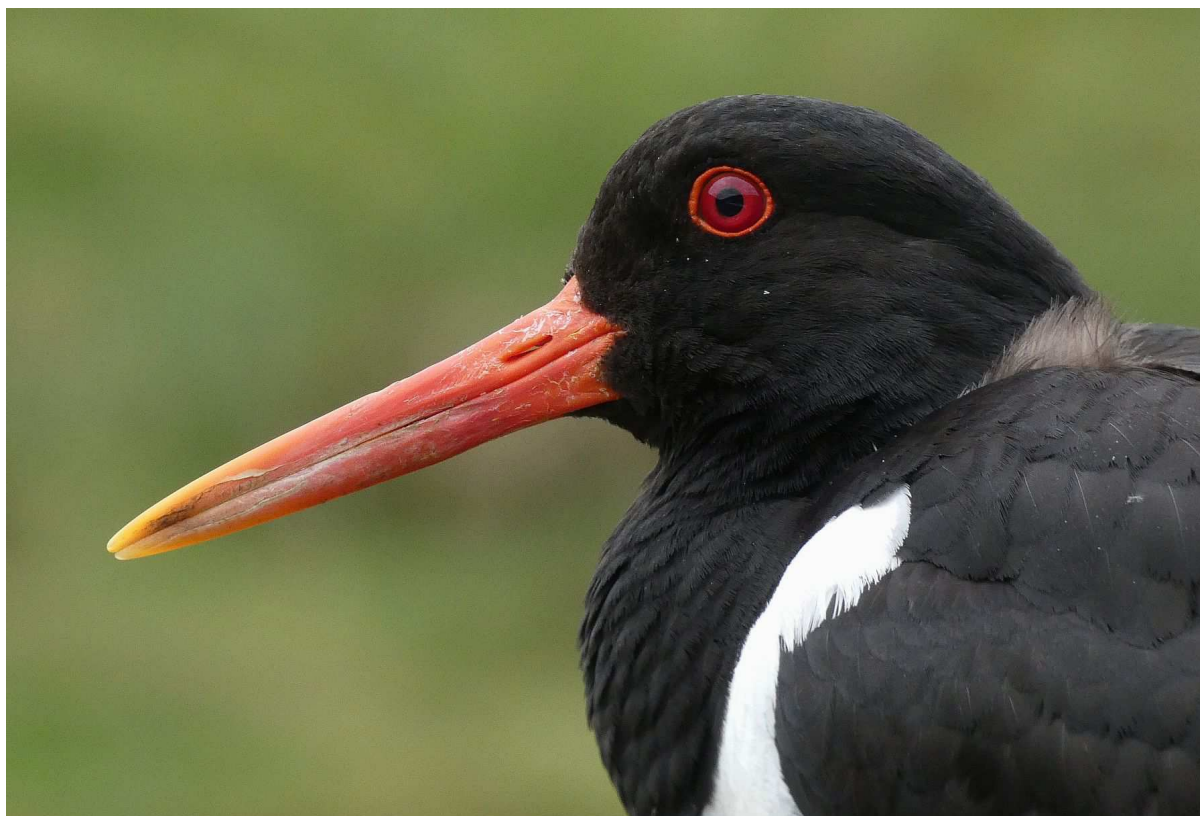
Whooper Swan	Unusually, three summering individuals present.
Ruddy Shelduck	Three at East Chevington on 8th.
Garganey	Up to two drakes and a female at Druridge Pools.
American Wigeon	Male still at Grindon Lough until 20th. Paired with European Wigeon.
Pintail	Unusual summering drake at East Chevington on 16th.
Great Northern Diver	Unusually, several sightings mid month.
Glossy Ibis	The first-summer stayed until 20th at Druridge showing extremely well.
Spoonbill	Up to two individuals seen at Druridge through to 15th.
Little Egret	Only three sites. A distinct reduction in sightings due to earlier cold spell in March.
Little Stint	Singles at Cresswell and Druridge.
Wood Sandpiper	Singles at Druridge & East Chevington.
Spotted Redshank	The wintering bird at Budle Bay again stayed all month.
Glaucous Gull	First-summer seen at North Shields Fish Quay on 2nd.
Hobby	Adult at Druridge Pools on 3rd.
Red-backed Shrike	Single on Holy Island on 7th.
Blyth's Reed Warbler	One singing at Newton Pool on 26th. First Spring record for county.
Marsh Warbler	Several individuals singing.

CONTENTS

Tawny Owl Survey
County Rarities - records needed
Plastics in Birds Exhibition

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 is September 13th.



An Oystercatcher in the Upper Coquet Valley
From the window of Janet Dean's car on 12th June

FIELD TRIPS

Contact Steve Anderson seaswan@btinternet.com

August 2018**Waders at Alnmouth**

To be confirmed

23rd September 2018**Musselburgh**

Contact: Steve Anderson Email: seaswan@btinternet.com

Oct 2018**Holy Island**

Contact: Trevor Blake Email: trevor1958@live

CLASSIFIED LIST**Brent Goose** *Branta bernicla*

A pale-bellied *hrota* race bird flew N at Newbiggin on 8th (AP) and one was at Budle Bay on 8th (GPK). Single dark-bellied *bernicla* race birds were at Druridge coal road pools on 1st (MSH/PRM) and Elwick on 14th (PRM).

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Coastal movement was prominent at Seaton Sluice, where 153 flew N and four S during the month, including 48 N on 1st (SSWT), while 37 flew N at Holy Island on 7th (ADM), a total of 29 N at Budle Bay on 9th and 15th (CGK/GPK), and 15 N and 20 S at Ellington between 2nd-18th (TB). Peak counts were 219 at Hauxley Reserve on 27th (HRS), 116 at Castle Island on 17th (DM/PJA), 60 at Linton Ponds on 7th (STH), 57 at Grindon Lough on 13th (PRM), 47 at Killingworth Lake on 20th (LJM), 20-25 at Druridge Pools and Newcastle Leazes Park, and 12-15 at Cresswell Pond, QEII CP Lake and the Tweed Estuary. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods/crèches	No. of young	Observer/notes
Swallow Pond	3	16	LJM. On 11th
Haughton Strother GP	3	16	MR on 11th. Includes broods from May
Hedgeley GP	3	11 (5,4,2)	LJM. On 19th. Includes brood from May?
Castle Island	1	16 (7,5,4)	STH. On 9th. Brood of 5 first noted on 1st
Halton Lea Gate	2	9 (5,4)	SW. On 4th
Sheepwash bridge	1	13	STH. Single crèche on 10th
Linton Ponds	1	12 (6,2,2,2)	STH. Single crèche on 6th
Bank's Pond, Dinnington	1	8	PCF on 30th. As reported in May.
Calot Shad, Tweed Estuary	1	6	MHu. On 17th
West Ord	1	5	MHu. On 17th
Grindon Lough	1	5	PRM. On 1st. As May?
Midgeholme	1	5	SW. On 22nd
QEII CP Lake	1	3	STH. On 7th. As May?

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

12 flew N at Annstead on 11th (DF) and singles were at Linton Ponds on 7th (STH), Budle Bay on 10th (GPK) and the Tweed Estuary on 15th and 21st (MHu).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

At Seaton Sluice, two flew N on 7th and one N on 14th (SSWT), 186 were at Hauxley Reserve on 27th (HRS), 49 (adults) at Haughton Strother GP on 11th (MR), 23 at Coanwood Pond on 26th (PRM) and 11 at the Tweed Estuary. One to six were also at Bothal Pond, Castle Island, Newcastle Leazes Park. Plenmeller Common and Spartylea. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Haughton Strother GP	7	32	MR on 11th. Includes all previously reported broods
Milkhope, Blagdon	1+	29	LJM on 4th. Six with young of various ages
Bothal Pond	1	6	TD on 17th. As April-May?
East Chevington	1	5	TD on 11th
Linton Ponds	1	3	STH on 6th
Plenmeller Common	1	2	PRM. On 26th

In addition, six adults accompanied 22 young of various ages at Killingworth Lake on 11th that were not bred on site (LJM).

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

One was at the Tweed Estuary on 15th (MHu).

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

A total of ten flew N at Ellington on 1st and 7th (TB) and a total of eight flew N and two S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). A total of 395 was noted during a WeBS count at the Tweed Estuary on 15th (MHu), 102 were at Killingworth Lake on 20th (LJM), 57 at QEII CP on 7th (STH), 34 at Castle Island (STH), 21-29 at Amble Braid, Bothal Pond and East Chevington, and 11-18 at Big Waters and the Blyth Estuary. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
East Chevington	4	22 (7,6,5,4)	TD on 11th
Hedgeley GP	3	--	LJM on 19th
Linton Ponds	2	15 (8,7)	CDH on 10th
Holywell Pond	1	6	MK on 9th. As May?
Killingworth Lake	1	6	MK on 9th
Newcastle Exhibition Park	1	5	DM. On 4th
Whiteadder Point, Berwick	1	5	TBr on 25th
Howick	1	4	JAR on 25th (first egg hatched on 12th)
Arcot Pond	1	3	LJM on 17th
Whittle Dene Reservoirs	1	3	PRM on 1st. Also pair on nest
Newcastle Leazes Park	1	1	DM. On 4th

One was also on a nest under Sheepwash bridge on 10th (STH).

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Two were at Druridge Pools on 4th (TB) and an adult was at Druridge coal road pools regularly until 15th (TD/TRD *et al.*). Singles were also at Budle Bay all month (CGK/GPK), the Tweed Estuary on 15th (MHu) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs regularly between 1st-18th (PCF/PRM/SR *et al.*).



A late-staying Whooper Swan at Whittledene reservoir

Alan Jack
13th June

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

One flew N and four S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT).

Budle Bay held peaks of 136 on 9th and 195 on 25th (CGK/GPK). Other peak counts of adults were 32 at the Blyth Estuary on 12th (LJM), 26 at Boulmer on 29th (BS), 25 at Castle Island on 9th (STH) and 18 at Druridge coal road pools (PRM). Four to eight were also at Druridge Pools, Elswick (Newcastle), Elwick, Fenham Flats, Howdon and the Tweed Estuary, and two at Haughton Strother GP and West Ord.

Shelduck breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods/crèches	No. of young	Observer/notes
Tyne Estuary	3	17 (10,6,1)	MK. On 5th
Boulmer	3	--	BS. Three breeding pairs this year.
Blyth Estuary	2	15 (10,5)	LJM on 12th. Includes young from May?
Castle Island	2+	14+ (10,4)	MSH. On 16th. Brood of 9 noted on 1st; STH/PJA
Cresswell Pond	2	14 (9,5)	MSH. On 5th. Brood of 5 first noted on 4th, and broods of 5 and 2 on 16th (latter a new brood?)
Druridge Pools	1	20	STH/IFo. Crèche of 19 small and one large young on 13th. Includes young from May?
Ashington	1	10	IRD on 11th. Small young held up traffic until they found their way into a field near Hawthorn Cottage.
Druridge coal road pools	1	9	MSH. On 1st
Hauxley Reserve	1	2	HRS. On 27th
Monks' House Pool	1	5	GPK on 1st. Same as May?

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*

Three were standing (no visible rings) on a small island at East Chevington north pool on 8th (AA/TB).

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

A duck was at Wark on 30th (PRM). Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Haughton Strother GP	1	10	MR on 26th. Three adults also noted.

Garganey *Anas querquedula*

Two drakes were at Druridge coal road pools on 7th (TRD) and one was noted there on 13th (STH/IFo). Single drakes were also at Cresswell Pond on 5th and 11th (IRD/MSH) and Druridge Pools on several dates between 3rd-8th (AA/TF/JFa *et al.*).

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

A pair flew N at Ellington on 6th (TB) and one flew N at Seaton Sluice on 22nd (SSWT). Up to four drakes and two ducks were at Druridge Pools between 1st-15th (TRD/PRM) and one to two birds at Cresswell Pond, Druridge coal road pools and Grindon Lough. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Bothal Pond	1	8	MSH. Recently hatched young on 29th
Druridge Pools	1	7	STH/IFo. New brood on 13th.

A duck with two young (as first noted in May) was also at Druridge Pools on 1st (PRM).

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Castle Island held 58 on 17th (DM), 55 were at Druridge Pools on 4th (MSH), 30 at East Chevington on 14th (PRM), 21 at Hauxley Reserve on 27th (HRS) and 15-18 at Hauxley Reserve (HRS) and Linton Ponds (CDH). Seven to eight were also at Bothal and Swallow Ponds, Haughton Strother GP and one to three at Branton GP, Cresswell Pond, Druridge coal road pools and Grindon Lough. More unusual was one at Budle Bay on 9th (CGK/GPK). Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Castron	3	18 (8,6,4)	JD. On 16th
Bothal Pond	2	15	MSH. A loose crèche of 15 young (probably broods of 11 and 4) on 29th. Brood of 8 small young also noted on 21st; TD
Hauxley Reserve	3	12 (9,2,1)	HRS/MSH. Broods of 2 and 1 on 27th, and brood of 9 on 29th
Big Waters	1	9	MK. On 9th
Lynemouth Flash	1	9	MSH. On 29th
Linton Ponds	1	5	STH. On 12th
Castle Island	1	8	DM. On 17th

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

Four flew N at Seaton Sluice on 30th (SSWT). A peak of 26 occurred at Grindon Lough on 26th (PRM), 17 (11 drakes, six ducks) were at Plenmeller Common on 1st (PRM) and up to seven at Druridge Pools between 5th-15th (TRD). Two were at Budle Bay all month (CGK/GPK), two at Derwent Reservoir on 9th (GB/DM/LAR), and one at Elwick on 14th (PRM).

Wigeon breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Caistron	1	5	JD. Small young on 16th – only the second confirmed breeding for the site (the first was in 1990)
Plenmeller Common	1	5	PRM. On 1st
Coanwood Pond	1	4	PRM. On 26th

American Wigeon *Anas americana*

A drake was again at Grindon Lough, on 1st, 4th and 13th (LJM/PRM), being noted paired with a female Wigeon on 1st.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Three flew N at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). Peak counts involved 88 at Castle Island on 17th (DM/PJA), 66 at Haughton Strother GP on 26th (MR), 54 at the Tweed Estuary on 15th (MHu), 49 at Hauxley Reserve on 27th (HRS), 38 at Newcastle Leazes Park (DM) and 12-20 at Arcot and Swallow Ponds, Grindon Lough, Haughton Castle. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Middleton Hall	4	--	LJM. On 19th
Newcastle Leazes Park	3	23 (10,7,6)	DM on 4th. 10 large, 7 half-grown and 6 tiny ducklings
Holywell Pond	3	17 (9,7,1)	MK. On 9th
Haughton Strother GP	3	14	MR. On 26th
Arcot Pond	2	11 (6,5)	LJM. On 17th
Sheepwash bridge	2	11 (8,3)	STH. On 10th
'Northumberlandia', Cramlington	2	9 (6,3)	LJM. Broods of large young on 26th
Wallsend Park	2	5 (4,1)	CDH. On 24th
Derwent Reservoir	1	15	IFo. On 15th
Humford Mill	1	6	STH. On 15th
Cresswell Pond	1	5	MSH. Fresh brood on 16th
Grindon Lough	1	5	PRM. On 1st. As May?
Hadrian Pond	1	5	LJM. On 11th
Linton Ponds	1	5	STH. On 6th
Castle Island	1	4	STH. Half-grown young on 8th. As May?
Druridge Pools	1	4	DM/PJA. Small young on 17th
QEII CP Lake	1	3	STH. Half-grown young on 7th. Includes young from May?
Tweed Estuary	1	3	PRM. On 1st
Burradon Pond	1	1	LJM. On 20th
Willington Gut	1	1	CDH. On 24th
Bothal Pond	--	15	TD on 17th

Pintail *Anas acuta*

A drake in moult was at East Chevington on 16th (BS).

Teal *Anas crecca*

A total of 174 N and six S at Seaton Sluice during the month was a site record for June and included a record June day count of 126 N and three S on 30th (SSWT). Five flew N at Newbiggin on 8th (STH) and two N at Tynemouth on 30th (DRW). Peak concentrations were 32 at Boulmer on 29th (BS), 20 at Druridge Pools on 15th (TRD), 16 at Grindon Lough on 26th (PRM), and ten at Castle Island. Three to four were also at Arcot Pond, Derwent Reservoir and Howdon on various dates, plus one to two at Branton GP, Castle Island, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge coal road pools, Low Newton scrape, Plenmeller Common and Tynemouth. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Harwood Forest	2	6 (4,2)	STE. Two different-aged broods at a fire pond on 10th

In addition, a female was noted on a nest at Grindon Lough on 1st (PRM).

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

20 (18 drakes) were at Holywell Pond on 13th (MSH), seven (all drakes) were at Arcot Pond on 4th (LJM), four (drakes) at Swallow Pond on 15th (TRD), and two at East Chevington, Linton Ponds and Woodhorn Flashes. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Holywell Pond	2+	13+	MSH/MK. Brood of 8 on 9th and two broods of at least 7 and 6 on 13th.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Four flew N and one S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). Peak counts were 33 at Grindon Lough on 26th (PRM), 24 at Castle Island on 8th (STH), 24 at Haughton Strother GP on 22nd (MR) and ten to 18 at Arcot and Linton Ponds, Grindon Lough and Hauxley Reserve. Two to seven were also at Bothal, Cocklawburn, Cresswell and Middle Ord Ponds, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools, East Chevington and Spartylea. Two were in Budle Bay on 2nd (GPK). Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Hauxley Reserve	2	16 (10,6)	MSH/HRS. Brood of 6 first noted on 27th and broods of 10 and 6 on 29th
Coanwood Pond	1	6	PRM. On 26th
Haughton Castle	1	3	TWi. On 26th

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

At Seaton Sluice, 19 flew N and 15 S during the month (SSWT). Peak counts were 30+ at Elwick on 14th (PRM), 27 at Newbiggin on 21st (STH), 20 at Fenham Flats on 14th (PRM) and 13-16 at the Blyth and Tweed Estuaries. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods/crèches	No. of young	Observer/notes
Holy Island	5	35	IK. First crèche (8 young) noted on 1st
Budle Bay	--	50	TRD on 6th. About 50 ducklings with several females thought to have come from the Farnes. Includes young reported in May?
Football Hole, Low Newton	1	8	MJC. On 13th
Blyth Estuary	1	4	LJM on 12th. Tiny young believed to have hatched on site
Cullernose Point	1	4	IRD. On 5th

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

A drake flew N at Blyth on 5th (TB).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

A strong movement at Seaton Sluice involved 1,992 N and 63 S during the month (SSWT), 233 moved N and eight S at Tynemouth on 30th (DRW), 90 N at North Blyth on 16th (STH) and 76 N and 40 S at Newbiggin between 8th-17th (STH). Four to 12 also flew N at High Newton and Stag Rocks. About 150 were off East Chevington on 11th (TD) and four were at Spital Bay, Newbiggin. More unusual were seven on Ladyburn Lake on 11th (TF/JFa).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

A drake and two ducks were at Cresswell Pond between 13th-15th, with one to two birds up to 22nd (STH/IFo/MSH *et al.*). The above three were seen to fly to Druridge Pools on 14th (BS). Singles were at Capheaton Lake, East Chevington, Haughton Strother GP and the Tweed Estuary on scattered dates between 11th-29th. Only eight ducklings (and three adult females) were noted at the confidential breeding site on 9th (TRD).

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

A total of 18 flew N at Seaton Sluice during the month, including 14 N on 15th (SSWT), nine flew W at Holy Island on 7th (ADM) and three moved N at Druridge Pools on 10th (TF/JFa). A moulting flock at Calot Shad, the Tweed Estuary held 110 birds on 29th (MHu), 37 at the Blyth Estuary on 12th appeared to be virtually all large juveniles (LJM), 32 at Holy Island on 2nd increased to 70 by the end of the month (IK), 26 were at Budle Bay on 15th (GPK), 12-18 at Fenham Flats and West Ord, and eights at Dodd's Well and Little Beach (both Berwick). One to two were also at Newbiggin, St Mary's, Upper Coquetdale and Wark. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Derwent Reservoir	1	9	IFo. On 11th
Whiteadder Water, Berwick	1	6	TBr. On 26th

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Four flew N at Seaton Sluice on 6th (SSWT), up to seven were at Budle Bay during the month (CGK/GPK), six were at Fenham Flats on 14th (PRM) and singles at the Long Nanny Estuary and Newbiggin.

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

The only reports were of a single male lekking during the early morning of 6th at Shield on the Wall Dam (PRM) and "a stunner" male perched on a dry stone wall at Acton Farm (Blanchland Moor) (DM/GB/LAR).

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

Four were at Coe Crags (Thrunton Woods) on 12th, three at Plenmeller Common on 1st and two at Pithouse Fell on 9th.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

One to six were at Belford, Druridge Pools, Harthope Valley and Newton Links.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Most sightings were of two or pairs at Bewick Drift (Lynemouth), Cheswick Dunes, Cocklawburn and Ellington with singles at Branxton, Chollerford, Longdyke Steading (Shilbottle), Low Newton and Swallow Pond.

Quail *Coturnix coturnix*

One was calling from a wheat field at Alnham during a Breeding Bird Survey on 9th (MKi) and still present and heard on 11th and 17th (TRD/JD). One was seen and heard at Yarrow Heugh (Tweed Estuary) on 22nd (MHu *per* J.Ingles).

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

Between two to eight were at Spartylea all month (CT) and one was at Linton Ponds on 10th.

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

The monthly total of 62 (54N, eight S) at Seaton Sluice was a record June site total. Also a record site June day count of nine N and one S on 2nd (SSWT). Two flew N at Newbiggin in the early morning of 8th (STH).

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

At Beacon Point (Newbiggin) two flew N on 6th followed by three N on 8th (AP). Another new site record at Seaton Sluice with one flying N being the first ever June sighting there (SSWT). One still sporting its winter plumage was offshore of Druridge Pools on 10th (TF/JFa), a summer-plumaged individual flew N past Little Beach (Berwick) on 13th (TRD/JD) and one was off Budle Point on 15th (GPK).

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

The only passage noted was 11N in 15 minutes past Snab Point on 5th (MSH). Eight were at Coquet Island on 7th (TRD) and one to six were at Cullernose Point, Ellington, Farne Islands, Holy Island, Stag Rocks and the Tweed Estuary.

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 799 (790N, nine S) in 54 hours of observation, with the main period between 15th-23rd and the maximum day total of 317N on 22nd (SSWT). One to 38 were recorded from several other locations on various dates, mostly flying N, with one fortuitous sea-watcher enjoying 12 Bottle-nosed Dolphins in the same scope views as nine flying N past Newbiggin on 15th (TRD).

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

The highest counts were six (three adults with a chick each) at Holywell Pond on 9th (MK) and Linton Ponds (only one chick) on 10th (CDH). Bothal Pond held a peak of five mid-month (TD/TF/JFa), a pair with two small juveniles were at Northumberlandia (Cramlington), three adults were at Linton Lane and one adult with two juveniles was at Hagg Bank Pond (Wylam). One to two were at nine other locations with nesting activity observed at Grindon Lough and Howick.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Two flew S together past Seaton Sluice on 23rd (SSWT). Peak numbers at breeding sites were nine adults at Widdrington Moor Lake on 24th (MSH), three pairs at Derwent Reservoir throughout the month with two nests abandoned by 22nd (IFo), a pair with three chicks and a further lone adult at Killingworth Lake on 9th (MK) and six at both Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 16th (SR) and Haughton Strother GP (including two young) on 11th (MR). One to four birds, with varying breeding successes, were at Airy Holm Reservoir, Arcot Pond, Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Cresswell Pond NWT, Druridge Bay CP, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Linton Lane, Linton Ponds and Swallow Pond.

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigrocollis*

The regular breeding site in SE Northumberland continued to hold three adult birds throughout the month; however no breeding activity was noted (TRD).

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*

The popular first-winter bird remained in the Druridge Pools area and was last seen flying S on 17th (TF/JFa).

Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

The single bird that arrived in the Cresswell Pond/Druridge Pools area last month remained and was joined by a second adult on 15th (TRD/IRD/AA/STH *et al.*)

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

The Tweed Estuary peaked at 14 during a WeBS count on 15th (MHu), ten were at Druridge Pools on 13th (STH/IFo) and six were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 1st (PRM). One to four were at 11 other localities including one annoyingly perched and calling on a house roof in Cramlington at 04.55 on 22nd (DM).

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Only three reports received. The first returning bird - after an absence of seven weeks - at Budle Bay on 23rd, then two there on the next day (CGK/GPK), and singles at Fenham-le-Moor and Sleek Burn.

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

Passage numbers included a maximum count from Seaton Sluice of 550N in one hour on 14th (SSWT), 225N past Annstead in an hour on 5th (DF), ca.100N along the north shore of Holy Island in 30 minutes on 6th (TRD) and further reports of three to 42, all moving N, from several other coastal points.

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Only six N were recorded at Seaton Sluice in what is a traditionally poor month for this species at that location (SSWT). At least 100 were at the Farne Islands on 8th (TRD), and the only other records were three at Spittal Bay, two at Blyth South Harbour, Stag Rocks and Little Beach (Berwick) and a single flying N at Holy Island.

A Shag on Staple Island on 8th June by Tim Dean

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

At Annstead, 29 flew N and 15S on 18th (DF), 21 were in the Blyth Estuary on 12th (LJM), East Chevington peaked at 18 on 14th and one to eight were at Castle Island, Derwent Reservoir, Hauxley NWT, the Tweed Estuary and on the Tyne at Newcastle Business Park.

**Osprey** *Pandion haliaetuss*

Two birds were at Derwent Reservoir on 22nd and single birds were also noted there on 16th and 18th (IFo). Single birds were also at Winnows Hill (Slaley) on 6th (MJC *et al.*), Budle Bay on 8th (GPK) and at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 13th (SR).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Once again only single birds were noted this month from 11 sites including a male which caught House Sparrows *Passer domesticus* on several days in a North Shields garden (DLo).

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

All sightings came from the Druridge Bay area with a male seen at Druridge Pools and at East Chevington throughout the month (TF/JFa *et al.*) and a female heading South near Druridge Pools on 17th (DM/PJA).

May bulletin clarification

Two moved N over the Snook on Holy Island on 12th (ADM).

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

On 2nd a ringtail was glimpsed from the car window at a confidential site (JR).

Red Kite *Milvus Milvus*

Single birds were observed at Derwent Reservoir on 3rd (IFo), Blindburn (Upper Coquetdale) on 4th (per IK), Blanchland on 9th (DM/GB/LAR), Old Hazeltonrig (nr Alnham) on 11th (MKi), Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 13th (SR), Temon on 14th (SW) and at Airy Holm Reservoir (nr Shotleyfield) on 15th (IFo).

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

11 birds were seen in the Upper Breamish Valley on 8th (MJC/KB) and six birds were in the Upper Coquetdale area and at Longhorsley on 9th (ASJ). Four birds were at Whiteadder Point (Berwick) on 26th (TBr) and three birds were seen at Rugley (Alnwick) on 7th (MJC), Upper Breamish Valley on 29th (MJC/KB) and at Wark (N Tyne) on 30th (PRM). One – two birds were seen at 17 sites.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Single birds were either seen or heard at East Chevington on 12th and 13th (IF), Arcot Pond on 17th (LJM/STH) and breeding was proven at Swallow Pond (Wallsend) with young seen on 17th (GPK).

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Birds were seen at Benton, Castle Island, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Howick, Jesmond Dene (Newcastle), Leazes Park (Newcastle), Spartylea and West Sleekburn. Broods were noted at Benton, Druridge Pools, Howick, Leazes Park (Newcastle).

Coot *Fulica atra*

19 birds and three nests were at Grindon Lough on 23rd (MRS/PRM), 14 birds including 5 young were at Bothal Pond on 26th (TD). At Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 21st an adult was seen with a single brood of 1 small young and other adults were seen with broods of five and four young (GB). On 23rd at Haughton Strother GP's (Humshaugh) there were eight adults and broods of seven, four and three young (MR). 15 young were also noted at Killingworth Lake on 17th (LJM). One - two birds were at six sites including a scarce bird at Derwent Reservoir on 22nd (IFo).

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Confirmed breeding was reported from Humshaugh, Haughton Strother GP on 22nd where two pairs were seen with a total of three young (MR), from Berwick, Whiteadder Water on 26th where a pair were accompanied by two young (TBr), from Breamish Water on 27th where a pair had a single chick (DF) and from Hauxley NWT on 29th where a brood of two was seen (MSH). The highest count of 89 came from Boulmer on 29th (BS). A count of 38 was made at Dodd's Well, north of Berwick on 21st (MHu), 23-29 were seen in the R Blyth Estuary for much of the month (STH, LJM) and 22 were in the Tweed Estuary on 15th during a WeBS (MHu). Other records came from Allendale (Sipton Burn), Benton (North Tyneside), Castle Island (R Wansbeck), Coanwood Pond, Cramlington, Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough, Howdon, Newbiggin (Beacon Point), Plenmeller Common, Shotleyfield (nr Airy Holm Reservoir), Slaley (Pithouse Fell) and Spartylea.

Avocet *Recurvirostra avocetta*

Records from Cresswell Pond suggested that at least four nests had eggs with nine nests being described as active. The largest count at the site was of 21 adults on 12th (STH). Other sites with records were Budle Bay with three birds on 25th (GPK/CPK), Ellington with two birds on 1st (TB), R Wansbeck Castle Island with two birds on 8th and 25th (STH, LJM). East Chevington had two on 25th (BS), St Mary's recorded two flying south on 25th (ASJ) and a single at Druridge Pools also on 25th (TRD).

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

Breeding records involving the presence of young came from a number of sites, the largest number of which came from Holywell Pond on 22nd (ASJ) where 19 juveniles were recorded and also from Boulmer on 21st, where 14 juveniles were recorded in the nearby fields (BS). Three chicks were reported from the Coal Road Flashes at Druridge on 11th (TD) and two chicks were seen at Wallsend (Swallow Pond), Humshaugh (Haughton Strother GP) and Derwent Reservoir. The highest count of the month came from Holy Island where a post-breeding flock of 70 was seen on 30th (IK). Other records came from Allendale (Sipton Burn), Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Castle Island (R Wansbeck), Coanwood Pond, Grindon Lough, Hauxley NWT, Howdon, Newcastle (Tyne Business Park), Plenmeller Common, Spartylea, St Mary's Wetland and West Hartford.

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

Records came from only three sites. Sixty birds were seen at Holy Island on 30th (northern birds in full breeding plumage, presumed to be very early returners as none had been on the island during the month) (IK). Up to six were reported from Newbiggin Beacon Point at various dates and a single was seen at Druridge Pools on 13th (STH/IFo).

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Two records which were from Newbiggin, Beacon Point. Three were reported on 15th (AP) and a single on 9th (AM).

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Reports of breeding came from Humshaugh, Haughton Strother GP on 20th where three chicks were seen (MR) and from North Blyth on 16th where a brood of three was recorded (STH). The largest count came from the Coal Road Flashes where 22 to over 40 birds were between 1st and 13th (MSH, PRM, TF/JFa, TRD, STH/IFo). Other counts came from Derwent Reservoir, East Chevington, Holy Island causeway, Holywell Flash, Low Newton scrape and Newbiggin.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

A single fledgling was reported from a site north of Hexham on 26th (MR), while potentially breeding birds were reported from a site in the south west (IFo) and another site nearby reported three pairs present throughout the month (IFo). Other reports came from a further three sites dotted around the county.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Tynemouth had two birds flying south on 30th (DRW). Other records, all of singles came from Bedlington, Boulmer, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Newbiggin Beacon Pt, Newbiggin (Quarry Cottage), Seaton Sluice Watch Tower and St Mary's Wetland.

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

The only record of confirmed breeding came from Catton on 30th when a single bird was "alarm calling, with young" (SW). The main period of movement off Seaton Sluice was between 21st-25th with 334N, including a site record for a June day of 268N on 25th (SSWT). Elsewhere the largest counts were of 102 at Boulmer on 29th (BS), 72 at Coanwood Pond on 26th (PRM), 41 at Catton Beacon on 30th (SW), 33 at Grindon Lough on 26th (PRM) and 31 flying north at St Mary's on 27th (ASJ). Other, smaller counts came from Allendale (Sipton Burn), R Blyth Estuary, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Featherstone Common, Kellah (Lambley), Fenham-le-Moor, Fontburn area, Fourstones, Grindon Lough, Halton Lea Gate (nr), High Midgeholme, Hauxley NWT, Howdon, Longhorsley, Morpeth (Benridge), Newbiggin (Beacon Point), Plenmeller Common, Sharperton, Spartylea, Tyne Estuary, Tweed Estuary, Wingates (Simonsides) and Woodbridge.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Seven birds were present at Boulmer throughout the month (BS) and one bird flew north off Seaton Sluice on 23rd (SSWT).

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Records were from Druridge Pools and nearby East Chevington. The peak count of 50 was at Druridge Pools on 15th (BS).



A Bar-tailed Godwit on Annstead Beach on 23rd June by Andy Hall

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

The Coal Road Flashes flock persisted until 1st with 14 counted (PRM) and a single was at Druridge Pools on 3rd (TF/JFa). Three were at Boulmer all month (BS) and singles were reported from Holy Island on 6th and 30th (TRD/IK).

Knot *Calidris canutus*

A single was seen at Boulmer on 6th and 16th (BS).

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

A male was present in the Druridge Pools area on 12th and 13th (EC/JSB/STH/IFo).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Northward passage at Seaton Sluice was recorded from 6th-7th with 40 counted (SSWT). At Beacon Point (Newbiggin) 20 were in the wader roost on 2nd with ten on 4th and 15 on 19th (all AP) reducing to seven on 21st (STH). At the Coal Road Flashes (Druridge), 17 were present on 1st (PRM) reducing to one by 7th (TF/JFa/MSH/TRD). Elsewhere, 12 were at Berwick Little Beach on 8th (TBr), eight at Boulmer on 12th (BS) and a rare inland sighting of a bird in full breeding plumage at Haughton Strother GP on 20th (MR).

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Birds remained from last month at the Coal Road Flashes (Druridge) with 21 on 1st (PRM/MSH), reducing to one by 15th (TD/TRD *et al.*). In other localities in the Druridge Bay area, five were at East Chevington on 15th (TRD) and one at Cresswell Pond from 14th-15th (PRM/TRD). Six were at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 21st (STH) and a single at Low Newton on 6th (TRD). There were only three reports from inland sites with two at Haughton Strother GP and singles at Derwent Reservoir and Grindon Lough (MR/PRM/IFo).

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

A single remained at the Coal Road Flashes (Druridge) until 11th (TF/JFa/TRD/TD) with another or possibly the same bird at nearby Cresswell Pond on 13th (STH).

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Two were reported from Beanley Plantation on 8th (TRD). Reports of singles came from Holborn Moss, Redpeth (Haltwhistle), Thrunton Woods and Winnows Hill (Slaley Forest).

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Reports were mainly from potential breeding areas with a maximum of 12 at Spartylea during the month and three pairs at Plenmeller Common on 1st (CT/PRM). Three birds were flushed from underfoot at The Snook (Holy Island) and were considered as 'likely breeding' (DF). Two were at Old Quickening Cote and Coanwood Pond and a pair was at Melkridge Common (JR/PRM). Singles including 'singing' and displaying birds were at Bellingham, Blanchland Moor, Derwent Reservoir (considered unusual in June) and Grindon Lough.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Healthy breeding populations were noted in the Breamish Valley with a maximum of 17 birds seen including six pairs one of which had four chicks (MJC/KB/ASJ). Ten birds, including four pairs, were in Upper Coquetdale where two pairs had one fledged young each (ASJ). At other breeding locations five-six were at Derwent Reservoir all month, four pairs were on the river at Hepple (ASJ), seven at Allen Banks (TD) and pairs were at Lilburn Tower and Wark. Singles were seen at Castron, Charlton Mires (Alnwick), Harthope Valley and Thrum Mill (Rothbury). Nearer the coast singles were at Hauxley NWT, Holywell Pond and Lynemouth.



Two images of Common Sandpipers in the Ingram Valley on 8th June by Mike Carr an adult (above) and a chick (right).

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Non-breeders were noted at the River Blyth Estuary with the highest count being 20 on 22nd (LJM). In breeding areas, birds were at Spartylea all month with a maximum of eight noted (CT). Grindon Lough held six with a pair displaying over Muckle Moss on 4th (LJM). Six were also at Derwent Reservoir with a pair and two small chicks seen on 16th (IFo). On the coast, five were at Calot Shad (River Tweed) on 21st (MHu), four were at East Chevington and a single at Hauxley NWT).

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Singles were seen at the Coal Road Flashes (Druridge) on 17th (TF/JFa/DM) and nearby at East Chevington on 25th (BS).



Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

A moulting adult was seen at Budle Bay from 28th-30th (GPK).

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

One flew south at East Chevington on 3rd (TF/JFa). Singles were at Druridge Pools on 1st (PRM) and 19th (AA). One was at the Long Nanny Estuary on 1st (GPK).

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

A light movement of 60 N per hour was recorded along the north shore at Holy Island on 6th (TRD) but no significant movement was seen during the month at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). Counts made at three regular breeding sites were 400 at Cullernose Point and ca.200 at both Coquet Island and the Farne Islands (TRD/JD) with, elsewhere, 156 in a Tweed Estuary gull roost on 19th and 98 in the Estuary on 15th (Mhu).



A Kittiwake passes Cullernose Point by Tim Dean on 22nd June



A Kittiwake at Tynemouth
12th June by Alan Jack

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

The highest counts came from Castle Island with 273 on 17th (DM/PJA) and 157, all adults, on 25th (LJM). Smaller gatherings of 30-50 were noted at Chollerford, Derwent Reservoir and Hauxley NWT and up to 12 in the River Tweed Estuary and at Spartylea (MHu/CT). Six nests were occupied at Swallow Pond, Wallsend on 11th (LJM) and the first juvenile of the year was noted at Seaton Sluice on 29th (SSWT).

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

Two adults flew N at Cresswell Snab Point on 6th (MSH) and one-two immatures were at Beacon Point on 1st (AP), Druridge Pools on 4th (TB), Cresswell Pond on 5th and 29th-30th (MSH/IRD), Castle Island from 6th-17th (many observers) and the Long Nanny on 6th (MSH).

Mediterranean Gull *Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus*

Two were present in Newbiggin village bay on 17th-21st (STH) with singles seen also at Derwent Reservoir (white Darvick ring 335H)(ASH *et al.*), Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools and Seaton Sluice (SSWT).

Common Gull *Larus canus*

Single birds were at Cresswell Pond and at Whittle Dene Reservoir (PRM) and up to three at Castle Island (DM) and Derwent Reservoir (DM).

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

In the River Tweed Estuary 18 were found in a WeBS on 15th (MHu), up to three were at Grindon Lough during the month (PRM) with one or two at Castle Island, Derwent Reservoir and on the Tyne at Newcastle Business Park (all DM).



A Greater Black-backed Gull on Inner Farne
Tim Dean on 8th June

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

The summering immature bird was again recorded at North Shields Fish Quay on 2nd (DRW).

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

One to three pairs had young at Davy Bank (Wallsend) (CDH), Blyth Community Hospital (RS) and North Blyth Staithes (STH). Gatherings of 350 were recorded in the River Tweed Estuary (MHu) with smaller groups of 40-90 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin), Castle Island, Davy Bank (Wallsend), Linton Ponds and on the River Tyne (Elswick Wharf-Newcastle Business Park) (DM/STH/CDH). One to three were at four other localities.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

A large flock of 200, mainly juveniles, were at Windyhaugh (Upper Coquetdale) (JR/NA) with 10-25 at Castle Island, Davy Bank, Elishaw and on the Tyne (Elswick Wharf-Newcastle Business Park) (DM/JR/CDH). Smaller numbers of up to ten were counted at nine other sites.

Sandwich Tern *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

A maximum count of 55 came from East Chevington (TRD) with 10-30 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) (STH), East Chevington (PRM), the Farne Islands (TRD) and two sites in the River Tweed Estuary (MHu). Up to eight were at six other localities.

Little Tern *Sternula albifrons*

On 6th, 12 were at the Long Nanny burn mouth and on the same day ten were seen distantly from the Lindisfarne castle at Ross, Black Law (TRD). A flock of ten flew N at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) in the early morning of 18th (AP) and three moved N at Seaton Sluice between 2nd and 8th (SSWT). One or two were recorded on various dates at Beacon Point, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington and Tynemouth.

The breeding colony at the Long Nanny lost over 30 clutches around the time of Storm Hector on 14th with further losses after that. Some replacement clutches/new clutches have been laid and nests were still active into early July (National Trust Rangers).



A Little Tern at Lowgos Bay by Andy Hall 23rd June

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*

Eight were counted on Coquet Island on 7th (TRD), at least six were at Boulmer on 4th (BS) and singles were noted elsewhere at Beacon Point (Newbiggin), East Chevington and Holy Island.



A Roseate Tern on Coquet Island
Tim Dean on 7th June

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Extremely well-reported this month. An impressive 41 pairs were using the small nesting platform at the marina at the Royal Quays, North Shields on 22nd (ASJ) and breeding pairs elsewhere comprised 13 at North Blyth Staithes where seven young were seen on 21st (STH), six on the raft at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 1st (PRM) and one at Swallow Pond on 11th (LJM). The peak count of adults at Whittle Dene was 26 on 12th (ASJ) and at localities away from the breeding sites, ten were at East Chevington, eight at Grindon Lough and up to five at Arcot Pond, Coquet Island, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Ellington, Hauxley NWT, Holywell Pond, Howdon, Monks' House Pool, Swallow Pond and the River Tweed Estuary.

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

Approximate counts during 6th-8th at breeding colonies were 1,600 at the Long Nanny, 1,200 on Coquet Island and 800 on the Farne Islands (TRD). At Bamburgh, Stag Rocks, 40 were present on 22nd (TRD/JD) with six seen at East Chevington and two at Hauxley NWT.



An Arctic Tern on Inner Farne by Tim Dean on 8th June

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

Three singles moving N were seen at Seaton Sluice on 7th, 22nd and 30th (SSWT) and singles were also at Annstead Point (Seahouses) on 6th (GPK) and Tynemouth on 30th (DRW).

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

The monthly total seen moving N at Seaton Sluice was seven (SSWT) and at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) a single moved N on 29th and two moved N the following day (AP).

Auk *sp*

At Snab Point, Cresswell 15 flew N in 15 minutes on 5th (MSH).

Common Guillemot *Uria aalge*

Approximately 10,000 were counted on the Farne Islands on 8th (TRD). Some large movements N were noted at Seaton Sluice including 1,200 in three hours on 5th and 1,150 in five hours on 7th (SSWT). Numbers seen elsewhere were 20 at Bamburgh Stag Rocks, 15 at Holy Island, eight at Berwick Spital Bay and two at Coquet Island and Berwick Little Beach.



A Bridled Guillemot on Inner Farne by Tim Dean on 8th June



A Guillemot passes Inner Farne on 8th June by Tim Dean

Razorbill *Alca torda*

In the large auk movements of 5th-8th, the maximum counts were 855 N in three hours on 5th and 1,760 N in six hours on 8th (SSWT). Small numbers noted at other localities were 30 on the Farne Islands (TRD) and up to six at Berwick (Little Beach), Coquet Island, Cullernose Point and Holy Island.

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

The maximum count in the larger Auk movements from 5th-8th, noted above, was 350 N in six hours on 8th (SSWT); a total of 90 was recorded at Tynemouth, moving equally N and S, in two hours on 30th (DRW) and ten were at Bamburgh Stag Rocks on 22nd (TRD/JD). At breeding colonies, approximate numbers were 3,000 on the Farne Islands on 8th and 1,000 on Coquet Island on 7th (TRD)



A Puffin at Inner Farne on 8th June by Tim Dean

Rock Dove *Columba livia*

On 25th 84 were at Stakeford Railway Bridge (LJM), seven at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 17th (DM) and present at Jesmond Dene.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Eight at Plenmeller Common on 26th (PRM), four at Jesmond Dene on 3rd and Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 10th with three there on 6th and at Derwent Reservoir NR on 9th. One to two were at eight other locations with nesting in the lime kiln at Little Mill on 10th (TWi).

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

On 4th 200 fed in a stubble field at South Snods Farm (IFo), ten at Jesmond Dene on 3rd, two to six all month at Spartylea and two at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) daily.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Up to eight including juvenile seen at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) and three at Spartylea all month (BS/CT), two juveniles at Howick on 24th and one at Linton Ponds on 10th.

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

At Harwood Forest on 10th nine singing males were found (STE) with eight in the Upper Breamish Valley on 8th (MJC/KB). Three males chased a female at High Midgeholme (nr Halton-le-Gate) on 4th (SW) with two at Goldheugh on 1st, Derwent Reservoir on 3rd, Winnows Hill (Slaley) on 8th, Harthope Valley on 9th and Druridge Pools on 20th. Singles were at 16 other widespread localities.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Two probable nest sites noted nr Spartylea with four birds seen all month (CT), two hunting the dunes at Buston Links (Alnmouth) on 4th and at Druridge Pools on 9th (STH/SR). There were regular sightings at Monks' House Dunes during the month with singles at a further 19 locations.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Five were seen or heard all month at Spartylea with a chick 'branching' on 20th (CT), two at Hollingreen (Allendale) on 30th (SW) with singles at ten further locations plus a young bird calling at Winnows Hill (Slaley) on 9th. One road casualty was noted at Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Just three reports of singles at Druridge Pools on 1st and 23rd and Acomb on 15th (PRM/MR/TF/JFa).

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

One was at Winnows Hill (Slaley Forest) on 6th (MJC/TW/AJ/ASH/AJN).

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Two or more were at Plenmeller Common on 1st with singles there on 23rd and 26th (PRM) with one hunting over the Golf Course at Newbiggin by the Sea from 26th to 30th (AP).

Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*

Three churring males were at Thrunton Woods on 8th and 26th (BS/TRD/JD), three at Winnows Hill (Slaley Forest) on 9th (DM/GB/LAR/ADM), two at Kyloe Woods on 14th and Winnows Hill on 27th (PRM/ASH/IK/AN) with one at Harwood Forest on 10th (STE).

Swift *Apus apus*

The largest counts on 14th were all noted as moving S with 47+ at Druridge Pools, 35+ at Cresswell Pond and 12+ at East Chevington (PRM). Colony counts of 30 at Cullercoats on 15th, 22 at Derwent Reservoir on 18th, 15 at Whitley Bay on 15th and six pairs nesting in Black Middens Bastle (Greenhaugh) on 23rd (ASJ/IFo). On 8th 15 were at Castle Island with 10 there on 17th, 12 at East Ord (Berwick) on 16th, ten at East Chevington on 13th, Hauxley NWT on 27th with two to eight at four other locations.

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Two were at R. Wansbeck (Low Angerton) on 9th with singles on four other dates (IRD), one to two at Haughton Strother on 11th were possibly breeding nearby (MR) with singles on R. Wansbeck (near Hartburn) on 11th, Ouse Burn (S Gosforth) on 22nd, Jesmond Dene on 24th and R. Coquet (Felton) on 30th.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Four were present all month at Spartylea and at Jesmond Dene on 10th, Harwood Forest on same date and Harthope Valley on 19th (CT/MJCo/STE/LJM). A male fed two juveniles in a garden at Stamfordham on 18th, three at Low Angerton on 9th (EC/IRD) with one to two at ten other locations with young feeding / being fed at Allen Banks, Barns Park (Cramlington), Newton Red House and Howick.



A great Spotted Woodpecker feeds its offspring
Eddie Crabtree's Garden
Stamfordham 23rd June

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Two recently fledged juveniles were at Netherwitton Common on 26th with one there on 27th (TRD/JD). Singles at Prestwick Carr on 11th, Ellington on 17th and juvenile at March Burn (nr Stonehaugh) on 23rd.

Falcon sp

A small falcon sp seen flying E in the distance on 29th (ADM) was possibly the Merlin that was seen at Chare Ends later on.

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Four were at Plenmeller Common on 18th (PRM) and three birds were seen at Holy Island on 6th (ADM) and a female with two fledged young were at Haughton Strother GPs (Humshaugh) on 25th (MR). Pairs were at Ellington and Druridge Pools on 10th (TB), Halton-Lea-Gate on 23rd (PRM), Holy Island on 25th (MJC) and the River Tweed Estuary on 25th (PRM). Single birds were at 14 sites throughout the month.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Only three records, all from Holy Island, with unsexed birds on 6th (CT/SR/AH) and at the Lough on 29th (ADM).

May bulletin clarification

The three Holy Island Merlin sightings by ADM were female.

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

A first-summer bird flew W through the Snook car park (Holy Island) on 30th (TF/JFa).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Two birds, an adult and a 2nd-calendar-year bird, were noted regularly in Budle Bay throughout the month (CGK/GPK). Two fledglings were on a crag face at a confidential site on 31st (ALT/DM/HD). Single birds were at Holy Island on 8th (ADM), East Ord (Berwick) on 13th (MHu), flying S at Tynemouth on 20th (DRW), Boulmer on 25th (BS) and at Yearle on 28th (SVM/AJM).

Ring necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

The highest count for the month was seven S at Gosforth Garden Village on 8th (MJC) with two at Walker Park on 20th (AJN).

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*

A female was in north dunes at Holy Island on 7th (ADM finder Ross Ahmed).

May bulletin clarification

On Holy Island a single male was found on 24th (SR), with a different male on 26th (ADM).

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

All reports were of singles at Ellington, Linton Lane area and Jesmond Dene on multiple dates and seven other widespread localities.

Magpie *Pica pica*

Four pairs were at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) during the month (BS) and five at Jesmond Dene on 24th (MJCo).

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

A flock of 200 fed with Rooks on hillside at Barrowburn (Coquetdale) on 9th (ASJ), 60 all month at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) during the month included only one juvenile (BS) and ten to 46 all month at Spartylea (CT) with 15 'sunning' themselves on the bowling green at Wallsend on 24th and ten at Jesmond Dene on 17th.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

Large flocks in Coquetdale with 310 at Makendon on 17th and 250 at Barrowburn on 9th (ASJ), 100 mostly juveniles at Puncherton Hill on 3rd (JR) with 18 at Snods Farm on 4th and pair with two young at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin).

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

On 9th 50 fed on hillside with other corvids at Barrowburn (Coquetdale) (ASJ), 25 fed below the Metro bridge at Willington Gut on 24th (CDH), 20 on the beach at Buston Links (Alnmouth) on 4th (STH) with two to three at Jesmond Dene and Newbiggin and Spartylea. Pairs fledged three young at Barns Park and Alexandra Park (Cramlington) on 9th and 23rd.

Raven *Corvus corax*

Five at Settlingstones on 26th (PRM), two in Upper Breamish Valley on 8th (MJC/KB) and one in Upper Coquetdale on 12th (TRD/JD).

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

A pair fledged ten young from a nest box in Eshott (MSH), family parties of six at Valley Park (Cramlington) and Haughton Strother GP (Humshaugh) both on 22nd (DM/MR), a pair fed young in nest at Fourlaws Plantation (Ridsdale) on 7th, three including young at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 4th (TD), two all month at Spartylea and singles at Castle Island, Jesmond Dene and Wark.

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

Pairs with four fledged young at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 17th and Todburn (Slaley) on 19th (ASJ) with singles in the Fontburn area on 5th and Elishaw (nr High Green) on 23rd.

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

A pair delivered food to young in nest at Church Wood (Longhorsley) on 1st (AB/LB), two at Airy Holm Reservoir (near Shotleyfield) on 15th (IFo) with singles at Valley Park (Cramlington), Linton Ponds and Holywell Dene.

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Six seen all month at Spartylea (CT) with a fledged family party of six in Blyth Town Centre on 13th (BS). Five pairs laid a minimum of 43 eggs fledging 42 at Eschott (MSH) and two boxes at Fulbeck (Morpeth) fledged four and five on 5th & 7th (TD). An adult fed two juveniles at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 29th with two in Jesmond Dene on 10th.

Great Tit *Parus major*

Four to six at Spartylea all month with six at Jesmond Dene on 17th (CT/MJCo). Two pairs laid 15 eggs but fledged only four in nest boxes at Eschott (MSH) with a family party of three in garden at Newton Red House on 19th.

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

A 10km drive at Otterburn Ranges on 9th found 120 singing birds with 32 at Blackburn Common on 23rd, 19 at St Mary's Island on 20th, 16 at Forestburn Gate on 9th and 15 at Smiddywell Rigg (Greenhaugh) on 23rd (ASJ). Nine sang on the Town Moor (Newcastle) on 4th, two males all month at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) and one at Aydon (Corbridge) on 28th.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

At Whiteadder Water (Berwick), around 100 birds with 35 burrows on 26th (TBr), 30 in Upper Breamish Valley on 29th (MJC/KB), six at Cuddystone Hall (College Burn) on 21st (AWG). Three occupied nests with chicks at Cullercoats on 16th and two in sand pit on Golf Course at Cheswick Dunes on 25th.



Young Sand Martins in a Seahouses nest hole
 Andy Hall
 23rd June

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Four nesting pairs at Foxhunters Ind Estate (Whitley Bay) on 1st (ASJ), six on nests at Howick on 11th (JAR), two nesting again for third year in natural cave at Black Crag (Wark Common) on 23rd (ASJ) and a pair at Millshield Picnic area toilets on 9th. Four all month at Spartylea, two south at Gosforth Garden Village on 23rd and 24th with two hawking over the lake at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 4th and one playing with a feather at Howick on 11th.

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

More than 50 at Castle Island on 17th, 30+ hawking over lake at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 4th (DM/PJA), 30 at Stag Rocks Bamburgh on 10th, nine at Linton Ponds on 7th and six all month at Spartylea. Nesting pairs numbered 12 at Ingram on 30th, ten at Clennel Hall on 17th, Highgreen Manor on 23rd and Canty's Brig (Berwick) on 26th (ASJ/TBr). Eight pairs nest building in Fontburn area on 6th, six pairs at Great Tosson on 17th and one pair fledged four young at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 23rd.

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*

A bird held territory at a confidential site to at least 17th. (TRD *et al.*).

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

Counts of ten came from Holywell Pond on 15th and Willington Gut (Wallsend) on 24th (TRD/CDH), while six to seven were at Cramlington (Alexandra Par and Barns Park), up to four at Spartylea and three at Branton GP, Jesmond Dene and Spindleston Woods.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Counts of singing birds included 22 at Wingates on 17th, 17 in the Breamish Valley on 3rd, 15 at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 17th and at Sidwood (Tasset Burn) on 23rd (ASJ), 12 at Fourlaws Plantation (Ridsdale) on 7th (IK) and five at Derwent Reservoir on 9th. Nine were in the Fontburn area on 5th, eight at Sipton Burn, six at Spartylea and four at Whittle Dene Reservoirs with one to two at a further seven localities, including a late migrant at Holy Island on 1st.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Holywell Dene held 12 singing males on 5th and 11 were singing in the Breamish Valley on 3rd (ASJ). Five late passage birds were at Holy Island on 7th, with two there on 3rd-4th. Four were noted at Jesmond Dene on 24th and a family party at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 20th included three fledged juveniles. There were three singing males at Howdon on 24th and one to two were reported from a further six localities.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

A total of 13 were singing at Whiteadder Water (Berwick) on 26th. At St Mary's Island there were three nesting pairs, one of which accompanied three fledged young on 10th, while another pair was feeding young in the nest. Four singing males were noted at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 1st and four were at Holy Island on 7th. At East Chevington two were ringed on 13th and one ringed and two re-trapped on 24th. Two were at Buston Links, Cresswell Pond and Linton Lane, while singles were at Corbridge (Aydon and Milkwell), East Cramlington LNR and Low Angerton, the latter carrying a faecal sac.

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

At East Chevington, ten were ringed and two re-trapped on 13th and 12 ringed and eight re-trapped on 24th (IF). Four were singing at Ladyburn Lake on 1st and three likewise at QEII CP on 7th and at Linton Ponds on 10th. Elsewhere, up to two were at Cresswell Pond (one carrying nest material), Druridge Pools and Killingworth Lake and one at Holywell Pond.

Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris*

A singing male was holding territory at Holy Island from 7th-17th (RA/ADM/TRD/IK). More unusual was another, seen and heard singing in Holywell Dene on 7th (ASJ).

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

Two were singing at East Chevington on 10th, while singles were in song at Arcot Pond, Bamburgh, Blyth, Castle Island, Coldcotes (Stonehaugh), Dinnington, Fontburn, Harwood Forest, Holy Island, Lynemouth and West Stobswood Pool.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Five in Jesmond Dene on 10th was the highest count (MJCo), followed by four + at Eshott and four at Cramlington (Valley Park) on 1st. Three were noted at Low Carritheth, while two were reported from Aydon (Corbridge), Castle Island (juvs.), Druridge Pools, Longhorsley Common, Prestwick Carr and Sipton Burn and singles at a further eight localities.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

15 at Wingates included a pair feeding four young on 17th (ASJ). Three pairs were in the Breamish Valley on 30th and up to four and a nest at Spartylea. A further four were reported from Airy Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield), while two were at Brada Quarry (Bamburgh) and at Longhorsley Moor. Singles were noted at a further ten localities.

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

A pair with three fledged young was at Holywell on 16th (ASJ) and three at Howdon on 23rd. Reports of singles came from Belsay, Blagdon, Brada Quarry (Bamburgh), Castle Island, South Snods Farm and Wansbeck Estuary.

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

A total of 21 birds at Holywell on 16th comprised seven pairs feeding young and seven fledged young (ASJ). Other sizeable populations included 15 singing males in the Breamish Valley on 3rd, 13 at Low Cocklaw on 25th and four pairs and four fledged young at St Mary's Wetland on 10th. Four singing birds were at Castle Island and Druridge Pools and a family party of at least four was at Blagdon. Three singing males were at Howdon and one to two birds at Aydon (Corbridge), Buston Links, Cramlington (Barns and Valley Parks), Davy Bank (Wallsend), Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin), Linton Lane, Longhorsley and Wallsend Dene.

A Whitethroat at Holywell
Alan Jack
on 24th June

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Four were at Jesmond Dene on 3rd and a family party of at least four was at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 6th. Singles were reported from Allen Banks, Cramlington (Valley Park), Housesteads and Winnows Hill (Slaley).



Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Up to six including fledglings were at Spartylea during the month, three in Jesmond Dene and singles at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) and Newbiggin town centre.

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Family parties of fledged young included eight (six young) at Alwinton on 17th (ASJ), seven (five young) at Ingram, five at Humford Mill (Bedlington) and four (two + young) at Fulbeck (Morpeth). In addition a pair fledged seven young from a nest box at Eshott and a juvenile was at Howick. Elsewhere, four were noted at Jesmond Dene, three were singing at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley), two were noted at Allen Banks, Blanchland and Low Carritheth and singles at Cramlington (Northumberlandia) and Whitley Bay, the latter flying S along the cliffs.



A juvenile Nuthatch
Alwinton
17th June by Alan Jack

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

One to two were reported from Blanchland, Clennel Hall, Debdon, Hollingreen (Allendale) and Spartylea.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

A large gathering at East Chevington rose from 600 on 12th to 1,000 by 24th (IF) and a post-breeding flock of 500+ (mainly juveniles) was at West Stobswood Pool on 23rd (MSH). Around 75 birds at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 11th declined to 45 by the month end, 45 juveniles were on garden feeders at Tynemouth on 20th and 40 were at Pegswood and Warkworth Lane. Up to ten (including nests) were at Spartylea throughout.

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

A singing male was near Chew Green on 9th (ASJ) and a female at Sipton Burn on 21st (PRM).

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

There were 31 singing males on Marden Estate (Tynemouth) on 11th (ASJ), up to six were noted at Spartylea throughout and four at Jesmond Dene on 24th. A pair with two fledged young was noted at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) from 13th.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

A very late migrant was at Holy Island (Straight Lonnen) on 14th (PRM).

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Nine singing males were noted at Ingram and a further seven elsewhere in the Breamish Valley on 30th (ASJ). Two adults and four fledged young were at Spartylea on 24th and four were singing at Jesmond Dene and at Monkseaton on 3rd and 11th respectively. Single birds were in song at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) throughout and at Wallsend Dene on 24th.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Ten were at Stonehaugh on 23rd (ASJ) and a family party of five at Ellington on 6th. Counts of two adults and two juveniles came from Blagdon on 4th and Marden Estate on 23rd, two were at Blanchland Moor on 9th and singles at Cowbyers Farm (Blanchland), Grindon Lough, Jesmond Dene and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

Up to 17 were noted at Spartylea, where there were four known nests, two of which fledged five and four young (CT). Four pairs were also found at Lordenshaw on 17th and two pairs each fledged two young from nests at Ingram by 30th (ASJ). There were three pairs at Highgreen Manor and Sidwood (both Tarsset Burn) and two pairs at Hesleyside Hall on 23rd. Four were in the Upper Breamish Valley on 8th, three at Harthope valley on 9th and pairs at Linbriggs (Upper Coquetdale), Shada (Bamburgh) and Simonburn. Reports of singles came from Alnham, Debdon, Harbottle, Nunwick, Rothbury and Widehope. Two passage birds were at Holy Island on 1st.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Five at Holy Island on 7th was the highest count, four were in Jesmond Dene on 17th and two were at a nest at Spartylea throughout.

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

A pair was feeding at least three fledged young at Derwent Reservoir on 18th (IFo).

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Two males were at Callaly on 3rd and Woodhead (Longframlington) on 11th and a female and juvenile at Chillingham Castle on 20th. Singles were also reported from Allen Banks, Beacon Hill (Longhorsley), Brown Rigg (Sharperton), Fontburn, Gilsland and Thrunton Woods.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

In the Breamish Valley a total of 22 on 30th comprised 13 males, two females and seven fledged young (ASJ). In Upper Coquetdale 11 males, two females and three fledged young were noted on 9th, while in the Milkhope Valley (Clennel) five pairs were feeding young in the nest on 17th and eight singing males were on 2km of moorland at Alwinton on 9th (ASJ). Elsewhere, three were at Harwood Forest on 10th, two at Hawsen Burn (Harthope Valley) and one at Fourlaws Plantation (Ridsdale).

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

Peak counts were nine (two pairs + five juveniles) at Cheswick Dunes on 25th (MHu), seven (four juveniles) at Druridge Pools on 3rd, six (four fledged young) in the Breamish Valley on 3rd, five (three fledged young) at Old Hartley on 1st, three juveniles at Sipton Burn on 21st and three (two juveniles) at Pithouse Fell (Slaley) on 9th. A male fed a single juvenile at Harthope Valley, a pair was at Warkworth Gut and two males at Long Nanny burn, while singles were noted at Belford Moor, Holy Island and Winter's Gibbet.



Two Stonechats

Above: an adult male at Seahouses on 23rd June by Andy Hall

Left: a juvenile at Old Hartley on 8th June by Alan Jack

Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

In Upper Coquetdale ca.25 on 19th comprised around seven family parties with fledged young from Shillmoor-Makendon (EC/JSB). Three pairs were at Milkhope Valley (Clennel) on 17th, a pair at The Wanneys on 23rd and two at Breamish Valley on 29th. Singles were noted at Harthope Valley and a confidential, potential breeding site.



A male Wheatear in the Upper Coquet Valley
9th June
Alan Jack

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

Four were present at Spartylea all month (CT). Two along Carey Burn on 9th (TRD). Singles at six other sites including juveniles at Makendon and Alwinton on 9th (ASJ).

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

55 were counted at Pegswood on 2nd (TD). 25 plus at Wark on 21st (PRM). 14 were at nests in Spartylea all month (CT). 12 at garden feeders all month at Marden and six likewise at Tynemouth on 25th (ASJ/CB).

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

60 at Haughton Strother on 22nd was a good count (MR). 12 were at Billylaw (Berwick) on 20th (MHu). Six at Little Mill on 10th (SW). Four at Priors Park (Tynemouth) on 1st, with five, including a fledged juvenile there on 3rd, where breeding had not occurred previously (MK/DRW). Up to five were present at Cresswell on several dates during June and at Allerdene on 27th. One to four were noted at a further ten sites, including two at garden feeders in Tynemouth on 2nd.

Dunnoek *Prunella modularis*

A family group of five were present all month in a Marden Estate garden (ASJ). Four were in Jesmond Dene on 17th and two at Spartylea all month.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava flavissima*

The month's highest count was nine at the regular site at Whittle Dene on 16th (SR). Elsewhere, two adults and a juvenile were at Haughton Strother on 29th (MR). One to two were seen at six other locations.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Two family groups totalling six birds were at Allenbanks on 15th (TD). Three pairs were found at Blanchland on 29th (RB/MB). A family of five was at Haughton Strother on 22nd (MR). Up to four were noted at Spartylea during the month (CT). Four was the total from three sites in Jesmond Dene on 17th (MJCo). Three juveniles were seen at Humford Mill on 15th (STH). One to two were at eight further sites.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla Alba*

Along the Upper Coquet on 9th, a total of 27 counted comprising pairs at eight sites and 11 juveniles (groups of four, four and three) (ASJ). 14, including juveniles, were at Haughton Strother on 22nd (MR). A pair with five juveniles which nested in the nearby cemetery, were on Whitley Bay Mini Golf on 26th. A pair feeding four fledged young were on the lawn at Clennel Hall on 17th (ASJ). An adult, also with four, fledged at Upper Breamish Valley on 29th (MJC/KB). One to two at five further sites, including a male taking food to a nest at Alexandra Park (Cramlington) (DM).

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

A ten km slow/stop drive in the Otterburn Training Area on 9th, produced 115 plus singing birds in display flights. At Blackburn Common on 23rd; a total of 32 noted singing and a minimum of ten nesting pairs were in fields at St. Mary's all month (ASJ). Three were seen on Newcastle Town Moor on 4th and six at Pithouse Fell (Slaley) on 9th (DM). A single singing at Seaton Sluice on 18th (RS).

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

Two were song-flighting at both Simonside on 9th and at Greenhaugh on 23rd (ASJ). Singles noted at Widehope, two sites at Thrunton Woods and Netherwitton Common and songflighting at Barleyhill during the month (TRD/JD/DM).

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

One song-flighting all month and seen carrying food at Cullercoats (Rockcliffe) (ASJ). Singles at two of the Farne Islands, Coquet Island and Berwick Little Beach.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Up to six present at Spartylea during the month (CT). Appeared common in pairs, many with young, during a cycle ride from Ponteland to Capheaton via Blackheddon on 8th (ASJ). A total of six were seen at five sites in Jesmond Dene on 10th (MJCo).

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Four males and a female visited garden feeders all month at Rothbury (TRD/JD). One to two were at five further sites.

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

A family group of five all month at garden feeders at Marden Estate (Cullercoats) (ASJ). Three other reports only, with up to four at Spartylea all month and singles at Jesmond Dene and Chollerford.

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

Ten were seen on Holy Island on 1st and 12 on 14th, eight were at Elwick also 14th (PRM). One to three were noted at seven other locations.

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis caberet*

15 plus males seen in Harthope Valley on 19th (LJM). 12 were in Breamish Valley on 30th and a family party of eight were feeding at Harbottle on 17th (ASJ). An adult with three fledged young was in the Upper Breamish Valley on 17th (MJC/KB). Three singing at Winnows Hill on 6th and three at Airy Holm Reservoir on 15th. One to two were at a further four sites during the month.

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

A very large flock containing many juveniles was feeding in pines near Harbottle on 17th. It held a minimum of 80 birds, of which 65 plus remained in the area on 24th (ASJ). Other large flocks indicative of a successful breeding season, were 40 at Debdon on 5th (JD) and 33 at Carshope (Upper Coquetdale) on 9th (ASJ). Four groups totalling 20 were at Harwood on 10th (STE). 13 were seen at Sweethope Lough on 12th (MJC). Eight were at Rugley (Alnwick) on 7th and family parties of seven and five were noted at High Green (Elishaw) and near Bellingham on 23rd (MJC/ASJ). Five were at Craggside on 28th, four at Arcot on 23rd and three at Thrunton Woods on 12th (MJC/STH/TRD/JD). Two were at Longframlington Common on 17th and Sidwood on 26th.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Up to 14 attended feeders at Marden Estate on each day of the month (ASJ). Between two and eight were seen at Spartylea all month (CT). One to four were noted at seven other sites during June.



A Goldfinch at St. Mary's
Alan Jack
24th June

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

Flocks of 35 were at Kyoie Woods on 16th and at Harbottle on 17th, the latter consisting of several family parties (GPK/ASJ). One to five seen at four other sites.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

26 counted within a one km radius at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 25th (TBr). Eight singing males were in the Breamish Valley on 3rd, seven at Ogle on 23rd and six at Holywell on 5th (ASJ). Three were singing at Weetslade on 9th and at Airy Holm on 4th (MK/IFo). Two were in a garden at Newton Red House on 3rd and singing at Beacon Lane (Cramlington) on 11th and Linton Lane on 14th. Singing males were noted at Linbriggs (Upper Coquetdale), Whittle Dene, Aydon and Longhorsely Moor during the month.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

In fields and bushes near St. Mary's Island eight pairs were located, some feeding young in nests on 5th. On 9th, eight males were singing along the Upper Coquet Valley (ASJ). Six were located on Holy Island on 1st (PRM). Five males sang in the Breamish Valley on 30th and at Arcot Pond on 11th (ASJ/DM). Four were seen at Swinhope (Allendale) on 28th (CT) and at St. Mary's on 23rd (AJN). Three sang at Haughton Strother on 11th and at Coanwood on 26th (MR/PRM). Two at Druridge Links on 17th. Singles seen at five further sites during the month.

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

Two flew S at North Blyth at 08:34 on 16th (STH). They had been seen earlier that day (07:50) at Whitburn in Durham moving N.

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

Seven hybrids were noted at Woodhorn Flashes on 13th (AP).

Birds of Unknown Origin

No sightings.

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

A.Allen, P.J.Allott, N.Anderson, M. & R.J.Bentley (MB / RB), T.Blake, J.S.Booth, K.Bradley, C.Bradshaw, T.Brewis (TBr), A. & L.Brunts, M.J.Carr, M.J.Cook (MJCo), E.Crabtree, T.Daley, T.R. & J.Dean, I.R.Douglas, S.T.Elliott, T. & J.Farooqi (TF / JFa), I.Fisher, P.C.Fletcher, D.F.Forshaw, I.Forsyth (IFo), P.Gilbert, A.Hall, C.D.Hampton, A.S.Hart, M.S.Hodgson, S.T.Holliday, M.Hutcheson (MHu), A.S.Jack, A.Janes, M.G.Kerby (MK), I.Kerr, M.Kirby (Mki), C.G.Knox, G.P.Knox, D.Lovatt (DLo), P.R.Massey, L.J.McDougall, D.Mckeown, A.D.Mould, A.J.Newson, M.Potts, A.Priest, J.Richardson, M.Richardson, S.Rippon, J.A.Roper, B.Steel, R.Stevens, C.Tudge, D.R.Watson, T.Watson, S.Westerberg, T.Wiffen (TWi).

Alnwick and District Natural History Society (R Poyer), Bamburgh Ringing Station, Hauxley Ringing Station, North Northumberland Bird Club, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

Apologies for any accidental omissions

BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION

This bulletin was compiled by Graeme Bowman (Geese to Mergansers), Steve Laing (Red Grouse to Cormorant), Trevor Blake (Hawks to Falcons), Tom Brewis (Oystercatcher to Godwit), Clive Hampton (Turnstone to Redshank), Eddie Crabtree (Kittiwake to Puffin), Tim Dean (Escapes, Hybrids and Unknown Origin, List of Contributors, Highlights), Peter Fletcher (Doves to Larks), Mike Richardson (Tits to Stonechat), Alan Jack (Dipper to Buntings).

Data Manager is Tom Brewis.

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 records for the month to ntbc.records@googlemail.com

Please email for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and grid references: Please use of standard location names and 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

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 online resource for anyone interested in birds. There are:

Photo Galleries – Here you can view hundreds of photos of birds from Northumberland, Newcastle and North Tyneside. Members are encouraged to contribute their own photos. Simply send them to galleries@ntbc.org.uk

Sightings – Here you can view reports of birds recently reported in the County. Anyone who would like to contribute and post sightings to this page, please email sightings@ntbc.org.uk Please note this section is moderated, so there may be a short delay before your record appears.

There are also County Checklists, Records Committee updates, Information on important Surveys, useful articles and reports on Bird ID and Overseas Birding Trips....and much more...

Please submit any other new content for the website to the main club email address at ntbcorg@gmail.com

New content such as Birding Trip Reports etc., is always welcome and very much appreciated.

To find out more please visit www.ntbc.org.uk

COUNTY RARITIES

The latest spreadsheets detailing county rarities in 2017 & 2018 are now on the NTBC website. These have been updated as a result of the recent County Records Committee meeting on 30th June. Info under www.ntbc.org.uk via the 'Members Resources' tab under 'Recording'. The links to the spreadsheets are on the right hand side. Please note that all reports showing 'Awaiting Description' will not be included in Birds in Northumbria 2017 unless descriptions are received. Even if you were not the finder I would welcome a report so that the sighting can be published in BIN. Report forms are available for downloading via a link at the bottom of the 'Recording' page.

TAWNY OWL SURVEY

Would you like to help with the **BTO** Tawny Owl survey in Northumberland?

If so, go to <https://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/project-owl> which will explain what is involved and register for tetrads.

This is a simple survey and will require about 20 minutes listening for Owls. Squares are available near Alnwick, south west of Berwick, The Cheviots, Bedlington, Ashington, Kielder and south of Hexham.



Puffins on Inner Farne by Tim Dean on 8th June

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2018 No 7

MONTHLY SUMMARY JULY 2018

4th September 2018



CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Whooper Swan	Still two summering individuals present.
Ruddy Shelduck	Female present at East Chevington then Hauxley from 14th.
Garganey	Up to three juveniles at East Chevington from 28th.
American Wigeon	Male still at Grindon Lough until 4th.
Green-winged Teal	Male at East Chevington on 26th.
Red-necked Grebe	One at Rockcliffe on 11th.
Great White Egret	Adult first seen at Berwick on 25th moved S to Druridge Bay area at end of month.
Little Ringed Plover	High count of 24 at Derwent Reservoir on 28th.
Black-tailed Godwit	Peak count of 109 at Cresswell Pond on 30th.
Curlew Sandpiper	Several individuals at various sites late in month.
Pectoral Sandpiper	Adult at Druridge Pools from 4th to 14th.
Red-necked Phalarope	Summer-plumage male at Branton GP on 25th.
Wood Sandpiper	Singles at various sites late in month.
Spotted Redshank	The long staying bird at Budle Bay stayed all month, now in summer plumage.
Mediterranean Gull	Peak of 94 at Newbiggin on 25th a record count.
Glaucous Gull	First-summer again reported at various sites during month.
Hobby	Adult at Cresswell on 30th.
Ring-necked Parakeet	Peak of 17 at Gosforth on 24th.

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 are;

13th September

Dr Colin Bradshaw - Northern Flights

With a liking for the landscape and birds of cold places, Colin talks about his travels in sub-Arctic zones of Europe

11th October

AGM followed by a talk by Graham Sorrie on Swifts Going, going.....

Swifts are an ancient species in trouble in the modern world. In this talk Graham will look at the Swift's life cycle, the issues facing these birds and how a programme in Morpeth is attempting to turn the tide.

A Goldfinch on thistles at Whitley Bay
by Alan Jack on 24th July



8th November

Rick Taylor community outreach officer, Scottish Borders

An update from the **South of Scotland Golden Eagle Project**, on the first translocations and release this year, and following the progress of the three young eagles.

13th December

Professor Martin Collinson, Aberdeen University: CSI BIRDING

DNA technology has advanced to the stage where migrant birds can easily be identified genetically using tiny samples of feathers. The talk will describe the advances and some of the key results from DNA –based identification in recent years. Do forensic techniques spoil birding as a popular hobby or enhance it?

FIELD TRIPS

Contact Steve Anderson seaswan@btinternet.com

23rd September 2018

Musselburgh

Contact: Steve Anderson Email: seaswan@btinternet.com

October 2018

Holy Island

Contact: Trevor Blake Email: trevor1958@live

CLASSIFIED LIST**Canada Goose** *Branta canadensis*

Peak concentrations were 184 at Castle Island on 3rd (LJM), 153 at Grindon Lough on 30th (SJH), 62-65 at Killingworth Lake (LJM) and Marden Quarry (KWY) and 45 at Newcastle Leazes Park. Ten to 21 were also at Bank's Pond (Dinnington), Big Waters, Druridge Pools, Merryshield gravel pits (Stocksfield) and the Tweed Estuary, and two to eight at Bothal Pond and Plennmeller Common.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Unseasonable singles were at Holy Island causeway on 8th (MJC) and the Tweed Estuary on 12th (MHu).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

At East Ord, 36 flew S on 18th and 36 N on 28th (MHu), and 16 flew S at Ellington on 25th (TB). Peak counts were 219 at Merryshield gravel pits (Stocksfield) on 28th (DLe), 176 at Airy Holm Reservoir on 20th (IFo), 112 at the Tweed Estuary on 30th (MHu), and 82-95 at Arcot Pond, Big Waters and Marden Quarry. Groups of 17-30 were also at Budle Bay, Grindon Lough and Plennmeller Common (latter included 2 broods of one juvenile each; PRM), and one to eight were at Castle Island, Newcastle Leazes Park and Spartylea.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

The Tweed Estuary held 452 on 12th (MHu), 101 were at Killingworth Lake on 15th (LJM), 30-38 at Castle Island (TB/DM/PJA) and East Chevington (DM/PJA), and 14 at Bothal Pond. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Whittle Dene Reservoirs	2	3 (2,1)	SR on 4th. Includes brood from June?
Holy Island	1	7	SR/AH on 22nd.
Wansbeck Business Park, Ashington	1	6	LJM on 3rd.
Ladyburn Lake	1	3	LJM on 17th.
Killingworth Lake	1	3	LJM on 15th. New brood.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Singles were at Budle Bay (CGK/GPK) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs (SR) all month.

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

138 were at Budle Bay on 9th (DF), 18 at Cresswell Pond on 25th and 30th (MJC/ASJ), and 17 at Castle Island on 15th (DM/PJA). One to two were also at Hauxley Reserve and West Ord. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods/crèches	No. of young	Observer/notes
Cresswell Pond	2	17 (10,7)	MSH on 5th.
Castle Island	2	11	STH on 3rd. As June?
Boulmer	1	10	MSH on 31st. Female + 10 very large young.
Budle Bay	1	8	CGK/GPK on 15th.

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*

An un-ringed adult female, of unknown origin, was at East Chevington north pool on 14th (NFO) and Hauxley Reserve on 22nd (IK/ASH) and 24th (EC/JSB).

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

A female was again at Newcastle Leazes Park, on 11th (GB).

Garganey *Anas querquedula*

Two (juveniles) were at East Chevington north pool on 28th (TF/JFa), and three were noted there on 30th (NFO).

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Druridge Pools held a peak of 18 on 25th (CH), six were at Bothal Pond on 28th (TF/JFa), and singles at Budle Bay, East Chevington and Hauxley Reserve. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Bothal Pond	2	13 (7,6)	TD on 18th. May include brood from June.

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

12 were at Castle Island on 15th (DM/PJA), ten at Big Waters on 17th (GB), three to four at Druridge Pools and Marden Quarry, and two at Cresswell Pond and East Chevington. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Bothal Pond	4	31 (10,9,8,4)	TD on 27th. Probably includes broods from June.
Ladyburn Lake	3	22	LJM on 17th.
Castle Island	2	15 (12,3)	LJM on 3rd.
Castron	1	9	JD on 13th.
Druridge Pools	1	8	MSH on 5th.
Linton Ponds	1	8	LJM on 24th.
East Chevington south pool	1	5	GB on 7th.
Hauxley Reserve	1	3	GB on 7th. New brood?
Holy Island Lough	1	1	SR/AH on 22nd.

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

Grindon Lough attracted a peak of 42 on 6th, with ten to 37 regularly throughout the month (SJH/PRM). Seven to eight were at Budle Bay (GPK) and Plenmeller Common (PRM), and one to two at Big Waters, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Hauxley Reserve, Monks' House Pool and Woodhorn Flashes.

American Wigeon *Anas americana*

One was at Grindon Lough on 4th (SJH).

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

12 flew N at Seaton Sluice on 25th (SSWT). Peak counts were 78 at Castle Island on 15th (DM), 60 at Big Waters on 8th (GB), 41-50 at Arcot Pond (LJM), Grindon Lough (SJH/PRM) and Newcastle Leazes Park (GB), and 32 at Bothal Pond and West Ord. Ten to 12 were at Spartylea and the Tweed Estuary. Breeding data (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated) were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Ladyburn Lake	8	44	LJM on 17th.
Whittle Dene Reservoirs	6	35	SR on 9th.
Killingworth Lake	3	9	LJM on 15th.
Castle Island	3	22	DM on 15th.
Linton Ponds	2	13	LJM on 24th.
Newcastle Leazes Park	2	6	GB on 11th.
Grindon Lough	1	10	SJH on 4th.
Cocklawburn Pond	1	6	MHu on 25th.
Wansbeck Business Park, Ashington	1	5	LJM on 24th.
St Mary's Wetland	1	5	MSH on 16th.
Sheepwash bridge	1	2	STH on 8th.

Teal *Anas crecca*

An unusually high July count at Seaton Sluice involved 188 N and 38 S (SSWT), 60 flew N at Annstead on 10th (GPK) and 39 N at Newbiggin on 11th (STH). Grindon Lough held a peak of 26 on 13th (PRM), 15-19 were at Derwent Reservoir (IFo) and Druridge Pools (GB), and ten at Plenmeller Common (PRM). Five to eight were also at Bothal Pond, Castle Island and Monks' House Pool, and one to four at Big Waters, Branton GP, Hauxley Reserve and Howdon. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Derwent Reservoir	1	7	IFo on 20th. Young about 2 weeks old.

In addition, a pair with two immatures were at Middle Ord Pond, Berwick (bred locally?) on 8th (MHu).

Green-winged Teal *Anas carolinensis*

A drake was at East Chevington north pool on 26th (TB/TF/JFa).

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

A peak of 16 adults was at Holywell Pond on 13th (MSH). Few were reported elsewhere, with one to two at Bothal and Swallow Ponds, Druridge Pools, East Chevington and Killingworth Lake. Much more unusual was a drake at Budle Bay on 2nd (GPK). Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Woodhorn Flashes	1	4	AP on 8th

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

One flew N at Seaton Sluice on 26th (SSWT). Largest gatherings were 35 at Castle Island on 11th (LJM) and 33 at Grindon Lough on 6th (PRM), while 11-12 were at Grindon Lough and Killingworth Lake. One to nine were also at Arcot Pond, Big Waters, Bothal and Middle Ord Ponds, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Spartylea and West Ord. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Ladyburn Lake	5	35	LJM on 17th.
Druridge Pools	4	19 (6,6,5,2)	TD on 19th. Young first noted on 3rd (IRD).
Woodhorn Flashes	3	21	LJM on 24th.
Mootlaw Quarry	3	20 (10,7,3)	ALT on 9th.
Hauxley Reserve	2	10 (5,5)	GB/LAR on 7th. Depleted broods from June?
Lynemouth	1	9	GB on 7th. On Lyne Burn.
Linton Ponds	1	8	LJM on 24th.
Holywell Pond	1	7	MSH on 27th.
Wansbeck Business Park, Ashington	1	7	LJM on 3rd.
Longhoughton Quarry	1	6	BS on 31st.
Monks' House Pool	1	6	DF on 9th.
Mootlaw Quarry	1	5	ALT on 12th.
Middle Ord Pond	1	3	MHu on 8th.



A healthy brood of Tufted Duck
Druridge Pools
by Tim Dean on 13th July

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

Peak counts were 502 at Holy Island on 8th (MJC), 128 at North Blyth on 13th (STH), 97 off Lynemouth on 16th (MSH), 50 off Seaton Sluice on 20th (SSWT), and 22 at Howick (JAR). Three to four were also at 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
Holy Island	2	9	IK. 6 small young at causeway and 3 half-grown young in Sandham Bay on 14th.
Blyth Estuary	1	2	LJM. New brood of 2 tiny young at the Sleekburn confluence on 3rd.
Howick	1	4	JAR on 9th.
Fisherman's Haven, Berwick	1	--	MHu on 27th.

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

Two flew N at Newbiggin on 12th (AP). Two drakes and a duck were off East Chevington on 17th (TF/JFa).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

At Seaton Sluice, 1,149 flew N and 153 S, including 280 N on 11th (SSWT). On the latter date 600 flew N at Newbiggin (STH), with a further 313 N there between 8th-10th (STH/ADM), while a total of 397 flew N at Annstead between 9th-23rd (DF), and 55-70 N at St Mary's (ASJ) and Whitley Bay on 9th (IJ). A 'raft' of 500+ was off Hadston Carrs on 4th (TF/JFa), with 300-350 at nearby Druridge-East Chevington (TD/TRD/JD) probably being part of this flock. Groups of 25-42 were on the sea off North Blyth, Seaton Sluice and Whitley Bay, while three to ten were off Cresswell and Warkworth.

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

At the main breeding site, two females and six juveniles were noted on 9th (TRD/JD) and 20 on 25th included 16 juveniles (TF/JFa). A duck was at Druridge Pools on 7th (GB/LAR).

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

A total of eight flew N and five S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). Peak concentrations were typically in the north of the county and included 96 at Calot Shad, the Tweed Estuary, on 8th (MHu), 86 at Holy Island on 8th (MJC), 85 at Spittal cliffs on 16th (MHu), 42-46 at Cocklawburn (MHu) and New Water Haugh (River Tweed; MHu), 37 at Boulmer and 19 at Meadow Haven, Berwick. Further south, 35 were at the Blyth Estuary on 23rd (LJM) and 26 off Hauxley on 22nd (IK/ASH). Three to seven were also at Budle Bay and Pauperhaugh (Rothbury).

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Two flew N at Newbiggin on 11th (STH). At Budle Bay a brood of five young on 5th dropped to two young by 9th and none by 15th (DF/CGK/GPK).

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

The only reports were of single males at Allenheads and Spartylea.

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

Seven were at Scald Hill (Cheviots) on 15th (IRD) and six were in the Rowley Burn area on 24th (AJH).

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

The only record was an adult with a brood of two juveniles at Simonburn on 19th (PRM).

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

The only reports were a good count of 24 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 23rd (SR), a pair with five juveniles at Boulmer, sightings of four at Beal Point, Ellington and Spartylea and singles at Barrasford and Linden Hall.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

Between one to five were at Spartylea all month (CT) and four were at Arcot Pond on 9th (DM).

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was seven (six N and one S), all between 6th-10th (SSWT). One or two were recorded at Annstead, Boulmer, Chevington Burn beach, Cresswell shore, Druridge, Newbiggin and Rockcliffe.

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*

A rare summer sighting of one close inshore at Cheswick Sands on 15th (CH).

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

There were 16 apparently occupied nests at Coves Haven (Holy Island) on 15th (per IK) and five juveniles were in nests at Longhoughton Quarry on 31st (BS). Two were present during a WeBS count in the Tweed Estuary on 12th (MHu) and a single was at Snab Point.



A Fulmar
Cullercoats
by Alan Jack
1st July

Sooty Shearwater *Puffinus griseus*

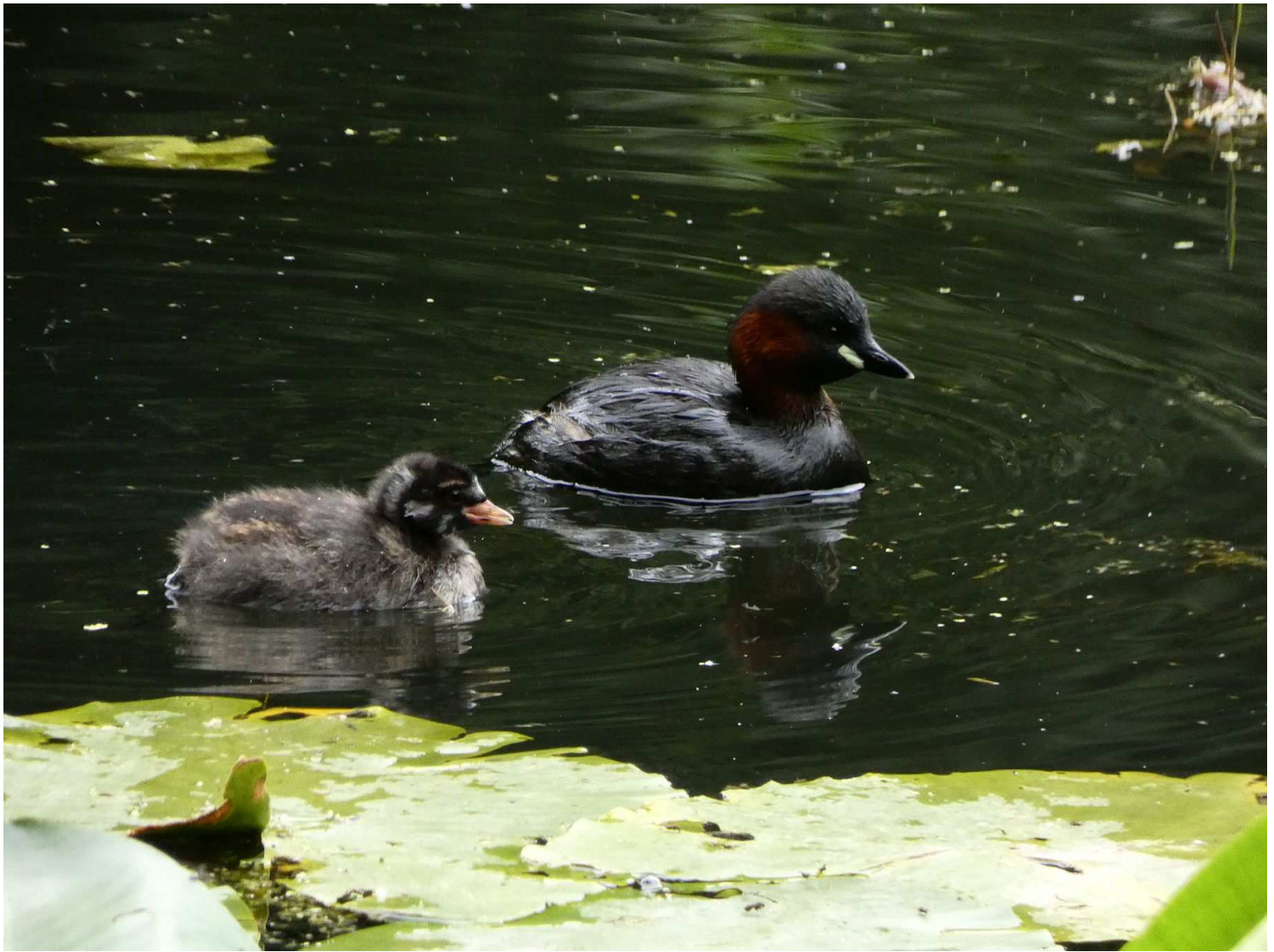
Apart from a single N past Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 7th (AP), the only sightings were on 10th when one flew N past Boulmer (BS) and four/five individuals were observed by four observers at different times at Newbiggin (STH/ADMc/DD/AP).

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 127 (113N, 14S) in 54 hours of observation and well below average for July (SSWT). Counts from other locations included Newbiggin with a total of 28N on 6th (AP), 66N in four hours on 9th then 76N on 10th (STH/ADMc/DD), Boulmer with 60N in 90 minutes on 10th (BS) and at Annstead with 32N on 9th then 21 on 10th. Two to seven were observed from several other locations along the coast.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) held a peak of 16 on 27th which included a brood of four young (TF/JFa/TD). Ten, all juveniles, were at Holywell Pond on 29th (CB), Arcot Pond held three broods of eight young, up to eight were at Grindon Lough throughout the month and seven were at Swallow Pond. One to four were at Airy Holm Reservoir, Capheaton Lake, Castle Island, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Killingworth Lake, Ladyburn Lake (Druridge Bay CP), Longhoughton Quarry, Marden Quarry, Shield on the Wall, Wallington and Woodhorn Flashes.



Little Grebes at Wallington
12th August by Janet Dean

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

One was at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 11th (IJ).

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Breeding data as follows:

Locality	Peak Count	Date	Observer/notes
Big Waters NWT	11	27th	Pairs with three, one and one young (GB)
Bothal Pond (Coney Garth)	8	July	Four adults throughout plus brood of four young towards end of month (TF/JFa). One pair on eggs from 27th (TD)
Airy Holm Reservoir	4	20th	A pair with two young, about ten days old (IFo)
Druridge Pools	3	13th	Two adults and a juvenile (TRD)
Whittle Dene Reservoirs	3	31st	Two adults and a juvenile (SR)
Ladyburn Lake	3	17th	Brood of two (LJM)
Holywell Pond	2	27th	One adult sitting on nest (MSH)

Further reports, without any reference to breeding, included ten at Widdrington Moor Lake on 31st (JD), two pairs at Swallow Pond, three adults at Derwent Reservoir, two at QE11 CP lake and a single flying past St Mary's.

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigrocollis*

The regular breeding site in SE Northumberland continued to hold a pair all month (TRD).

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

The Tweed Estuary peaked at a healthy 28 during a WeBS count on 12th (MHu). 11 birds, mostly juveniles, were at Arcot Pond on 30th (LJM) with 11 also at Castle Island (R Wansbeck) on 11th (STH). Ten were at Druridge in the "Budge" fields on 7th (GB), six were at Derwent Reservoir and one to five were at several other locations.

Great White Egret *Ardea alba*

One, presumably the same bird, toured the county towards the end of the month. First spotted on 25th at West Ord (Berwick) by a birding holidaymaker (BWG), it then moved on to Holywell Pond in the afternoon on 27th (MSH), appeared at Widdrington Moor Lake on 28th (TB) and finally at Cresswell Pond on 31st where it was chased by two Grey Herons before heading off west (LJM).



A Great White Egret
Holywell Pond
Mike Hodgson
18th July

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Sightings increased this month as birds returned to the county. Seven N on 14th was a new site day record at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). Five were at Sleekburn on 25th (TB), four was the peak monthly count at Budle Bay from 25th to the end of the month (CGK/GPK), three flew south over the Long Nanny burn mouth on 19th and three were at Middle Ord pond (Berwick). One to two were at Alnmouth, Beal Point, the Blyth Estuary, Druridge Pools, North Seaton, Warkworth Gut and Whiteadder Point. One at Derwent Reservoir on 20th was the first documented record for the site, with a second bird joining it the next day (IFo).

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

Passage numbers at Newbiggin included 660N in two and a half hours in the early morning of 10th and 393N in two hours of the following morning (STH). 233 flew N in three hours past Annstead on 9th and 180 N in three hours on 23rd (DF). At Cocklawburn on 28th up to 180 per hour bucked the trend by flying S (DF) and the only movement of note at Seaton Sluice was 125N per hour on 6th (SSWT).

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

In what is traditionally a poor month for this species, the only sightings at Seaton Sluice were two singles flying N on 1st and 29th (SSWT). The roost at Meadow Haven (Berwick) peaked at eight on 15th (BWG) and two were at Blyth South Harbour on 12th.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Passage at Annstead (Seahouses) included 45 (30N and 15S) on 9th, 58 (23N and 35S) on 16th and 46 (28N and 18S) on 23rd (DF). East Chevington peaked at 81 birds on 17th (TF/JFa), 40 were on offshore rocks at North Blyth on 22nd (STH) and 34 were in the Blyth Estuary on 12th (LJM). 29 were at Castle Island on 15th, further inland Derwent Reservoir held 19 on 27th (IFo) and 18 were at the base of the Couple statue at Newbiggin on 26th (LJM). Five to nine were at Castle Island, New Water Haugh and the Tweed Estuary.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetuss*

On 15th a bird was observed soaring over Black Law (Holy Island) and drifted across to Pilgrims' Way (IK). A bird was noted at Derwent Reservoir on 24th (IFo).

Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorous*

A very dark bird, nothing like a Northumberland Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo* was seen at Howick Hall on 20th (PHa).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

A young bird was food begging from an adult near Arcot Lane on 25th (DM). At Ellington a male, female and a juvenile female were all seen separately throughout the month (TB). Single birds were also seen at Ashington, Cawfields, Cramlington, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Greenhaugh, Howick, Jesmond Dene (Newcastle), Leazes Park (Newcastle), Newbiggin and at Rockcliffe.

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

An adult male and an adult female were at Boulmer on 30th (BS). On 23rd a juvenile was at East Chevington ((TF/JFa), while on the 28th males were seen flying South over the Bay Horse Pub (Cramlington) and at East Chevington (TF/JFa). A female flew S at Cresswell Home Farm on 29th at 21:15 (TB). A 'cream crown' was seen flying S over Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 31st (AP/EB).

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

An adult female was seen on 30th and 31st at a confidential site (TBr).

Red Kite *Milvus Milvus*

A family party of two adults and two fledged young were seen at Dipton on 5th (AJ *et al.*). A pale tawny immature was noted at Fern Hill (Oakwood) on 1st (ALT). A bird was perched on the wall at the west end of Grindon Lough on 4th before being chased off SE by two Lesser Black-backed Gulls *Larus fuscus* (SJH) and single birds were also seen at Derwent Reservoir on 21st and 26th (IFo).

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Three birds were at High Green (Greenhaugh) on 18th (AJH). Two birds were at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 6th (DM), West Hartford on 10th (TB) and at Spartylea on 27th (CT). Single birds were noted at Ellington, Grindon Lough, Howick, Morpeth, QEII CP and at West Hartford.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Three juveniles were seen along the eastern edge of the North Pool at East Chevington on 13th (TRD) and an adult and up to two juveniles were also noted at East Chevington on several dates (TF/JFa). Three juveniles were at Arcot Pond on 30th (LJM) and two juveniles were also noted there on 22nd (STH). Single birds were at Arcot Pond, Big Waters NWT, Castron, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, East Chevington and Swallow Pond (Wallsend).



A Water Rail at Swallow Pond by Tim Dean on 13th July

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

16 birds were at Big Waters NWT on 23rd (GB). Eight birds including one small young were at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 16th (GB) and eight birds were at Linton Pond on 24th (LJM). Seven birds were at Castle Island on 15th (DM/PJA) and four were at Jesmond Dene (Newcastle) (MJCo) and Spartylea (CT) on 1st, Druridge Pools on 15th (DM/PJA) and at Derwent Reservoir on 26th (IFo). One to three were seen at Arcot Pond, Ashington, Druridge Bay CP, Grindon Lough, Gunnerton (Barrasford), Holywell Pond and at Howick.

Coot *Fulica atra*

55 birds were at Bothal Pond on 6th (TF/JFa) and 48 birds were counted there on 27th (TD). Grindon Lough peaked at 41 birds of which at least eight pairs nested but all failed probably to Crow predation (SJH). Big Waters NWT had 31 birds on 22nd (GB). Exhibition Park (Newcastle) had 13 birds including nine juveniles on 17th (GB) and ten birds were at Shield on the Wall on 15th (MRS). One to four birds were at Arcot Pond, Druridge Bay CP, East Chevington and Linton Pond,

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Coastal movements were in full swing for much of the month with a total of 324 (56N, 268S) seen off Seaton Sluice from 9th onward (SSWT) while the highest count at North Blyth staithes was 64 on 16th (STH) and 54 were seen from Seahouses, Annstead on 23rd (DF). Other double-figure counts at coastal sites were 34 at Cresswell Pond on 26th (TF/JFa), 26 in the Tweed Estuary on 12th (MHu) and 24 at St Mary's on 9th (MSH). The largest inland counts were 30 at Plenmeller Common on 19th (PRM), a maximum of 20 at Spartylea on 1st (CT) and 13 were counted at Grindon Lough on 6th (PRM). Other, smaller counts came from Allenheads, Big Waters NWT, Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Castle Island, Cramlington (Southfield Green), Druridge Bay, Ellington, Gunnerton (Barrasford), Newcastle (Gosforth, Regent Centre).

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

All records came from Cresswell Pond where incubation on two nests was occurring until 5th (MSH, IRD). On the same date a minimum of five eggs were seen scattered across the sand bar (IRD). The report with the highest number of juveniles was of four on 25th (CH).

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

The highest counts were from a mixture of inland and coastal sites. Derwent Reservoir had the largest count of 174 on 20th (IFo) while 170 were reported from Cresswell Pond on 19th (TD). Monks' House Pool had 120 on 30th (DF), Grindon Lough reported 119 on the same day (SJH) and Castle Island had a count of 108 on 11th (STH). Big Waters NWT had 96 birds on 22nd (GB), R Tweed, New Water Heugh reported 86 on 30th (MHu) and 50 were at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) on 18th (TD). Smaller counts came from Arcot Pond, East Chevington N Pool, Ellington (Chugdon Wood), Howdon, Plenmeller Common, Shield on the Wall, Spartylea and West Hartford.

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

Most reports were coastal with return movement evident off Seaton Sluice on 10th-14th when a total of 92N and 273S were recorded (SSWT). At Boulmer 300 were seen on 30th (JAR) and a count of 120 was made at Howick on 23rd (JAR). Cresswell Pond had a count of 113 on 26th (TF/JFa), a total of 108 were recorded on Holy Island (28 on the east shore and 80 on the Lough) on 8th (MJC) and over 100 were reported from St Mary's on 21st (MSH). The largest inland counts were of 91 at Plenmeller Common on 19th (PRM) and of a flock of 90 flying S at Derwent Reservoir on 25th (IFo). Other counts were from Cocklawburn, Grindon Lough, Newbiggin (Beacon Pt), Rockcliffe, Seahouses (Annstead), St Mary's Island.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Five birds were seen at Seahouses, Annstead and at Howick on 23rd (DF, JAR) and three were at Budle Bay on 24th (CGK/GPK). Singles were reported from Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Holy Island, Newbiggin (Beacon Pt).

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

A pair successfully bred with three chicks at Budle Bay (GPK). Ten birds were seen at Cocklawburn on 18th (MHu), seven were at Derwent Reservoir on 24th (IFo) and six were at St Mary's on 24th (ASJ). A single bird was reported from Big Waters NWT.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

An exceptional report of 24 came from the far south of the county on 28th (IFo). Most of the number were made up of a loose flock of 15 juveniles and four adults which were likely on passage. Twenty-four appears to be the largest count to-date for this species. Other reports were from a range of sites in the south east of the county.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Return movement was evident with 28 birds seen flying S at Boulmer on 28th (BS) while one north and 21S off Seaton Sluice were reported from 25th (SSWT). Further double-figure counts came from Holy Island with 11 on 22nd (SR/AH), 11S at St Mary's on 30th (JBU) and 10+ at Budle Bay on 20th (GPK). Further reports of smaller counts came from Beal, Berwick (Spittal cliffs), Cheswick (Black Rocks), Cresswell Pond NWT, Cresswell (Snab Point), Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Ellington, Ellington (Chugdon Wood), Hauxley NWT, Newbiggin, Newton (Long Nanny), Seahouses (Annstead) and Tweed Estuary (Calot Shad).

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Yarrow Slake, in the Tweed Estuary had 136 on 19th (MHu) and Seaton Sluice Watch Tower logged a monthly total of 53N and 20S. Forty-six were at Lindisfarne NNR, Beal Point on 22nd (MJC) and the same number were seen at Cresswell Pond on 29th (IRD). On 8th Big Waters NWT reported 39 (GB), about 30 were seen at Warkworth, Birling Carr on 14th (CW) and the Tweed Estuary had 28 on 12th (MHu). Smaller counts came from Cheviot (Scald Hill), Cramlington (Southfield Green), Derwent Reservoir, Grindon Lough, Howdon, Plenmeller Common, Spartylea, Wark (North Tyne).

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

The St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Is) roost had a maximum count of 236 on 8th (MJC). Elsewhere the largest count was of nine at Boulmer on 30th (BS). Seven were seen at Budle Bay on 9th which is a low count at this stage for this site (GPK), six returning birds in full breeding plumage were noted among the Holy Is non-breeding roost on 14th (IK) and three birds were seen at Cresswell Pond on 29th (JFa/TF). Other reports came from East Chevington (North Pool), Lindisfarne NNR (Beal Point) and St Mary's.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

The count of 109 on 30th at Cresswell Pond (MJC) appears to be the highest July count on record and the sixth largest count overall. Eighty-two birds were seen flying S on 8th (TB), the maximum count at Cresswell Pool was of 69 on 26th (MSH) and 47 were seen at the nearby North Pool, East Chevington on 6th (AA). On 11th, 44 were counted at R Wansbeck, Castle Island (LJM), Druridge Pools had 28 on 1st (IRD) and 23 were flying S on 18th (ASJ). Smaller counts from other sites were from Arcot Pond, Berwick (Little Beach), Budle Bay, Druridge 'Budge' fields, Holy Island, Monks' House Pool and Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Return passage was noted at Seaton Sluice from 16th with a total of 10N and 20S during the month (SSWT). One at Cresswell Pond on 19th increased to 26 by 26th (TD/TF/JFa). Other gatherings were 26 at Stag Rocks on 31st (DF), 24 at Boulmer on 19th (BS), eight at Hauxley NWT on 7th (GB) and four at St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) on 8th (MJC).

Knot *Calidris canutus*

The first passage to the S was a single on 16th at Seaton Sluice. A good passage of 278 S was recorded on 29th at the same site (SSWT). At Boulmer, 108 flew S on 29th (BS), 150 were at Budle Bay on 29th (CGK/GPK) and a 'spectacular' gathering of 120 summer-plumaged birds was at Stag Rocks on 31st (DF). The wader roost at Beacon Point, Newbiggin saw four birds on 17th gradually increase to 105 by 31st (AP). Single-figure counts were made at Cresswell Pond from 17th-28th then 39 were seen on 29th and a peak of 86 on 30th (MSH/MJC *et al.*). On the Farne Islands, a group of 40 birds included three summer-plumaged birds, the rest all appearing to be non-breeders. Smaller numbers were seen at other coastal sites, with 27 at the River Coquet Estuary on 31st (CSa), ten at Boulmer on 30th (JAR) and one-eight at Amble Braid, Beal Point (Lindisfarne), East Chevington and St Mary's Island and Wetland.

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

One flew S at Seaton Sluice on 10th and one S at Ellington on 29th (SSWT/TB). The Druridge Bay area claimed the lion's share of records, with Cresswell Pond having one on 19th and a maximum of six by 29th (TD/LJM/IRD *et al.*). East Chevington saw one on 14th increase to five by 31st (Nfo/TF/JFa *et al.*) and the Druridge Pools and surrounding fields attracted two on 3rd (TRD/JD) and four by 29th (TF/JFa). Elsewhere, two were at Monks' House Pool on 20th-21st (DF/GPK) and singles were seen at Budle Bay, Boulmer, Castle Island, Charlton Mires and St Mary's Wetland.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

The first returning adult was at Castle Island on 11th (STH) with another summer-plumaged adult at East Chevington on 13th and 30th (TRD/NFo). One-two adults were reported from Cresswell Pond from 28th-31st and a single was at Budle Bay on 29th.

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

The start of passage was noted at Seaton Sluice from 20th with a total of 13N and 42S during the month (SSWT). Six were back at the favoured haunt of Chevington Burn beach on 19th with probably the same birds (reported as five) at Druridge Bay the day before (TD/NFo). Four were at St Mary's Wetland on 30th and two were at both Cresswell Pond and Holy Island (IJ/MJC/TF/JFa).

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

A monthly total of 5N and 61S was noted at Seaton Sluice with the first movement from 19th (SSWT). At Budle Bay the first returning birds were seen on 8th with a count of eight made, which increased to a record July count of 1,100 by 29th (CGK/GPK). The first birds at Cresswell Pond were five on 5th (MSH) increasing steadily through the month to a least 310 by 28th (TF/JFa). Similar but smaller numbers were noted at nearby East Chevington with eight on 12th (MSH) increasing to 80 by 31st (TRD/JD) and Druridge Pools with one on 3rd (TRD/JD) and over 50 by 28th (TF/JFa). At other coastal localities, 100 were at Beal on 28th (DF), 30 at Amble Braid on 21st (GB) and 26 (eight juveniles) at St Mary's Island on 24th (ASJ). One-eight were at Berwick Little Beach, Castle Island, Cheswick Black Rocks and the River Tweed Estuary. Inland at Derwent Reservoir, 16 adults were seen on 27th where two juveniles had been seen on 24th (IFo). Two adults were at Plenmeller Common on 19th (PRM).

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

Three-five birds were reported from the Farne Islands (Brownsman, Big Scarcar and Inner Farne) on 8th and 24th (TF/JFa/MSH). One was at Warkworth Pier on 26th (CSa) and one at Stag Rocks on 31st was the earliest by a fortnight for the observer (DF).

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

The only report was a single roding at Winnows Hill (Slaley Forest) on 9th (DM).

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Numbers reported from Cresswell Pond fluctuated during the month with 14 on 13th, 25 on 26th and three on 31st (TRD/MSH/TRD/JD *et al.*). At Derwent Reservoir, 15 were seen on 24th but only a single on 31st (IFo). The peak at Druridge Pools was nine on 13th (MJC) and one or two were at Big Waters, Grindon Lough, St Mary's Island and Whitley Bay golf links in the last four days of the month.

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius*

A summer-plumaged male was found at Branton GP on 25th (TRD/JD/MJC/TF/JFa).

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Five flew S at Seaton Sluice from 18th onwards (SSWT). Birds were conspicuous at many lowland and coastal sites as return passage commenced. The highest count came from inland, with 12 reported from Derwent Reservoir on 24th (IFo). Birds were present at Castle Island all month and had reached a high of seven by 31st (TB/STH/DM *et al.*). Counts of five came from Big Waters, Budle Bay, Druridge Pools and Whittle Dene Reservoirs (GB/CGK/GPK *et al.*) and four were at Cresswell Pond and Wylam (GB/TF/JFa/AA). Three were present at each of Branton GP, East Chevington and Monk's House Pool and one-two were at Castron, Charlton Mires, Corbridge, Hauxley NWT, Holywell Pond, Linton Ponds, Long Nanny, Newbiggin, New Water Haugh (River Tweed) and West Stobswood.



A splendid view of a Red-necked Phalarope for Tim Dean
Branton Ponds on 25th July

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Passage began in earnest this month with the first noted at Charlton Mires on 1st (AH). However, only singles were seen at Beanley, Big Waters, Druridge Pools and East Chevington until 23rd-31st, when a surge of birds was recorded. A notable concentration of nine was at Castle Island on 31st (TB) and groups of three were at Holy Island, West Stobswood and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Two birds were at Boulmer, Budle Bay and Druridge Pools and singles were reported from Arcot Pond, Cresswell Pond, Linton Ponds, Lower Whiteadder (Berwick), Middle Ord Pond (Berwick) and Warkworth village (flyover garden tick).

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

The monthly totals from Seaton Sluice were 22N and 38S (SSWT). At Budle Bay, 56 were recorded on 9th increasing to 250 by 26th (DF/MSH/GPK). The River Blyth Estuary held 137 on 23rd (LJM) and 71-75 were at Amble Braid and Cresswell Pond (GB/TF/JFa). Double-figure counts came from the River Tweed Estuary with 44 on 12th (MHu), North Blyth Staithes with 43 on 6th (STH), 22 at both Castle Island on 11th and Yarrow Slake (River Tweed) on 19th (MHu) and 15 were at St Mary's Wetland on 30th (IJ). One-four were reported from Cheswick Black Rocks, Derwent Reservoir, Grindon Lough, New Water Haugh (River Tweed), Plenmeller Common and Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay).

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

This attractive wader was reported from five sites with two birds at Budle Bay on 4th (*per* CGK) and two also at Druridge Pools and Cresswell Pond on 29th (TF/JFa). Singles were seen at Bothal Pond on 17th (TF/JFa) at East Chevington on 31st (TRD/JD).

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

The resident adult was noted all month at Budle Bay.

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Autumn passage was well underway with birds distributed mainly at coastal sites. The largest concentration was seven at Beal Point (Lindisfarne) on 22nd (MJC). Counts of three came from Holy Island and New Water Haugh (River Tweed) and two were reported from Druridge Pools, East Chevington and the River Coquet Estuary. Singles were seen at Bothal Pond, Boulmer, Budle Bay, Castle Island, Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Holywell Pond and Spittal Cliffs (Berwick).

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

Movement S past Seaton Sluice comprised 400 per hour on the 27th, the only movement of note (SSWT). Two counts at sites in the River Tweed Estuary were 124 and 238 on 12th and 20th respectively (MHu) and 49 were on the rocks at Church Point, Newbiggin on 9th (STH).

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Gatherings of 180 and 300 were recorded at Castle Island on two dates at mid-month (LJM/DM/PJA), with 250-300 in the River Tweed and River Blyth Estuaries on 12th (LJM/MHu) and 107 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 31st (SR). Elsewhere, 50 were at Howick and Jesmond Dene (JAR/MJCo) and 43 at Grindon Lough was the largest of several counts made there throughout the month (SJH). A German colour-ringed adult seen at Brierdene, Whitley Bay on 16th had returned there for the 5th successive winter (MSH).

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

One or two birds were seen on dates throughout the month from eight localities namely Annstead (Seahouses), Beacon Point (Newbiggin), Boulmer, Budle Bay, Castle Island, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools and East Chevington (13 observers); these birds were a mix of different ages.

Mediterranean Gull *Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus*

Over 40 records were submitted of this popular species as its numbers climbed to a remarkable record summer total of 94, including 36 juveniles, at its favoured locality, Newbiggin on 25th (STH). Other counts from Newbiggin, increasing from around mid-month onwards, ranged from 7 to 52, some of which were juvenile birds (STH/GB/TF/JFa/TB/CH/BS). A recently cut field at Widdrington Moor Lake regularly attracted up to a maximum 37 on 22nd (MSH). Elsewhere, three to five were noted at Budle Bay (CGK/GPK), Cresswell (Snab Point) (MJC), Ellington (TB), Lynemouth (MSH) and Seaton Sluice (SSWT) with one to two, some juveniles, at many other localities between Lindisfarne in the north and St Mary's Island (numerous observers).

Common Gull *Larus canus*

A recently cut field at Widdrington Moor Lake attracted at least 150 on 21st (MSH) and 24 mainly juveniles were at Berwick, Little Beach on 15th (MHu). Small numbers of up to eight, mainly juveniles, were recorded at seven other coastal and inland localities.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

Only three records, consisting of four in the River Tweed estuary (MHu), two in Druridge Bay (DM) and an immature at Grindon Lough (PRM).

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

The summering immature bird was recorded at St Mary's on 9th (ASJ) and was seen moving N at nearby Rockcliffe on the same day (IJ). On 12th it was again recorded at Boulmer (BS).

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

On the River Tweed Estuary 483 were counted in a WeBS on 12th (MHu) and elsewhere, 34 were on Druridge Bay beach near Chevington Burn mouth, 11 at Castle Island (DM/PJA) and a single in Jesmond Dene (MJCo). A colour-ringed 3rd-summer bird at St Mary's Island had been ringed in June 2017 at a York waste disposal site (MSH). Breeding records during the month came from the North Blyth staithes where four pairs had a total of eight young (STH) and four nests held nine young at the Admiral Business Park, Cramlington (LJM).



A summer-plumaged Mediterranean Gull

Newbiggin

Alan Jack

25th July

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

At Derwent Reservoir, 16 were present, including four adults, on 26th (IFo), five was the maximum number from eight counts at Grindon Lough (PRM/SJH), four were in the Tweed Estuary (MHu), two at Cramlington (DM) and in Jesmond Dene (MJCo) with a single at Arcot Pond (DM).. At the Admiral Business Park (Cramlington) four nests held ten young during the month (LJM) and a pair with a juvenile at Cramlington had probably bred on a nearby factory roof on the Northumberland Business Park (DM).

Tern *sp*

At least 250 mixed Arctic, Common and Sandwich Terns were on the recently exposed scrape at the East Chevington North Pool on 26th, (TF/JFa)

Sandwich Tern *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

At Seaton Sluice, passage of 465S and 75N was counted in six hours on 27th (SSWT), 114 moved N at Annstead on 23rd (DF) and during a significant tern passage on 30th, 54 flew S in a 10-minute sample count at Boulmer (BS). On the East Chevington North Pool scrape, exposed for the first time for some years following this summer's drought conditions, 95 gathered on 12th (MSH) and on other dates, 40 were at Druridge (TRD), at least 20 on the rocks at St Mary's Island (MSH), 12 in the River Tweed Estuary (MHu) and up to ten were at three other localities. A darvic-ringed bird, UFA, was in the River Tweed Estuary (MHu) and a ringed bird UFZ at East Chevington on 19th was ringed as a chick on the Farnes in July 2013.

Little Tern *Sternula albifrons*

At least 20 were at Black Law, Holy Island on 8th (MJC), eight were at Budle Point on 29th (CGK/GPK), three at Beacon Point, Newbiggin which flew off S on 30th (AP) and two at Boulmer on 21st (BS). The Long Nanny colony had an extremely disappointing season although it started off well with 42 active scrapes with eggs; however, Storm Hector struck in mid-June when there was almost total abandonment with a number of wind-blown clutches followed by some predation. All these nests were lost. Numbers of adults started to re-occupy the colony again fairly quickly and 23 nests, probably mainly re-lays, were counted. Unfortunately, most of these were lost to predation by Weasel/Stoat but mainly by Black-headed Gulls. The last chick succumbed on 27th July. No young survived to fledging this season (National Trust Rangers via MSH).

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*

The first birds seen moving S at Seaton Sluice were three on 27th-28th (SSWT). At Boulmer, 12, including one juvenile, fed offshore on 29th (BS), four, including two juveniles, flew N on 23rd at Annstead (Seahouses) (DF) and three, including a juvenile, were at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 20th (AP); singles were noted elsewhere on Brownsman (Farne Islands) (MJC/TF/JFa), East Chevington North pool (DM/PJA) and at St Mary's Island (JBu). The Coquet Island colony comprised 118 pairs this year, the highest since 1970, and it is expected that around 118 chicks will successfully fledge (TAC).

Commic Tern *Sterna hirundo/paradisaea*

During late evening of 30th at Boulmer, 117 were counted flying S in a 10-minute sample count during a significant southward tern passage (BS).

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

The only significant passage count at Seaton Sluice was 220N and 35S in six hours watching on 27th (SSWT). At East Chevington North pool regular gatherings of up to 110 were attracted to the scrape (TRD), ten were at Cresswell Pond on 5th (MSH) and elsewhere, one to six were recorded at Arcot Pond, Branton GP, Castle Island, Cramlington, Cresswell Pond, Druridge, Holywell Pond, Howdon, Leazes Park, the River Tweed Estuary and Swallow Pond.

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

At Annstead, 75 were counted moving N on 9th (DF) and at at least 80, including 31 1st-summer birds, gathered at East Chevington on 12th (MSH). Ten, including 1st-summer birds, were at Hauxley NWT on 7th (GB) and seven at East Chevington on 14th (NFO). The Long Nanny colony had a successful breeding season this year when large numbers of birds again returned to the colony and a maximum count of 1,789 nests with eggs was made. Storm Hector in mid-June caused some losses, although not catastrophic, and a number of later nests were presumably the result of some re-lays. Many fledged young were seen on the wing despite predation mainly by Brown Rat, Weasel and the inevitable Black-headed Gulls (National Trust Rangers via MSH). The remains of an adult found here had been ringed at this site in July 2005 (MSH).

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

An adult was on Brownsman (Farne Islands) on 8th (MJC/TF/JFa) and a juvenile moved S past Seaton Sluice on 30th with almost certainly the same individual seen on the same day at St Mary's Island (JBu/IJ).

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

Two were seen moving N on 10th at Beacon Point, Newbiggin (AP) and from 4th-10th singles flew N at Beacon Point, East Chevington Rockcliffe, Seaton Sluice and St Mary's Island (TF/JFa/IJ/JBu/AP), some of these sightings probably being of the same individual; the monthly total of only two seen at Seaton Sluice was described as 'well below average' (SSWT).

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

A 'well below average' month for this species also at Seaton Sluice with only 11 recorded from 47 hours' watching (SSWT). Reports throughout the month comprised daily totals of seven at Beacon Point, Newbiggin (AP), five at East Chevington (TF/JFa) and Boulmer (BS), four at East Chevington (TF/JFa), three at Annstead (DF) and Beacon Point (AP) and one to two at Howick, Rockcliffe and St Mary's Island.

Auk *sp*

The maximum count of Guillemot/Razorbill at Seaton Sluice was 175N, 30S in 1.5 hours on 3rd with few records thereafter although small numbers were on the sea throughout with young seen later in the month (SSWT),

Common Guillemot *Uria aalge*

Three reports only, comprising one and five at Druridge and two at East Chevington (TRD).

Razorbill *Alca torda*

Three flew N at St Mary's Island on 2nd (MSH) and two were at Druridge on 13th (TRD).

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

At Seaton Sluice, 95 flew N and 50S in 1.5 hours on 6th with few seen thereafter (SSWT) and six flew N at St Mary's Island on 2nd (MSH); a single recorded at Druridge was the only other sighting (TRD).

Rock Dove *Columba livia*

A peak of 179 were at Stakeford Railway Bridge on 25th with 88/89 there on 3rd and 11th (DM/PJA/LJM), ten at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 29th (DM) and present at Jesmond Dene.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

High count of 36 at the regular site Howdon on 28th (CB), eight at Plenmeller Common on 13th (PRM) with five there on 19th and at Jesmond Dene on 1st and Chugdon Wood Ellington on 20th. One to three were at six other locations.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

Up to eight at Spartylea during the month (CT) with seven including one juvenile at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 7th and at Jesmond Dene on 30th.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

A maximum of 12 at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) with juvenile present on 7th (BS), up to six at Spartylea all month and Dinnington on 30th with four at Prestwick on 24th.

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

Nearly all gone with singles at Blanchland on 27th (CB) and Holy Island on 29th (SR/AH).

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Three chicks flew in a barn at Spartylea from 24th with a family group of five present all month (CT). Three adults hunted at Cresswell Pond on 25th (ASJ), two at a nest box at Howick on 4th (JAR) and singles regularly at Cresswell Pond and at five other locations. A pair at Holy Island had laid a new clutch of 5 eggs on 13th following predation (IK).

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Four seen or heard all month at Spartylea (CT), two or more including juveniles at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 30th (TD) and two at Whittingham on 23rd (CW). A juvenile was at Wark (N.Tyne) on 8th with singles at Nunwick and Chugdon Wood (Ellington).

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

An adult with two juveniles was at Druridge Pools on 23rd and 31st (TF/JFa/TB) with one to two there regularly, the only other report being an adult male ringed at Mickley Square on 21st (DLe).

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

A juvenile was at Plenmeller Common on 13th (PRM) with singles at Holy Island on 22nd and 29th (SR/AH) and Hauxley NWT on 24th (EC/JSB).

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Single birds at Plenmeller Common on 13th and 19th (PRM).

Swift *Apus apus*

A large gathering of at least 250 over fields at Bellasis Bridge (Blagdon) on 10th (STH) with 100 at Plessey Checks (Cramlington) on 12th (TB), south at Seaton Sluice Watch Tower on 20th (SSWT) and at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 30th (TBr). Nesting colony counts were encouraging with 70 around Hill Heads (Whitley Bay) on 22nd, 40 at Cullercoats on 20th and Lynemouth on 21st (ASJ) with 15 at Stamfordham (EC). 15 to 60 were at nine locations with one to eight at a further eight, three being at East Chevington on 31st.

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

All reports were of singles at Jesmond Dene on 1st, Branton GP on 9th, Wylam on 17th, Gosforth on 19th & 24th, Gunnerton (Barrasford) on 22nd and Borough Woods (Morpeth) on 29th.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

A female was seen with two juveniles at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 7th with three there on 4th and 14th (TB). Two all month at Spartylea, at Humford Mill (Bedlington) on 11th and Valley Park (Cramlington) on 13th and 17th (DM). Singles were at five other locations.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

On 20th one was at Banks Pond (Dinnington) (MJC), at Gunnerton (Barrasford) on 22nd (PRM), Hexham on 25th (AJH) and Horton Grange (Blagdon) on 26th (PCF).

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Five birds were at Plenmeller Common on 19th (PRM) and three were seen at Grindon Lough on 10th (PRM) and at Rowley Burn on 24th (AJH). Two noted at Plenmeller Common on 13th (PRM) and single birds were at 13 other sites during the month.

June Bulletin Revised text:

Five birds were noted in the Upper Breamish Valley on 8th (MJC/KB) and three birds were in the Upper Coquetdale on 9th (ASJ) and at Whiteadder Point (Berwick) on 26th (TBr). Two birds were at Coanwood Pond, Ellington, Great Wanney Fell, Grindon Lough, Harwood Forest, Low Cocklaw (Berwick), Northumberlandia (Cramlington), Sipton Burn, St Mary's Island and the Upper Breamish Valley. Single birds were at 12 sites during the month.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

An un-sexed bird was seen hunting around a Sand Martin *Riparia riparia* colony at Warkworth on 14th (CW). A female was at Holy Island on 20th (AJR) and an un-sexed bird was also noted there on 29th (SR/AH). An immature was seen at Boulmer on 25th and daily after that (BS) and a female flew S at St Mary's Island on 29th (ASJ).

June Bulletin Revised text:

A male carrying prey at a confidential site on 23rd (ASJ) was the only record this month.

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

An adult was seen hunting Hirundines over the golf course at Newbiggin on 20th (AP). On 29th an adult male flew N at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) at 21:10h and a male was also noted at Snab Point (Cresswell) on 30th (AJR).

June Bulletin Revised text:

An unsexed bird was flying around the entrance to Druridge Pools before flying off S on 3rd (TF/JFa).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

An adult and two noisy juveniles were at a confidential site on 12th (ALT) and two adults were at Budle Bay on 29th (BS) and a single bird was noted there throughout the month (GPK). Single birds were seen at Castle Island on 6th (STH), at Widehope a bird was hunting moths/butterflies on 8th (TRD/JD), a bird was also at Holy Island on 8th (MJC) and a juvenile was on a roadside lighting column at North Shields on 17th (ASJ).

June Bulletin Revised text:

A bird with prey flew onto the ground at a confidential site where it was joined by its mate on 9th (TRD). Single birds were seen at Stobswood on 8th (TF/JFa) and at Budle Bay on 13th (GPK).

Ring necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

17 flying N early morning of 24th at Gosforth Garden Village was the monthly maximum (MJC).

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Two to five at Ellington regularly in the second half of the month (TB), two at Jesmond Dene on 15th (MJCo) and Valley Park (Cramlington) on four dates from 14th to 26th (DM). Singles were at Cramlington and Kielder Forest.

Magpie *Pica pica*

A high count of 18 at Ellington on 16th (TB), ten at Prestwick Carr on 5th with a family party including four juveniles at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 10th and four at Jesmond Dene on 1st.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

One noisy flock of 200+ at Widdrington Moor Lake on 24th (MSH), 108 at Castle Island (R. Wansbeck) on 11th and 56 at Holywell Pond on 1st (LJM) with up to 12 at Spartylea during the month and two to seven at Newbiggin and Jesmond Dene.

Rook *Corvus frugilavus*

A pair with two fully fledged young were at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) all month (BS).

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

On 23rd 56 were at Budle Bay (DF), 38 at Beacon Hill (Cramlington) on 9th (DM) with six at Jesmond Dene on 30th and family party of four at Newbiggin all month.

Raven *Corvus corax*

Four at Plenmeller Common on 13th (PRM), three at Scald Hill (Cheviots) on 15th (IRD) and singles at Grindon Lough on 4th and Widehope on 31st.

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

There was just one report of two at Jesmond Dene on 15th (MJCo).

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

Singles at Rothbury on 1st (JD) and Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 25th (NFO).

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

A family party of six with at least one adult at Farnley Gravel Pits (Corbridge) on 1st (DLe), and a family of more than three at Big Waters NWT on 26th (GB) with two at Prestwick Carr on 5th, Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 24th and Mickley Square on 28th. Singles were at Linden Hall regularly and at Pegswood Moor and Hauxley NWT.

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Four all month at Spartylea (CT) and a family group of four at Howick on 23rd (JAR) with two at Jesmond Dene on 1st.

Great Tit *Parus major*

A family party with six juveniles at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 10th (DM), six at Spartylea all month and two at Jesmond Dene on 15th.

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Three sang at St Mary's on 24th (ASJ) and two at Grindon Lough on 4th (SJH).

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

A gathering of 65 at Cresswell Pond on 30th (MJC), around 50 at mouth of Coquet on 14th (CW) with six S at Ellington on 14th and feeding at Alnham Moor on 26th with three found at Newcastle Town Moor on 27th noted as rare at this location (GB).

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

On 22nd, 115 were at Holy Island (MJC), 50+ at Grindon Lough on 30th (SJH), 46 at Cocklawburn on 25th (MHu), thirty at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 31st (BS) with 19 south at Beal Point (Lindisfarne NNR) on 22nd. One to eight were at three other locations with four nests containing fledglings noted at Howick on 9th (JAR) and significantly lower than normal numbers at Stamfordham this year (EC).

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

Ninety at Holy Island on 22nd (MJC), 45 at Newcastle Town Moor on 27th (GB), 42 feeding near nests at Old Hartley on 14th and at nesting colony at Cresswell Village on 25th (ASJ). More than 20 were at Castle Island on 3rd, 18 at Lynemouth on 21st, 16 at Newbiggin on 15th and six to ten at six other widespread localities. Cliff nest sites were used at Fisherman's Haven (Berwick) with ten AON on 17th (CH) with cliff nesting at Holy Island for second year running with four to five nests (IK) but only 14 nests at Royal Border Bridge (Berwick) down from 60+ in 2006 (MHu).

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

There were family parties of 14 at East Chevington on 13th (TRD), eight at Ellington on 3rd and five at Cramlington (Valley Park) on 19th; three were at Jesmond Dene on 1st.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Four were singing at Druridge Pools on 21st and three juveniles were at Gosforth Garden Village on 24th. Singles were reported from Barrasford, Cresswell Pond (juv.), Grindon Lough, Marden Quarry (juv.) and St Mary's Island.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

A family party was at Cramlington (Valley Park) on 10th, while four were noted at Jesmond Dene on 1st and two were singing at Howick on 10th.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

A family party of five plus two others in song were at St Mary's Island on 24th (ASJ), Four were at Arcot Pond on 9th, Big Waters on 26th and Needles Eye (a pair with two juveniles) on 7th, while three + were at Bamburgh on 28th. Two were singing at Holy Island Lough on 22nd, two were at Cramlington (Barns Park) on 11th and a single at Cresswell Pond on 30th.

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

A total of 13 at Ladyburn Lake on 17th included three juveniles and eight singing males (LJM). Singles were also seen and/or heard at Ashington (Wansbeck Business Park), Bamburgh, Caistron, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, St Mary's Island and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

All reports were of singles 'reeling' on various dates at Arcot Pond, Big Waters, Cheswick, Cramlington (Valley Park), Cresswell Pond, Dinnington, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Lynemouth and Merryshields (Stocksfield).

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Eight (seven juveniles and one adult) were ringed at Mickley Square on 28th (DLe). Two adults and two juveniles were at Howick on 10th and at Marden Quarry on 22nd, three + were noted at Bamburgh on 28th and two were at Cramlington (Valley Park) on 7th and at Jesmond Dene on 1st.

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

The only reports were of family parties of four at Woodhorn on 13th and three at Howick on 23rd (TB/JAR).

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

Three family parties totalling 17 birds were noted at St Mary's Island on 24th (ASJ). Another family group of six was at Prestwick Carr on 5th, while three were singing at Howdon on 4th. Up to two were noted at Cramlington (Valley Park) and singles at Cramlington (Beacon Lane), Holy Island (22nd) and West Sleekburn.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

The only reports were of three in Jesmond Dene on 1st and singles at three Cramlington localities on various dates.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Four were at Spartylea all month and three at Jesmond Dene.

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Three were at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 7th (TB) and two in Jesmond Dene on 30th. Elsewhere, singles were noted at Capheaton Lake, Cramlington (Valley Park), Rothbury, Spartylea and Wallington.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Three juveniles were ringed at Corbridge Common on 16th (DLe). Elsewhere, singles were reported from Boulmer, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Hauxley NR and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

The largest gatherings were 250 at Boulmer on 30th, 200+ at Newton Links on 3rd, 150+ at Grindon Lough on 4th, 150 at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) and 100 at Prestwick Carr on 6th. Elsewhere, 40 at Monks' House Pool on 8th included an albino and up to 12 were at Spartylea throughout.

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Successful breeding records included a pair with three young about to fledge from a garden nest at Prestwick Carr on 26th (PCF), a pair with two newly fledged young at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 30th and a pair with two young at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) from 1st-5th. Up to five were at Spartylea all month, three were at Jesmond Dene and a leucistic individual was at Cramlington on 3rd.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Up to six were at Spartylea throughout the month (CT) and five at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 22nd. Three at Cramlington (Valley Park) included two back in full song by 12th and a single was at Jesmond Dene.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Two at Byker on 28th was the only report (PCF).

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

Three family parties comprising about 14 birds were noted in an around a Stamfordham garden from 12th-24th (EC). Two family groups were at Widehope on 21st and adults accompanied single juveniles at Derwent Reservoir and Linden Hall on 27th and 30th respectively. Single birds were also reported from Blakehopeburnhaugh (Kielder) on 10th, Wallington on 12th and Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 23rd.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Counts of four came from Jesmond Dene and Spartylea.

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

A juvenile at Derwent Reservoir on 24th was the only report (IFo).

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Two were at Wark (North Tyne) on 22nd; a juvenile was ringed at Corbridge Common on 14th, a migrant female was at East Ord (Berwick) on 22nd and a juvenile at Spartylea on 26th.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

An adult and a juvenile were at Widehope on 30th (JD) and a single early migrant at Holy Island on 30th.



A juvenile Whinchat at Widehope on 30th July by Janet Dean

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

Confirmed breeding came from Widehope where a pair accompanied two juveniles on 4th (TRD/JD); a male and a juvenile were at Cresswell Pond on 17th and an adult and juvenile at Howick on 23rd. Elsewhere, four (two pairs) were at Harwood Forest on 1st and a pair at Buston Links on 2nd, while singles were noted at Boulmer, Cocklawburn, Druridge and Newton Links.

Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Two juveniles, one of which looked recently fledged, were at Mootlaw Quarry (Ryal) on 9th (ALT) and a single bird was at Widehope on 30th.

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

Two were present all month at Sparylea (CT). Singles were noted at three other river sites.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

300 fed throughout the month in a field near the Priory (Holy Island) (IK). 100 plus were in a wheat field at Bamburgh on 28th (BRS). 86 were counted at Battlesteads (Wark) on 9th (CB). 40 frequented the track to Holywell Pond on 28th/29th (ASJ/CB). 30 plus were at Wark on 22nd (PRM). 12 to 18 were at Sparylea all month, with 16 also all month at garden feeders at Marden (CT/ASJ).

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

Six were at Battlesteads (Wark) on 9th and five plus fledged young were at Heddon on the Wall on 1st (CB/AA). Two to four were at six other sites and a pair with a second brood was in a Ponteland garden nest box breeding here for the first time in 20 years (CW).

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

Four were at Sparylea and a Marden Estate garden all month (CT/ASJ). Two newly fledged birds were in a Cramlington garden on 12th (STH). A single in Jesmond Dene on 1st.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava flavissima*

A good breeding season seems evident this year, with 12 seen at the favoured site of Whittle Dene on 4th and also 12, mainly juveniles at Boulmer on 24th (SR/BS). Nine, including six juveniles, were at Cresswell Pond on 25th (ASJ). Eight, including juveniles were seen at Ross Back Sands on 21st (JBu). Seven were at Druridge Pools on 13th (MJC). On 17th, a family party, two adults and three juveniles, arrived from the north at St. Mary's Wetland before moving off, where three juveniles seen on 19th and two on 16th. Six juveniles were noted here on 24th (ASJ). Five birds flew S at East Chevington on 19th (TFa/JFa). Five were also seen at Ross on 25th (MJC). A family group of four were at Druridge Pools on 19th (TD). Three juveniles were seen at Cresswell Pond on 5th (MSH). One to two were noted at a further nine sites during the month.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

A family of six were at Sheepwash Bridge (Bedlington) on 8th (SHT). Four were at Pauperhaugh on 9th and a family of four at Mitford on 29th (ID/TD). Three juveniles at Howdon on 4th suggested local breeding (CB). Two juveniles were at Ellington on 24th and a single juvenile at Whitley Bay cemetery on 18th (TB/ASJ). One to two were at eight further locations, including one at Newcastle Town Moor on 16th and 17th (GB).

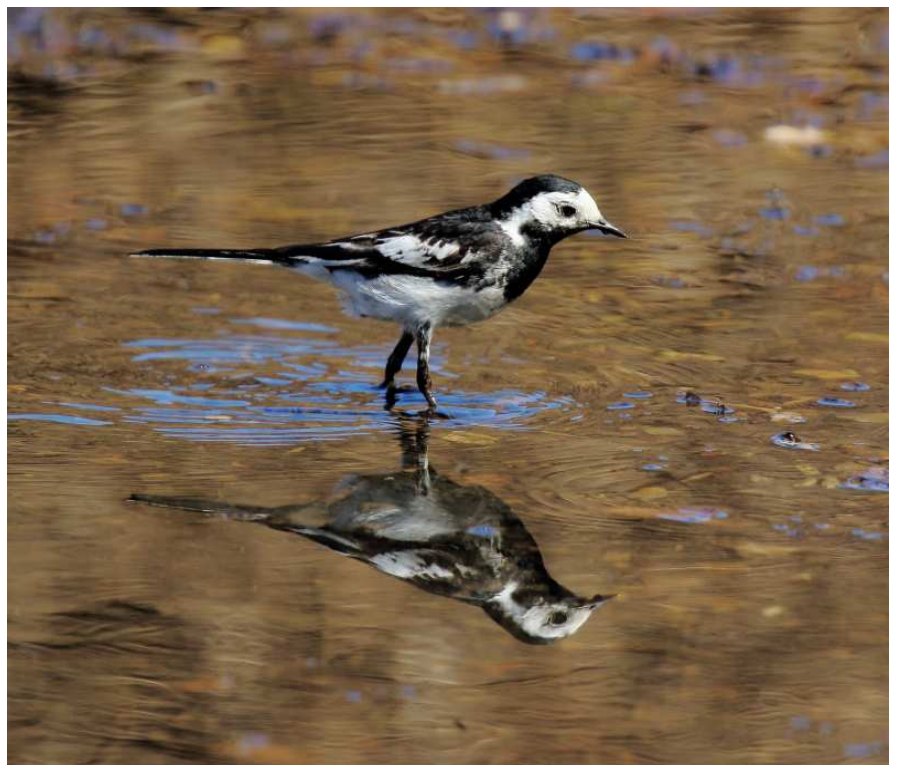
Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

28 were counted across Holy Island on 22nd with the same number seen at Derwent Reservoir on 27th (MJC/IFo). 12 noted at Beal Point on 22nd (MJC). Ten were feeding at St. Mary's on 12th, included seven juveniles (ASJ). A pair with three young were at Ladyburn Lake on 17th (LJM). One to four were at three other sites.

A Pied Wagtail reflects in Whitley Bay

Alan Jack

12th July

**Meadow Pipit** *Anthus pratensis*

17 flew S at Beal Point on 22nd (MJC). Six were still song fighting at St. Mary's on 24th (ASJ). One was seen carrying food at Newcastle Town Moor on 27th (GB)



A Whitley Bay Pied Wagtail ignores Alan Jack
12th July

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

The sole report this month was of a song flying male at Cullercoats on 12th (ASJ).

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Six present at Spartylea all month (CT). Five were in Jesmond Dene on 1st (MJCo).

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Three males and a female were present at garden feeders most days during the month at Rothbury (TRD/JD). Three males were seen at Howdon on 8th and two juveniles were there on 2nd. Three also at Jesmond Dene on 24th (CB/MJCo). One to two were at five further sites.

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

Only three reports came this month, with six at Boulmer on 24th and five present all month at Marden Estate and Spartylea.

Linnet *Carduelis canabina*

83 were at Beal Point on 22nd and 70 at Seaton Point (Boulmer) on 16th (MJC/NFO). 20 were seen at Cresswell Pond on 30th (AJR). 12 were at St. Mary's on 10th and two were at Plenmeller Common on 13th (ASJ/PRM).

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis caberet*

Poorly reported with four at Plenmeller on 13th and two at Grindon on several dates being the only records (PRM).



An unusual image – a Rock Pipit in Flight

Alan Jack
1st July
Cullercoats

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

Six were noted in Harwood Forest on 1st (MJC). Three were at High Green on 18th and at Grindon the following day. Two birds were heard at Wallington on 12th and Blakehopeburnhaugh on 20th. One flew SW over Monkseaton on 15th and one was at Wark on 23rd.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Two flocks totalling 80 birds were at St. Mary's/Old Hartley in the final week (ASJ). 25 were at Prestwick Carr on 30th and ten to 20 at Spartylea during the month(PCF/CT). Up to 16 (mostly juveniles) attended garden feeders at Marden Estate all month (ASJ). Singles at two further sites.

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

Four birds were seen at Grindon on 19th (PRM). Three were occasional visitors to garden feeders at Rothbury during the month (TRD/JD). One to two were at Linden Hall on two dates (NFO).

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

Three singing males were at Gunnerton on 22nd and likewise at Linton on 24th (PRM/LJM). One sang at Big Waters on 12th (GB).



A Greenfinch has a bathe
Whitley Bay
12th July
Alan Jack

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Ten were at St. Mary's on 24th and included four males still singing (ASJ). A female and juvenile were at Big Waters on 29th and a single at Ellington on 14th(GB/TB)

ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN

Escapes

No sightings

Hybrids

Correction from June 2018

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

The sighting from last month should have read ' One hybrid with seven Canada Geese at Woodhorn Flashes on 13th June (AP).

Birds of Unknown Origin

No sightings

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

R.Ahmed, A.Allen, P.J.Allott, T.Blake, J.S.Booth, G.Bowman, C.Bradshaw, T.Brewis (TBr), J.Bucknall (JBU), M.J.Carr, M.J.Cook (MJCo), E.Crabtree, A.Curry, T.Daley, T.R. & J.Dean, I.R.Douglas, T. & J.Farooqi (TF / JFa), P.C.Fletcher, D.F.Forshaw, I.Forsyth (IFo), P.Gilbert, A.Hall, P.H.Hanmer (PHa), A.S.Hart, C.Hartley, A.J.Hewitt, S.J.Hingston, M.S.Hodgson, S.T.Holliday, M.Hutcheson (MHu), A.S.Jack, A.Janes, I.Johnson, I.Kerr, C.G.Knox, G.P.Knox, D.Leat (DLe), P.R.Massey, L.J.McDougall, D.Mckeown, A.J.Newson, N.F.Osborne, A.Priest, A.J.Richards, S.Rippon, J.A.Roper, C.Saunders, M.R.Smith, B.Steel, R.Stevens, A.L.Todd, C.Tudge, T.Watson, C.Wright, K.W.York.

Alnwick and District Natural History Society (R Poyer), Bamburgh Ringing Station, Berwick Wildlife Group, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

Apologies for any accidental omissions

BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION

This bulletin was compiled by Graeme Bowman (Geese to Mergansers), Steve Laing (Red Grouse to Cormorant), Trevor Blake (Hawks to Falcons), Tom Brewis (Oystercatcher to Godwit), Clive Hampton (Turnstone to Redshank), Eddie Crabtree (Kittiwake to Puffin), Tim Dean (Escapes, Hybrids and Unknown Origin, List of Contributors, Highlights), Peter Fletcher (Doves to Larks), Mike Richardson (Tits to Stonechat), Alan Jack (Dipper to Buntings).

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 records for the month to ntbc.records@googlemail.com

Please email for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and grid references: Please use of standard location names and 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

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 online resource for anyone interested in birds. There are:

Photo Galleries – Here you can view hundreds of photos of birds from Northumberland, Newcastle and North Tyneside. Members are encouraged to contribute their own photos. Simply send them to galleries@ntbc.org.uk

Sightings – Here you can view reports of birds recently reported in the County. Anyone who would like to contribute and post sightings to this page, please email sightings@ntbc.org.uk Please note this section is moderated, so there may be a short delay before your record appears.

There are also County Checklists, Records Committee updates, Information on important Surveys, useful articles and reports on Bird ID and Overseas Birding Trips....and much more...

Please submit any other new content for the website to the main club email address at ntbcorg@gmail.com

New content such as Birding Trip Reports etc., is always welcome and very much appreciated.
To find out more please visit www.ntbc.org.uk



Another view of the Red-necked Phalarope

Branton Ponds on 25th July

Tim Dean

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2018 No 8

MONTHLY SUMMARY AUGUST 2018

4th October 2018



CONTENTS

County Records Committee vacancy

Ornithological reports 1935 to 1950

CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Mute Swan	Large count of 563 at Tweed Estuary.
Whooper Swan	Still two summering individuals present.
Ruddy Shelduck	Female still present at Hauxley until 21st.
Garganey	Several passage birds including first record for Derwent Reservoir.
Black-throated Diver	Two off East Chevington on 27th.
Great Northern Diver	Single at Druridge on 21st.
Black-necked Grebe	Single at Cresswell Pond on 4th.
Spoonbill	Three N past Warkworth on 2nd.
Bittern	Summering bird still at East Chevington.
Curlew Sandpiper	One or two at Cresswell Pond and Beal Pt.
Pectoral Sandpiper	Adult at East Chevington up to 16th.
Wood Sandpiper	Singles at various sites during month.
Spotted Redshank	One or two at various sites during month.
Greenshank	High count of 17 at Beal on 29th.
Mediterranean Gull	New county record of 117 at Newbiggin on 8th.
Yellow-legged Gull	Juveniles at St Mary's and Tynemouth.
Caspian Gull	Polish ringed 'PKCS' present all month at Amble Harbour.
Black Tern	One or two offshore at various sites late in month.
Long-tailed Skua	Sub-adult passed various sea watch sites on 13th.
Swift	Record day count of 580 at Seaton Sluice on 2nd.
Hobby	Several sightings during month.
Black Redstart	Single at Cocklawburn on 15th.



A common Sandpiper at Holywell Pond by Trevor Basey on 1st 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 are:

11th October

AGM followed by a talk by **Graham Sorrie** on **Swifts Going, going.....**

Swifts are an ancient species in trouble in the modern world. In this talk Graham will look at the Swift's life cycle, the issues facing these birds and how a programme in Morpeth is attempting to turn the tide.

8th November

Rick Taylor community outreach officer, Scottish Borders

An update from the **South of Scotland Golden Eagle Project**, on the first translocations and release this year, and following the progress of the three young eagles.

13th December

Professor Martin Collinson, Aberdeen University: **CSI BIRDING**

DNA technology has advanced to the stage where migrant birds can easily be identified genetically using tiny samples of feathers. The talk will describe the advances and some of the key results from DNA –based identification in recent years. Do forensic techniques spoil birding as a popular hobby or enhance it?

FIELD TRIPS

Contact Steve Anderson seaswan@btinternet.com

CLASSIFIED LIST

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

An early return was witnessed at Fenham Flats, where 420 were present on 30th (DF).

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Eight flew S at Seaton Sluice on 30th. Large concentrations involved 400 at Hauxley Reserve on 10th (SRB), 280 at Buston Links on 6th (STH), 269 at Grindon Lough on 8th (PRM), 203 at Haughton Strother GP on 11th (SW), and 102-126 at Derwent Reservoir and West Ord. Groups of 55-68 were at Druridge Pools and Holywell Pond, 23-45 at Brenkley, Cresswell Pond, Killingworth Lake and Warkworth, and eight to 19 at Amble Braid, Bothal Pond, Castle Island, Newcastle Exhibition Park and the Tweed Estuary.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

One was at the Tweed Estuary on 10th (MHu).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Peak counts were 961 at Haughton Strother GP on 11th (SW), 750 at Airy Holm Reservoir on 30th (SW), 600 at Derwent Reservoir on 25th (IFo), 384 at the Tweed Estuary on 10th (MHu), 218-250 at Druridge Pools and Newton flash, and 150-167 at Big Waters and Holywell Pond. Groups of 38-63 were at Budle Bay and West Ord, and 15-23 were at/over Arcot Pond, East Chevington, Grindon Lough and Spartylea. A neck-collared individual (orange band, NJB) at Airy Holm Reservoir on 2nd had been marked at Nosterfield LNR, North Yorkshire on 21st February 2016 (IFo).

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Singles were at Airy Holm Reservoir on 30th (IFo) and East Chevington on 29th (TF/JFa).

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Three flew N and two S at Seaton Sluice between 19th-24th (SSWT). An impressive 563 were counted at the Tweed Estuary on 10th (MHu), 115 were at Killingworth Lake on 25th (SRB), 53 at East Chevington on 14th (IRD), and ten-19 at Bothal Pond and Castle Island. Three to eight were also at Amble Braid, Grindon Lough and Holy Island (six juveniles). Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Arcot Pond	1	3	DM. On 1st
East Chevington	1	2	TD. On 1st

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Singles were at Budle Bay all month (CGK/GPK *et al.*) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs between 8th-31st (SR).

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

13 flew N and nine S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), 18 were at Cresswell Pond on 12th (DM/PJA), 12 (mostly juveniles) were at the Blyth Estuary on 4th (GB/LAR), 11 were at Elswick on 1st (SRB), eight to nine at Amble Braid and Castle Island, and one to two at Cresswell Pond, the Tweed Estuary and West Ord.

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*

One was at Hauxley Reserve on 1st (TRD) and 18th (CH). A female/immature bird was at both Airy Holm and Derwent Reservoirs on 20th. The latter bird remained at Derwent Reservoir until 31st except for a visit to Airy Holm reservoir on 28th (IFo).



The Hauxley Ruddy Shelduck
Tim Dean on 1st August

Garganey *Spatula querquedula*

Two juveniles found at East Chevington north pool on 2nd remained until 25th (TF/JFa *et al.*). Single birds were also at Bothal Pond on several dates between 14th-27th (TF/JFa/NFO), Castle Island on 1st (TF/JFa), and Monks' House Pool on 27th (DF/CGK/GPK). One at Derwent Reservoir on 18th was a 'first' for the site (IFo).

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Two flew N and one S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT) and three flew S at Cocklawburn on 7th (DF); 30+ were at East Chevington on 28th (MSH), six to seven at Arcot and Cresswell Ponds (DM/LJM) and Budle Bay (DF), and three to four at Bothal and Cresswell Ponds, Druridge Pools and Monks' House Pool. One to two were also at Grindon Lough and Linton Ponds.

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Peak counts were 30 at Cresswell Pond on 12th (DM/PJA), 30 at Woodhorn Flashes on 26th (CDH), 26 at Bothal Pond on 11th (TD), 20 at Big Waters on 19th (GB), 20 at West Stobswood on 23rd (MSH), and 14-16 at Caistron and Linton Ponds. Eight were at East Chevington and one to two at Arcot Pond, Castle Island, Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

A total of 14 flew N at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). Grindon Lough held a peak of 57 on 15th (PRM), 50 were at Budle Bay on 21st-22nd (DF/GPK), and 29 at Derwent Reservoir on 13th (IFo). Six were at East Chevington, and one to three at Big Waters, Cresswell and Holywell Ponds, Druridge Pools, Low Newton scrape and St Mary's Wetland.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

A total of 12 flew N at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). The largest counts involved 170 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 30th (SR), 142 at Budle Bay on 11th (CGK/GPK), 124 at Merryshield GP (Stocksfield) on 17th (DLe), 104-112 at Derwent Reservoir and Middle Ord Pond, and 52-83 at Arcot, Bothal, Holywell and Linton Ponds, Big Waters, Castle Island, Newcastle Exhibition Park, Newton Pool and the Tweed Estuary. Groups of 27-47 were at Airy Holm and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Grindon Lough, Monks' House Pool and Spartylea.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

Five were at Fenham Flats on 30th (DF), four at Budle Bay on 23rd (GPK), two at Newton Pool on 25th (GB/DM/LAR), and one at East Chevington on 16th (TF/JFa).

Teal *Anas crecca*

A total of 1,652 N and 166 S at Seaton Sluice was a record August total for the site (SSWT). Peak gatherings were about 500 at East Chevington on 22nd (TRD/JD), 80 at Budle Bay on 11th increasing to 180 by 25th (CGK/GPK), 60-91 at Arcot Pond (LJM), Derwent Reservoir (IFo), Grindon Lough (PRM) and Newbiggin (GB/LAR), and 32-47 at Backworth Pond, Castle Island and Monks' House Pool. Groups of 12-15 were also at Druridge Pools and West Ord. More unusual was one, with Mallards, on Newcastle Exhibition Park lake on 14th (GB).

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Holywell Pond held a peak of 20 on 4th (MSH), 11 were at Big Waters on 13th (GB), three to four at Grindon Lough (PRM) and Swallow Pond (TRD), and one to two at Bothal and Warkworth Lane Ponds, Derwent and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, Druridge Pools and Holy Island.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Two flew N at Seaton Sluice on 19th (SSWT). Peak concentrations were 72 at Caistron on 12th (JD), 28 at Killingworth Lake on 14th (LJM) and 26 at Grindon Lough on 23rd (PRM). Seven to ten were also at Bothal and Linton Ponds, Haughton Castle, Monks' House Pool and Spartylea, and one to four at Airy Holm and Derwent Reservoirs, Cocklawburn Pond and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Haughton Strother GP	1	8	SW. On 11th
Bothal Pond	1	6	TD. On 11th (brood at least a week old)
East Chevington	1	6	PRM. On 9th
Grindon Lough	1	6	PRM. On 7th
Arcot Pond	1	3	LJM. On 1st. Later reduced to two young
Woodhorn Flashes	1	1	LJM. New brood on 1st

Scaup *Aythya marila*

Two were at East Chevington on 29th and 31st (TF/JFa/NFO). Two were on the River Coquet at 'The Buts' on 21st (per RPo).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

110 were at North Blyth on (STH/IFo), 42 at Holy Island on 5th (MJC), and four to five at Amble Braid, Budle Bay and the Tweed Estuary. A female with a brood of three young was at Amble Braid on 9th (PRM) and a duck with two large downy young were off Seaton Sluice watch tower on 18th (SSWT).

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

A pair flew N at St Mary's on 25th (JBu/AC), and one was at Holy Island on 26th (SR/AH). One off Newbiggin on 13th later flew S (AP).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

A total of 1,449 flew N and 272 S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), and two to ten moved N at Hadston Carrs, Newbiggin and Snab Point. Three groups, totalling 40 birds, were off East Chevington on 1st (TD), and 22 were at North Blyth on 6th (STH). Two were near the Black Middens in the Tyne Estuary on 14th (AJN) and two off Warkworth.

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

One flew N at Seaton Sluice on 2nd (SSWT). Three were at the regular breeding site on 6th (TRD). Singles (all fledged juveniles) were at Arcot Pond between 1st-29th (GB/LJM), Cheswick Pond on 12th (CH) and Cresswell Pond on 2nd (TF/JFa), and a female/immature drake was at Cocklawburn Pond on 15th (MHu).

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

A total of 28 flew N at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), six flew N at Hadston Carrs on 13th (TF/JFa), and one S at Boulmer. A flock of 160 was off Ross-Guile Point on 27th (MJC), 120 moulting birds were at Budle Point all month (CGK/GPK), 118 were at the Tweed Estuary on 10th (MHu), 88 at Cocklawburn on 9th (MHu), and 32-49 at Amble Harbour, the Blyth Estuary and New Water Haugh (River Tweed). Groups of 15-22 were at Holy Island, Howick, Linnbrigg and Warkworth, and five to seven at Derwent Reservoir, Low Newton and North Blyth. One to two were also at Arcot Pond, Caistron, Lesbury, Newbiggin and St Mary's Island.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Five were at Amble Harbour on 10th (SRB), and singles at the Coquet Estuary and Newbiggin.

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

In the Cheviots 40 were at Broadhope Hill on 19th and 20 at Hedgehope on 30th (IRD). A single was at Shirlaw Pike (Longframlington) on 17th.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

The only report was of 14 at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) on 22nd (MNC).

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

A party at Lincoln Hill (Humshaugh), observed on several days, comprised up to 37 birds (per SW/TWi). Two adults with 15 small young were flushed in a bean field at Ellington on 6th (TB) and a family party of 14 were present at St Mary's on 22nd and 26th (ASJ). 12 were at Paxton Dean (Longhorsley) on 30th (AB/LB), ten at Wallington and one to eight at Close House, Cresswell Pond, Haughton Strother, Longhoughton, Newbiggin and Spartylea.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

Seven were at Brier Dene Farm on 22nd (MNC) and between two to five were at Spartylea all month (CT).

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

The monthly passage total at Seaton Sluice of 11 (four N and seven S) was an average yield for August. The peak offshore count at East Chevington was a minimum of 35 present on 9th (PRM), with possible evidence of a family party – two adults sporting red throats with two immatures – there on 16th (IRD). The only other non-Druridge Bay sighting was a single at Annstead on 27th.

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*

Two were off Chevington Burn beach on 27th (TD).

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

One was on the sea off Druridge Pools on 21st (TF/JFa).

Storm Petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus*

One was ringed overnight on 25th at Druridge Pools by Iain Robson (TF/JFa).

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

The only movement of note at Seaton Sluice was 300N in five hours on 25th (SSWT). One downy chick was still in its cliff nest at Coves Haven (Holy Island) on 26th (IK).

Sooty Shearwater *Puffinus griseus*

Passage numbers were generally low for the time of year with 11 N past Annstead Point on 26th being the highest count (CGK/GPK). One to three were recorded flying N at several other locations from mid-month with Seaton Sluice Watch Tower describing the paucity of sightings as a "dismal showing!"

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 617 (523N, 94S) in 104 hours, the peak period being 333N between 25th-26th (SSWT). Similar passage was experienced elsewhere with 68N past Annstead Point on 26th (CGK/GPK), 64N at Tynemouth between 1505-1915 on 25th (DRW), 57N past Church Point (Newbiggin) in an hour and a half, also on 25th (TF/JFa). Smaller numbers were reported from many other locations throughout the month.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) has had a productive breeding season with a peak of 25 on 12th plus at least three broods of young (TF/JFa). The highest count at Caistron was 23 during a WeBS visit, also on 12th (JD), Holywell Pond peaked at 17 on 21st (LJM) and 15 were at East Chevington on 9th (PRM). One to eight were at Airy Holm Reservoir, Arcot Pond, Bank's Pond (Dinnington), Big Waters NWT, Blyth GC, Capheaton Lake, Cocklawburn Pond, Cresswell Pond, Embleton Quarry, Grindon Lough, Haughton Strothers, Hauxley, Holy Island Lough, Howick, Linton Ponds, Milkhope Lake (Blagdon), Newton Pool and Swallow Pond.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

The highest count this month was from Widdrington Moor Lake which held up to 18 by 17th (TB). Successful breeding was reported from several locations: a total of ten birds included four young at Big Waters NWT on 13th (GB), three pairs with one, one and two young respectively were at Derwent Reservoir all month (IFo), seven at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) on 4th included four half-grown young and another adult on a nest (TRD), two adults and two juveniles were at Holywell Pond and totals of four were at Airy Holm Reservoir and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. One to three birds were at Branton GP, Chevington Burn beach, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Holy Island and Swallow Pond.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetuss*

Three birds were up in the air together at Derwent Reservoir on 18th (IFo) and one – two were seen there on several dates throughout the month including one with a blue colour ring PX5 on left leg which was ringed as a male chick on the Solway coast of Scotland on 23/07/16 (IFo). Two juveniles were at Colt Crag Reservoir on 28th (per IK). Single birds were also at Wallington on 14th (TRD), Budle Bay on 18th (CGK/GPK), Pilgrims' Way (Lindisfarne) on 25th- 27th (IK) and at Kielder Water on 29th (TRD/JD).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Three birds, two females and a male, were in the air together at Ellington on 17th (TB). Two recently fledged juveniles were calling from a tree under Byker Bridge (Newcastle) on 8th (GB). Two birds were also noted at Newbiggin Golf Course on 21st (GB), West Hartford on 21st (LJM), Ellington on also on 21st (TB) and at Slaggyford on 29th (SW). A 1st winter female was at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) all month (RS) and other single birds were also seen at Bamburgh, Bedlington, Cramlington, East Chevington, Ellington, Haughton Castle, Humshaugh, Jesmond Dene (Newcastle), Lynemouth Flash, Monkseaton, Prestwick Carr, Prudhoe, Seaton Burn, Spartylea, Warkworth Lane, West Hartford and at Widdrington Village.

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Once again most sightings came from the Druridge Bay areas with a male, female and juveniles at East Chevington (TD/NFO *et al.*) throughout the month, Single birds were observed at Druridge pools on 23rd (AJ/ASH *et al.*), Widdrington Moor Lake on 28th (MSH) and at Hemscott Hill (Cresswell) on 29th (TF/JFa). Un-sexed birds were noted flying South at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 10th & 17th and one flying North there on 26th mobbed by gulls (AP).

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

A female was seen flying SW north of Throckley being mobbed by small birds on 30th (CFH).

Red Kite *Milvus Milvus*

Two birds were together at Derwent Reservoir on 7th (IFo) with singles noted there on 16th, 17th, 21st (Ifa). Other birds were at Westerhope (Newcastle) on 2nd (per IK), flying South at Cresswell Pond on 5th (ADM), Hepburn Moor on 10th (AA), East Holywell on 15th (MNC) and at Snods Edge on 19th (IFo).

Correct text for June section**Red Kite** *Milvus Milvus*

An Adult was circling with Gulls over Byker Metro Station (Newcastle) before flying off NW over Shields Road on 15th (JB).

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

One – four birds were seen at Spartylea throughout the month (CT) and two adults and two juveniles were at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 12th (DM). Four birds were also at Wark (North Tyne) on 14th (PRM) and at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 28th (SR). One - three birds were noted at 23 sites during the month.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Eight birds including six large juveniles were seen at Arcot Pond on 4th (GB) and seven birds were calling from different areas of Warkworth Lane Pond on 27th (TB), six plus were reported at East Chevington on 9th (PRM). One – four birds were either heard or seen at Arcot Pond, Backworth Pond, Big Waters NWT, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools and East Chevington.

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

30+ birds at East Chevington on 9th (PRM) was the highest count this month and 23 were at Druridge Pools on 27th (TD). 17 were at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 24th (GB), 11 at Holy Island Lough on 5th (MJC) and 10 birds were seen at Arcot Pond on 9th (DM), Castle Island (WeBS) on 12th (DM), Newton Flash on 25th (DM) and at Cresswell Pond on 26th (CDH). One to nine birds were at Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Grindon Lough, Holywell Pond, Linton Ponds, Newton Pool, Northumberlandia (Cramlington), River Blyth Estuary, Spartylea and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Correct text for June section**Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*

Eight birds were seen at Hauxley NWT on 27th (HRS); six birds were at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 4th (DM) and at Castle Island on 17th (DM). Five were at Arcot Pond on 27th (LJM) and three birds were at Haughton Castle on 30th (SW). Breeding was confirmed at Benton, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools, East Cramlington LNR, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Killingworth Lake and Leazes Park (Newcastle).

Coot *Fulica atra*

Killingworth Lake had the highest count with 53 birds present there on 14th (LJM), followed by Bothal Pond with 38 birds on 11th (TD), 36 at Grindon Lough on 8th (PRM), 34 at Linton Ponds on 26th (CDH) and 31 at Big waters NWT on 13th (GB). Three to seventeen birds were noted at Arcot Pond, East Chevington, Grindon Lough, Haughton Strothers and at Holy Island. A single bird in Budle Bay throughout the month was a rare patch tick which was even twitched by a birder from County Durham who visits there regular (CGK/GPK/RA).

Correct text for June section**Coot** *Fulica atra*

42 birds were at Grindon Lough on 26th (PRM) and 39 birds were seen at Swallow Pond (Wallsend) on 11th and at Killingworth Lake on 20th (LJM). 30 birds were at Bothal Pond on 17th (TD) and 16 were at Linton Ponds on 14th (PRM). Breeding was confirmed at Arcot Pond, Burradon Pond (Cramlington), Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Grindon Lough, Hadrian Pond, Heighley Gate (Morpeth), Killingworth Lake, Leazes Park (Newcastle), Linton Ponds, Middleton Hall and at Swallow Pond (Wallsend).

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Coastal movement was evident with a total of 890 counted over the month at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). Budle Bay had a peak count of 160 on 12th (CGK), ca. 150 were at St Mary's on 24th (ASJ), and 108 were counted at Newbiggin, Beacon Point on 31st (AP). Counts of 49-91 came from Boulmer, Cullercoats Bay, Hartley Bay, Holy Island, Howick, North Blyth, Seahouses (Annstead) and Tynemouth with smaller counts from Blyth, Derwent Reservoir, Haughton Strothers, Newcastle (Elswick), Spartylea, Tweed Estuary, Wark (North Tyne) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

All but one record came from Cresswell Pond where, between 9th and 12th, there were reports of two adults and an immature bird (CH, AJ/ASH/AJN/TW/IK/MN, IRD). The latest report for this site was the 23rd. A juvenile was spotted in the Blyth Estuary on 24th (AC).

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

Post-breeding flocks were seen at Derwent Reservoir on 30th when 800 were estimated (IFo). Other large flocks were reported from Whittle Dene Reservoirs with 700 on 18th (SR), East Chevington where 520-600 were present on 7th and 28th (MSH,TD) and a peak count of 428 was made on 24th at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) (TF/JFA). Counts of 200-393 came from Cocklawburn, Coquet Estuary, Cresswell Pond, Haughton Strothers, Holywell Pond, Monks' House Pool, Newcastle (Elswick) and St Mary's. Smaller counts came from Aln Estuary, Amble Braid, Arcot Pond, Big Waters NWT, Cocklawburn, Grindon Lough, Holywell Pond NR, Howick, Linton Ponds, Monks' House Pool, Tweed (New Water Haugh), Tweed Estuary and Wansbeck (Castle Island).

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

A count of 2,000 on Holy Island on 28th (IK) appears to be the largest there since 2015 and was very early compared with previous large counts. St Mary's had a count of 550 on 22nd (ASJ), Newbiggin Beacon Point had 450 on 15th (STH) and Old Hartley reported 350 on 31st (MNC). Counts of 50-170 came from Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Boulmer, Cresswell, Greenhaugh (Waterhead), Howick and Shiremoor. Smaller counts were reported from Backworth, Blenkinsopp Common, Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Boulmer, Cocklawburn, Cresswell (Snab Point), Derwent Reservoir, Grindon Lough, and Seahouses (Annstead).

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Another large count was made at Budle Bay with 160 there on 12th (CPK/GPK). Fifteen were seen in summer plumage on the Holy Is. Causeway on 25th (DM). Other reports were of birds in single figures, coming from Boulmer, Seahouses (Annstead) and Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

A very large count of 500 or more was made at Budle Bay on 19th (GPK/CPK). Fifty-seven were reported from Holy Island on 5th (MJC) and 54 from Low Newton on 21st (SW). Smaller counts were reported from Alnmouth (Buston Links), Bamburgh (Stag Rocks), Beal, Berwick (Little Beach), Boulmer, Chevington Burn, Cocklawburn, Cresswell (Snab Point), Derwent Reservoir, East Chevington, Seahouses (Annstead), Seaton Sluice Watch Tower, St Mary's and the Tweed Estuary.



A Ringed Plover at St. Mary's by Alan Jack on 22nd August

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

Up to six birds, including two juveniles were seen at East Chevington on the 1st and 2nd (TD, TF/JFa). This number declined to two by 16th. On the same date two juveniles were at Cresswell Pond (TF/JFa) and a report of a single juvenile was made at Monks' House Pool on 20th (GPK). At Derwent Reservoir a pair with three small chicks were seen on 4th, making the fifth pair to be noted there this year. Up to five birds were regularly seen here up to 17th (IFo).

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Very healthy passage was observed off Seaton Sluice: on 1st-2nd some 233 were seen flying south with 156 of these seen on 2nd, 51 of which were picked up at St Mary's (JBU). The monthly total for offshore movement passing Seaton Sluice was 361 (SSWT). A flock of 24 and a separate individual was reported from Cresswell Pond NWT on 22nd (MSH). Counts of 1-15 were made at Alnmouth, Amble Harbour, Arcot Pond, Beal, Berwick (Little Beach), Blyth Estuary, Boulmer, Budle Bay, Cocklawburn, Coquet Estuary, Cresswell (Snab Point), Druridge Bay CP, East Chevington, Ellington, Hauxley NWT, Holy Island, Longhorsley (Linden Hall), Newbiggin, North Blyth, Seahouses (Annstead), St Mary's Wetland, Tweed Estuary and Tynemouth.

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Holy Island had a count of 466 on 5th (MJC), 386 were in a high-tide roost at Boulmer on 28th (NFO) and 127 were seen at Cresswell Pond NWT on 23rd (IRD). Between 68 and 120 birds were counted at Amble Braid, Cresswell Pond, St Mary's and the Tweed Estuary. Smaller counts came from Big Waters NWT, Derwent Reservoir, East Chevington, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower, Shield on the Wall Dam, Shotleyfield (Airy Holm Reservoir), Spartylea and R Tyne (nr. Black Middens).

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Fifty-one were counted at St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) on 5th (MJC) and 15 were at Boulmer on 18th (MJC). Counts of 1-8 were made at Berwick (Little Beach), Blyth Estuary, Boulmer, Cresswell Pond NWT, East Chevington, Howick, Lindisfarne NNR (Beal Point), Newbiggin (Church Point), Seaton Sluice Watch Tower, St Mary's and Wansbeck (Castle Island).



A Bar-tailed Godwit
St. Mary's
Alan Jack
22nd August

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

A healthy passage was apparent at Seaton Sluice with a monthly total of 113S and 2N and a site record for an August day count being made on 2nd with 39S. Further north, at Monks' House Pool, another site record was established when 73 were counted on 27th, beating the short-lived record of 50 which was set on 24th (DF). Sixty-two birds were at Cresswell Pond on 12th (AJR) and the same number were in the Coquet Estuary on 22nd (ANHS) with 41 seen at Beacon Pt., Newbiggin on 2nd (AP). Budle Bay had 36 on 27th (DF) and East Chevington reported 28 on 2nd (TF/JFa). On 3rd a minimum of 23 were counted on the eastern side of Coquet Island (LJM) and 20 juveniles were in the Blyth Estuary on 24th (AC). Counts of 1-18 were reported from Alnmouth, Amble Braid, Arcot Pond, Berwick (West Ord), Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Druridge Pools, Hauxley NWT, Holywell Pond NR, Rockcliffe, St Mary's, Tynemouth, Wansbeck (Castle Island) and Warkworth weir.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Well recorded at Seaton Sluice during the month with totals of 15N and 188S (SSWT). The highest count came from Stag Rocks with 95 on 10th (DF). Other significant counts, as passage birds returned to the county were 52 at Newbiggin on 17th (STH), 42 at Boulmer on 4th (MJC), 40 at Snab Point (Cresswell) on 25th (TB), 34 at Holy Island on 5th (MJC), 31 at both St Mary's Island on 4th and Hauxley NWT on 25th (ASJ/GB/DM) and 25 at North Blyth Staithes on 19th (STH). Twelve or fewer were reported from Amble Harbour, Cocklawburn, Cresswell Pond, the River Blyth Estuary and the River Tweed Estuary.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

Passage at Seaton Sluice involved 125S (65 between 1st-3rd) and 38N during the month (SSWT). The Newbiggin area was regularly monitored with the highest roost count being recorded early in the month, with a peak of 124 on 2nd (AP). Numbers declined during the remainder of the month with only 18 (17 juveniles) recorded on 27th (NFO). Peak counts early in the month also came from Stag Rocks with a high of 70 reported on 10th and at Budle Bay, where 65 were reported on 10th (GPK/CGK) declining to three by 18th and a single on 25th as birds passed through (DF/DM). Much smaller numbers were reported from other localities with 14 at Cresswell Pond on 2nd (TF/JFa) and one-nine at Boulmer, Cocklawburn, East Chevington, Holy Island and the River Blyth Estuary.

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

There were 89 records received this month with most coming from the favoured Druridge Bay wetlands. Birds were present at East Chevington all month with three on 1st increasing to 20 by 17th and reducing to nine by 30th (many observers). Birds also frequented Cresswell Pond throughout the month with a maximum of six on 9th reducing to one by 30th (many observers). Druridge Pools attracted one on 1st reaching a high of five on 16th (PG/TRD/TF/JFa *et al.*). Maximum counts from other sites were six at Monks' House Pool (MSH/DM), three at Castle Island (TF/JFa), three at Holywell Pond (ASJ/MSH) and two at each Arcot Pond, Hauxley and Newbiggin. Singles were seen at Amble, Boulmer, Holy Island, Newton Pool, St Mary's Island and West Stobswood Pool on various dates during the month.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

Light passage continued, with two adults remaining at Cresswell Pond from last month and one being reported until 12th (TD/AA/AJR *et al.*). A single was at Beal Point (Lindisfarne) on 5th (MJC).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Monthly totals reported from Seaton Sluice were 135S and 57N (SSWT). Numbers fluctuated at St Mary's Island as birds moved through. On 6th 52 were counted rising to 122 by 23rd (only one juvenile) and declining to 38 (seven juveniles) by 31st (ASJ/MSH). There were other notable counts including 62 at the regular haunt of Chevington Burn, 60 at Budle Bay, Stag Rocks (reported as unusual here) and Newbiggin, 42 at Holy Island and 40 at Snab Point (Cresswell). Observers noted that numerous birds were still in summer plumage. Elsewhere, one-12 were at Alnmouth, Cocklawburn, Cresswell Pond and beach and Lynemouth.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Strong passage was noted this month with several sites attracting notable numbers. Seaton Sluice recorded 477S (228S on 3rd) and 9N during the month and the peak count at Budle Bay was 1800 on 19th (SSWT/CGK/GPK). Other sites reporting three-figure counts were Boulmer with 200 on 28th (NFO), the Coquet Estuary, with 183 on 1st (MJC) 156 at Cresswell Pond on 2nd (TF/JFa), 145 at Holy Island on 5th (MJC), 120 at Amble Braid on 2nd (STH) and 110 at East Chevington on 20th (TF/JFa) reducing to seven by 30th (TRD). The maximum count received from St Mary's Island was 82 on 20th (ASJ) and 92 were a few miles further north at Newbiggin on 6th (AP). Druridge Pools attracted 45 on 14th, 38 were at Stag Rocks on 29th and 16 were at Berwick Little Beach on 30th. Other sites where between one-eight were seen were Cocklawburn, Derwent Reservoir, Grindon Lough, Holywell Pond, Howdon, Monk's House Pool, the River Tweed Estuary and the River Tyne (Elswick).

A Dunlin at St. Mary's
Alan Jack
21st August



Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

Small numbers were seen at three typical sites. Eight were at Newbiggin on 4th (STH), four at Stag Rocks on 6th (DF) and two at St Mary's Island on 19th (ASJ).

Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos*

An adult was reported from East Chevington between 2nd-16th (TF/JFa/NFO/PRM/AA).

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Birds were reported at more lowland ponds and pools than last month with a few reports from further inland. One flew S at Seaton Sluice on 8th (SSWT). In the Druridge Bay area, the highest counts received were 22 at Cresswell Pond on 6th (TRD), nine at East Chevington on 9th (PRM/TRD/JD) and six at Druridge Pools on 6th (TRD). One-eight were seen at Arcot Pond, Big Waters, Bothal Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Grindon Lough, Holywell Pond, Howick, Newton Pool and St Mary's Island and Wetland.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Most birds had evacuated breeding areas during the month illustrated by nine at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd but only one seen on 30th (IFo). Other maximum counts were seven at Castle Island on 12th (DM), four at Newbiggin on 2nd (AP), three at East Chevington on 2nd (TF/JFa) and three at Monks' House Pool from 7th-13th (DF/MJC). One-two were at Alnmouth, Arcot Pond, Big Waters, Bothal Pond, Colt Crag Reservoir, Cresswell Pond, Elswick (River Tyne) Foxton Bends, Hauxley NWT, Holy Island, Holywell Pond, Howick, the River Coquet Estuary, Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay), Tynemouth and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Three on 1st increased to 12 by 7th at Castle Island (TF/JFa/GB/DM/AC). Further inland, five-six were at Grindon Lough from 21st-23rd reducing to one by 18th (DRW/PRM). Arcot Pond held three on 4th reducing to one by 25th as birds moved through (LJM/GB/DM). Similarly, four were at Budle Bay on 2nd declining to one by 25th (CGK/GPK/RA). One-two were seen mainly during the first half of the month at Backworth Pond, Big Waters, Bothal Pond, Branton GP, Derwent Reservoir, East Chevington, Holy Island, Holywell Pond, Longhirst Flash, Mootlaw Quarry, Newbiggin (Beacon Point and golf course), Ogle Bridge, St Mary's Wetland, Whittle Dene Reservoirs and Woodhorn Flashes.



A Green Sandpiper
Holywell Pond
Trevor Basey
August 1st

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

The monthly totals from Seaton Sluice were 488S (145S on 3rd) and 144N (SSWT). Counts from Budle Bay varied between 142 on 18th and a maximum of 310 on 3rd (DF/GPK). Other sites attracting three-figure counts were, Amble Braid with 176 on 9th (PRM), Holy Island with 154 on 5th (MJC), 154 at the River Tweed Estuary on 10th (MHu), 150 at the River Blyth Estuary on 4th (GB), 123 at the River Coquet Estuary on 22nd (ANHS) and 112 at St Mary's Island on 27th (ASJ). Cullercoats held 80 on 25th (ASJ), 54 were at Newbiggin on 17th (STH) and 47 were at Boulmer on 4th (MJC). Counts of 22 and fewer came from Alnmouth, Arcot Pond, Beal, Castle Island, Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir and East Chevington.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

One-two were reported from East Chevington from 1st-4th (TD/GB/TF/JFa). Singles were at Cresswell Pond on 3rd (AA), Beadnell Flash on 4th (GPK), Beal Point (Lindisfarne) on 5th (MJC) and a juvenile well inland at Grindon Lough from 15th-18th (PRM).

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

At Budle Bay, the resident adult had moulted into winter plumage and was joined by a juvenile on 18th (DF/GPK/CGK *et al.*). The same two birds were probably those reported from Beal on 4th (DF) where a juvenile was also seen on 5th (MJC). There were two juveniles at East Chevington on 27th (TD/NFO/TF/JFa) and a single at Bothal Pond from 4th-6th (GB/TD/TRD).

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Very well reported this month with records from 32 sites. At Beal, five were reported on 4th increasing to a record count for the site of 17 on 29th (DF/MJC). Some of these may have accounted for a report of ten at Holy Island on 26th (SR/AH) and ten were also at nearby Budle Bay on 25th (CGK/GPK). On 8th, 12 were at Alnmouth (MJC) but only one remained by 31st (MKi). At St Mary's Island, six arrived from the N on 2nd and two were also seen at St Mary's Wetland and a single flew S there on 30th (all ASJ). Birds were seen at Derwent Reservoir from 16th with the maximum count being of four juveniles on 30th (IFo). Groups of three were reported from Big Waters, Druridge Pools, Foxton Band West Ord (Berwick). One-two were at 22 other localities from the River Tweed Estuary in the north to Elswick (River Tyne) in the south.

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

Two counts in the River Tweed Estuary were 126 and 384 on the 2nd and 10th respectively (MHu).



A Kittiwake at Tynemouth
Colin Bradshaw
18th August

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Gatherings of around 400 were at Budle Bay (DF) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs (SR) with 300 in the Blyth Estuary (LJM), 250 at Howick (JAR) and 240 in the River Tweed Estuary, the largest of three counts there (MHu). Elsewhere, smaller counts of 157 came from Arcot Pond, 121 from Castle Island (DM/PJA), 40-90 at Boulmer and Bothal Pond (MKi/TD) with up to 20 in Jesmond Dene and at Spartylea (MJCo/CT).

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

The majority of sightings came from East Chevington where two flew S on 8th (NFO) and two flew W on 22nd (TRD/JD); single juveniles/immatures were present from 8th-27th (many observers). Two juveniles flew N at Cullercoats and St Mary's Island on 25th possibly the same individuals (CB/JBu/AC).

Mediterranean Gull *Ichthyaetus melanocephalus*

The extraordinary late-summer influx of this species, first reported last month, continued with a new record count from Newbiggin of 117 on 8th, comprising 71 adults, seven 1st-summers and 39 juveniles of which eight carried colour rings, two ringed as *pulli* in Germany and two as adults in Belgium (CH); other large counts from Newbiggin were 23-93 on dates between 4th and 30th (STH/NFO/CH/ADM). Cresswell Pond/Snab Point held 10-15 on three days (DM *et al.*) and 12 were seen at Warkworth Lane (Ellington) and Lynemouth Beach (TB/DM). Numerous other sightings of one to six birds were recorded mainly from the Newbiggin/Cresswell/Ellington area but also at Castle Island, East Chevington, the QEII Lake, St Mary's Island, Seaton Sluice and further afield at Bamburgh, Budle Bay, Holy Island, Low Newton, Monks' House Pool, Warkworth and Whittle Dene Reservoirs; these records comprised birds of all ages (many observers).

Common Gull *Larus canus*

The late-summer build-up of returning birds included a maximum count of 2,300 in the Budle Bay roost on 18th (CGK/GPK) with smaller gatherings recorded elsewhere of 600 at Netherwitton and Whittle Dene Reservoirs (JR/SR), 500 at Old Felton (NFO), 100 at Hesleyside, Bellingham (AJH) and 60 at West Ord, Berwick (MHu). Smaller groups of 20-50 were seen at Big Waters NWT and East Chevington (DM/GB) with one to two at four other sites.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

Budle Bay held 62 and East Chevington North Pool 18 on 25th (DM/GB/LAR) but the only other records were of 12 in the River Tweed Estuary and singles at Castle Island and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

A WeBS in the River Tweed Estuary on 10th found 568 and 330 roosted in a cut corn field at Ord Moor, Berwick (MHu). Smaller gatherings were 233 in the River Blyth Estuary (LJM), 89 at Longbridge End on the Beal salt marsh (DM), 68 at West Ord (Berwick) (MHu) and 28 at Castle Island (DM). At Quarry Cottage, Newbiggin 20 adults and immatures regularly came to feed in the garden (RS). A breeding pair with three young were at Alexandra Park, Cramlington on 11th (DM) and a total of 140 AONs (Apparently Occupied Nests) were counted in the Blyth area during May-August this year (STH/LJM).

***Caspian Gull** *Larus cachinnans*

The regular late-summer Polish-ringed visitor to Amble, with PKCS leg ring, was again recorded on a few dates throughout (CSa/TRD/TB).

The Amble
Caspian Gull

Tim Dean

14th August



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

A probable juvenile was noted at St Mary's Island on 7th (AC) and again at Tynemouth on 12th . Photographed by JBu.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

The highest count was 14 at the Derwent Reservoir on 2nd (IFo) and elsewhere, counts of seven came from Arcot Pond, Castle Island and Cramlington (DM) and one to five at eight other widespread localities (PRM/MHu/DM/JR/MJCo). A total of 69 AONs (Apparently Occupied Nests) were counted in the Blyth area during May-August this year (STH/LJM).

Sandwich Tern *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

Large numbers were recorded passing Seaton Sluice throughout the month with peaks of 370N, 1,390S between 1st-4th and 445N and 285S on 25th-26th (SSWT). Three-figure counts of 112-180 came from St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) on 25th (IK) and 170-180 at the Black Middens and Spanish Battery Rocks at Tynemouth on 9th (DRW/CB). Gatherings of 40-62 were reported from Alnmouth (TRD/JD), Annstead (DF), Hadston Carrs (AJR) and St Mary's Island (ASJ) with 20+ at East Chevington (MSH) and 12 at Boulmer (TRD). One to nine were seen at six other coastal sites between Druridge Pools and the River Tweed Estuary.

Little Tern *Sternula albifrons*

The only record was of a single passing S at Seaton Sluice on 1st (SSWT) indicative of an early departure of the species following the disastrous breeding season.

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*

At Seaton Sluice two moved N and five S between 2nd-26th (SSWT) and four to six were recorded at Beacon Point, Newbiggin (STH/AP), four at Hadston Carrs (AJR), three at Low Newton (TRD) and one or two at Alnmouth, Budle Point and St Mary's Island.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Good numbers were reported throughout with peaks of 40N, 795S from 2nd-4th, 275N, 42S on 13th and 445N, 285S from 25th-26th (SSWT). Double-figure counts were 14 at Howdon on 13th (CB) and ten+ at Amble Braid and in the nearby Harbour on 9th (PRM). Elsewhere, three to eight were recorded at East Chevington (TRD/PRM), five at Whittle Dene Reservoirs (PRM) and three at Low Newton (TRD) with one or two at eleven other localities, both coastal and inland. Encouraging numbers bred successfully at the North Blyth staithes where 19 pairs raised 30 fledglings, the last two still being fed on 24th (STH).

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

Few sightings from Seaton Sluice where the maximum counts were 20N and 10N on 2nd and 20th respectively (SSWT). The only other records were singles at Holy Island on 5th (MJC) and at Tynemouth on 11th (DRW).

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

A juvenile was recorded at Beacon Point, Newbiggin on 19th (AP/STH) and juveniles were seen at Cullercoats on 25th (CB), moving S at Seaton Sluice on 26th (SSWT) and moving N at Annstead also on 26th (CGK/GPK).

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

The monthly total counted at Seaton Sluice of 7N and 3S is reported as 'well below average for August' (SSWT). Five moved N at Annstead Point, Seahouses on 13th (CGK/GPK) and two moved N at Church Point, Newbiggin on 25th (TF/JFa) but otherwise only seven singles, all flying N, were recorded at five localities namely Annstead, Druridge Bay, Holy Island, Newbiggin and Snab Point (Cresswell) (DF/NFO/JR/GB/TB/SR).

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

Two adults were at Newbiggin on 25th (SR) and on the following day two moved N at Annstead Point, Seahouses (IJ). A single flew N at Newbiggin on 13th (JR) and, possibly the same individual, a fully-spooned adult, was seen the same day at Annstead Point (CGK/GPK). On 25th, an adult bird at St Mary's Island was on the sea feeding on a dead Kittiwake (AC/JBu); probably the same bird was seen to fly N at Tynemouth in the late afternoon (DRW) and also to fly S from Tynemouth early the following morning (DRW). Also on 25th, a light-phase bird passed N at Cresswell, Snab Point (TB).

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

The monthly total recorded at Seaton Sluice was 57 comprising 19N and 38S described as a low total for August with no sign of a return to the 'usual' peak. The largest daily count at Seaton Sluice was 9N and 14S on 26th (SSWT). Elsewhere, six were at Tynemouth on 27th (DRW), four in Budle Bay on 12th (CGK/GPK), three in Warkworth Bay on 19th (CSa) and at Annstead on 27th (DF). Twelve records of one or two came on dates throughout from five other localities, mainly Newbiggin but also Hadston Carrs, Howick, the River Tweed Estuary, Snab Point, St Mary's Island and Warkworth Bay.

Long-tailed Skua *Stercorarius longicaudus*

Records of a single sub-adult, seen on the evening of 13th at Cresswell (Snab Point) (TB), Seaton Sluice (MH/SSWT), and Newbiggin (NFO), almost certainly relate to a single individual.

Common Guillemot *Uria aalge*

On 8th, 52, many with accompanying juveniles, were on the sea off Seaton Sluice (SSWT) and 30, including juveniles, were seen at Howick (JAR). Other sightings of adults with juveniles were eight at St Mary's Island, four at sea (IJ), four in Druridge Bay, two at East Chevington (TRD/JD) and a single off Hauxley (DM).

Razorbill *Alca torda*

Birds with young on the sea comprised six at East Chevington on 22nd and two at sea on 18th (IJ).

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

The monthly total seen passing Seaton Sluice was 7 S between 2nd-3rd (SSWT) and on 8th one was seen diving for food just off the breakwater at the Coquet Estuary.

Rock Dove *Columba livia*

High count of 88 at Stakeford Railway Bridge on 12th, 46 at Waren Mill on 25th (DM/PJA), 42 at Cresswell Pond on 26th (CDH), 39 at North Blyth Staithes on 24th (STH) and one to 16 at Jesmond Dene and Seaton Sluice.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Well reported in low numbers with six+ at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 15th (PRM), five at Jesmond Dene on 5th and Cresswell Pond on 6th (MJCo/TRD) with one to two at nine other locations.



A Stock Dove in a Woolsington garden
John Littleton
25th August

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

On 24th 100 were at Carterway Heads (IFo), two to eight at Spartylea all month (CT) and six at Jesmond Dene (MJCo) with singles at Newbiggin and Bedlington Colliery.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

A peak count of 19 at Dinnington on 29th (PCF), 16 at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) during the month (BS), 11 at North Blyth on the 14th and two to four at Callerton and Spartylea.

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

A fledged juvenile of unknown origin was being fed in a garden at Chare Ends (Holy Island) on 1st (IK) with singles at East Chevington on 6th (CB/ME), Bamburgh on 7th (BRS) and a juvenile in the observer's garden at Tynemouth on 14th possibly the same bird being seen at Spanish Battery on 16th (DRW).

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Family group of a pair with three fledged chicks all month in a barn at Spartylea (CT), two at Holy Island on 13th and Plenmeller Common on 15th (MJC/PRM) with singles at eight widespread locations. A pair at Holy Island fledged two young whilst and second pair were still feeding large young in nestbox (IK).

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Four all month at Spartylea with one seen eating road kill on 18th & 21st (CT). A pair in the observer's garden at Longbenton on 15th (AJ) with singles at Ellington, Rothbury and Wark.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Reported regularly all month from Druridge Pools four being the peak on 1st, 3rd and 16th (TD/AA/TF/JFa). Singles were at Derwent Reservoir on three dates from 18th to 27th (IFo).

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

One was at Holy Island on 5th, 12th and 13th (TB/AH).



A sad sight. A Long-eared Owl road casualty.
Byegate crossroads on 11th August
Tony Metcalf

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Four were at Holy Island on 13th with three there on 19th and single on 30th. One was hunting on three dates from 9th to 31st at Newbiggin by the Sea (AP), at Chevington North Pool on 19th (ADMc) and at St Mary's on 22nd (IJ).

Swift *Apus apus*

Large groups around 300 at St Mary's Island on 3rd and Backworth on 5th (ASJ/CGK) with 75 at Ellington on 18th, 70 at Humshaugh on 2nd, 54 at Amble on 4th and 50 at Lynemouth on 9th. There were double-figure counts from eight sites till 17th with single-figure counts then on from 15 locations till the last of one at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 28th (TB).

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

A family party of five at Houxy Burn (Wark Common) on 4th (AJ), three at Haltwhistle on 8th, Nunwick on 11th and Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 28th with singles at a further eight locations. Two nest sites on Wansbeck at Mitford occupied last year again had young being fed from June through to August (ADMc).

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Three at Dukeshouse (Hexham) on 20th the high count (AJH), two all month at Spartylea and at feeders at Holywell Pond on 21st (CT/LJM). Singles were at 11 other locations seven of which were in the Cramlington area.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Singles heard at Netherwitton Common on 5th and Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 17th (TRD/JD/TB).

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

A 1st summer male was at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) throughout the Month (RS). Five birds were on Holy Island on 13th (MJC), while four were at Derwent Reservoir on 17th (IFo) and at Prestwick Carr on 19th (MJC). Three birds were at Grindon Lough on 7th (PRM) and at Ingram (Breamish Valley) on 25th (MJC/EFC/DJC). One – two birds were at 16 sites including single birds in off the sea at Seaton Sluice on 24th, 26th & 31st (SSWT).

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Two birds a juvenile male and a female were at The Snook (Holy Island) on 13th (MJC) other coastal sightings included single birds at Beacon Point (Newbiggin), Boulmer, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Links, East Chevington, East Holywell, Hemscott Hill, Holy Island and St Mary's Wetland. Inland sightings involved an adult male at Derwent Reservoir on 23rd and an imm. male there on 25th (IFo) and a juvenile in the Breamish Valley on 28th (MJC/DJC).

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

An adult was hunting *hirundines* at Kiln Point (Budle Bay) on 2nd (GPK) and another was observed catching Dragonflies over Chugdon Wood (Ellington) before flying off North also on 2nd TB). An adult was in Holy Island Village early morning on 5th (MJC), a juvenile flew through at Airy Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield) on 11th (IFo) and an adult flew over the road N at Cresswell Hall on 27th (TB).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

An adult was noted at Budle Bay on 9 days throughout the month (CGK/GPK). Other birds were at Beal Point (Holy Island) on 10th (MJC), Derwent Reservoir on 16th and 24th (IFo), Castle Island on 26th (AC) and at Ross/Guile Point on 27th (MJC).

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

A family party at Snods Edge on 5th (IFo), three at Thrunton Woods on 8th (JD) and one to two at 11 widespread localities.

Magpie *Pica pica*

Four at Jesmond Dene on 5th (MJCo) and a family party of four at Howick on 30th (JAR).

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

A pre-roost gathering of 1,100 at Stocksfield on 14th (DLe), 115 at Dinnington on the same date (PCF) and 80+ at R Blyth Estuary also on 14th (LJM). Up to 12 seen all month at Spartylea and 11 at Jesmond Dene on 5th.

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

A pre-roost gathering of 65+ at Budle Bay on 18th (CGK/GPK), 36 including many juveniles at St Mary's Island on 3rd (ASJ), 14 at Alexandra Park (Cramlington) on 20th (DM) with one to five in Jesmond Dene and Newbiggin.

Raven *Corvus corax*

Two flew NW at Spartylea on 30th (CT) with singles at Alnwick Moor on 4th and Barrow Lone (Coquetdale) on 18th.

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

Flocks of eight at Airy Holm (Shotleyfield) on 26th (IFo), seven at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 4th (DM), six at Spartylea all month (CT) and one in Jesmond Dene on 5th.

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

Two at Fontburn Reservoir on 27th the only multiple sighting (PG) with singles coming to feeders at Rothbury all month and new garden tick at Shilbottle from 7th with regular sightings at Derwent Gorge and Linden Hall (Longhorsley).

A Marsh Tit
Tim Dean's garden
Rothbury
28th August

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

Regular sightings of two at Airy Holm (Shotleyfield) and at Derwent Reservoir on 28th (IFo) with a single there on 5th and at Castle Island on 1st, Rothbury on 5th, Big Waters on 8th, Linden Hall on 21st and Paxton Dean (Longhorsley) on 30th.



Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

At least 17 in the feeding station at Big Waters on 19th (GB), four all month at Spartylea and one in Jesmond Dene on 19th.

Great Tit *Parus major*

At Spartylea eight were present all month (CT) and five at Jesmond Dene on 19th (MJCo).

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Just one report of five at St Mary's Island on 26th (ASJ).

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

More than 40 at West Stobswood Pool on 23rd (MSH), 20 at Wark (N.Tyne) on 18th (PRM), 18 at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 28th (TB), 15 S at East Chevington NR on 28th and 10 S at Ellington on 2nd. One to six were at five further locations.



A juvenile Sand Martin

St. Mary's

Alan Jack

28th August

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Large counts of 150 at Ingram (Breamish Valley) on 28th (MJC/DJC), 150 S in 2 hours at Seaton Sluice on 29th (SSWT), 120 the maximum count at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) (BS), 110 at St Mary's Island on 3rd with 100 there on 30th (ASJ). Three – 80 were at ten locations with five late broods noted at Howick on 14th.

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

Around 175 at Cresswell on 10th with 39 occupied nests (ADMc), 100+ at Bamburgh on 7th (BRS), 60 at Lynemouth on 23rd and Ingram (Breamish Valley) on 28th, 50 at Chugdon Wood Ellington on 24th and 44 at Old Hartley on the same date. Six to forty were at 14 other widespread localities with two pairs feeding second broods at Ellington on 27th and in cliff nests at Holy Island on 26th (IK).



Two juvenile Hirundines

Photographed at St.
Mary's by Alan Jack

Top: a House Martin and right: a
Swallow

28th August



Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

A 'tribe' of 23 was at Longhirst on 19th (TB); nine were at Airy Holm Reservoir on 26th and six at Derwent Reservoir on 28th. Two were noted at Blakehopeburnhaugh on 29th and Nunwick Mill on 11th.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

A count of 25 at St Mary's Island on 21st were mostly juveniles, all having moved on by evening (ASJ). On the same day, 15+ were noted at Budle Point and at Newbiggin and ten + at Bamburgh. Elsewhere, 20 were at Ellington on 10th and at Coldwell (Humshaugh) on 11th and 12 at Holy Island on 13th. Six were noted at Derwent Reservoir on 28th, peak counts of five came from East Chevington on 9th and Tynemouth on 22nd, four were at Exhibition Park on 14th and one to three at a further seven inland localities.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Twelve were at St Mary's Island on 21st (ASJ) and eight at Ellington on 10th. Counts of four came from Ingram on 25th and Haughton Castle on 19th; three+ were noted at Bamburgh on 21st and three at Druridge Pools on 31st. One to two were also noted at Coldwell, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Derwent Reservoir, Haughton Strother, Nunwick and Nunwick Mill.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

There was a count of 11 from East Chevington on 9th (PRM), when two family parties of five and four were at Cocklawburn. Another family group of five was at St Mary's Wetland on several dates, two were at Bamburgh on 14th and singles at Airy Holm Reservoir on 21st and 30th, Big Waters on 19th and Druridge Pools on 14th.

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Two were at Newton Pool on 14th and singles at Big Waters on 19th, Cresswell Pond and Druridge Pools on 1st and East Chevington on 9th.

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

One was at East Chevington on 9th and another singing at Grindon Lough on 15th (PRM).

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Twelve at Mickley Square (ten ringed and two re-traps) on 17th was the highest count (DLe). Two to four+ were noted at Bamburgh on 7th, 14th, 21st and 29th, while two were at Ellington on 4th (juveniles) and 10th and in a Tynemouth garden on 25th. Singles were also reported from Airy Holm Reservoir on 26th, Blakehopeburnhaugh on 29th, Coldwell on 11th, Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 25th, Derwent Reservoir on 28th and St Mary's Wetland on 4th.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

Two were found at Newbiggin on 21st (GB) and singles at Budle Point on 21st and at Ellington on 10th.

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

Two were at Budle Point on 21st (GPK) when singles were also at Airy Holm Reservoir, Howick, Newbiggin and St Mary's Island; another was at Druridge Bay CP on 12th.

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

Ten were noted at Ellington on 9th-10th (TB). A family party of five was at East Chevington on 1st, five juveniles were at St Mary's Island on 21st and a further four juveniles were at the base of Tynemouth Pier on 19th. Elsewhere, one to three were noted at Airy Holm Reservoir from 21st-30th, numbers at Ellington had reduced to three by 31st, two were at Coldwell on 11th and singles were noted at Bamburgh, Derwent Reservoir, Exhibition Park, Holy Island, Newton Red House and Prestwick Carr.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Three were at Bamburgh on 7th and at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 15th.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Four were at Spartylea throughout the month (CT) and two at Jesmond Dene.

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Up to five were at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) during the month (TB). An adult and three juveniles were at Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 23rd and one to two at Ellington, Haughton Castle, Hesleyside, Jesmond Dene, Nunwick Mill, Rothbury and Slaggyford.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

A family party of four was at Craggside on 2nd (JD). Three were at Gosforth Park NR on 20th and singles at Bamburgh on 7th and 21st, Airy Holm Reservoir, Big Waters, Derwent Reservoir, Nunwick, Simonburn and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

Flocks of around 400 were reported from Belford on 19th (DF) and Newbiggin GC on 15th (STH), while 200+ were at St Mary's Island on 28th and up to 20 at Spartylea throughout.

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Ten were at Holy Island (Village) on 13th (MJC) and five at Spartylea throughout.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Seven were reported from Comb (Falstone) on 29th and two were at Spartylea throughout.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

A notable 47 were at Lincoln Hill (Humshaugh) on 18th, and nearby 40 were at Coldwell and 18 at Haughton Mains on 11th (SW). A flock of 34 fed on Rowans at Corbridge Common on 18th and 24 were at Derwent Reservoir on 31st. Counts of 11 came from Billsmoorfoot (Hepple) on 21st and Horton (Blyth) on 3rd, while eight were noted at Newcastle Airport and three at Exhibition Park.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

There were seven at Humshaugh on 11th and six at nearby Haughton Castle on 19th (SW), while four were noted at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 8th. At Linden Hall, up to four adults were noted but probably only one pair bred (two to three pairs in recent years), feeding young to the end of the month. One to two were also reported from Airy Holm Reservoir, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Coldwell, Derwent Reservoir, East Chevington, Exhibition Park, Netherwitton Common, Newbiggin, Simonburn, Slaggyford and St Mary's Island.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Counts of five came from Gosforth Garden Village (singing) on 30th and Jesmond Dene on 19th (MJC/MJCo) and four were at Spartylea throughout the month.

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

One at Holy Island (Snook) on 13th was the only report (MJC).

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

A male was found at Cocklawburn on 15th (MHu).

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

A family party of four was at Houxy Burn (Wark Common) on 4th (AJ). A juvenile was at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd-5th and singles at Coldwell on 11th, Druridge Bay CP on 7th and 12th, Holy Island on 13th, Nunwick Mill on 11th and St Mary's Island on 23rd.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

A total of ten were noted moving through St Mary's Island from 8th-27th, with a peak count of four on 21st (ASJ). Six were at Holy Island on 13th and two juveniles at Mootlaw Quarry on 26th. A juvenile at Derwent Reservoir was the observer's first here in 15 years and only the second reported from here in the last 35 years (IFo). Further singles were noted at East Chevington on 20th, Howick, Newbiggin and Warkworth dunes on 21st and Newcastle Town Moor on 14th.

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

Family parties of four were noted at Cocklawburn on 9th, Cresswell Pond on 31st, Howick on 21st and Ingram on 25th (MJC/JAR/ EFC/DJC). A pair and at least one juvenile were reported from East Chevington on several dates and two were noted at Monks' House Pool on 25th. Single males were at Druridge on 6th and Prestwick Carr on 29th.

Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

A family group of seven was at Plashetts on 11th (PCF) and seven fed on a garden lawn at Cullercoats on 25th (ASJ). Six were found at Warkworth Pier on 21st and four at Howick on 23rd. Counts of three came from Boulmer and Newbiggin on 18th and 13th respectively, while one to two were reported from Blenkinsopp Common, Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Ellington, Guile Point, Newcastle Town Moor, St Mary's Island and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

A Wheatear on a St. Mary's
wall
Alan Jack on 25th August



Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

Two were at Spartylea all month and at Beanley on 31st. One seen in Jesmond Dene on 29th was the observer's first here since January (DHB).

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

90 were counted at Haughton Mains on 19th (SW). 75 were present at Cullercoats Bay all month and 50 at Holywell Village on several dates, 48 plus were here on 21st (ASJ/LJM). 62 were counted at a roost at a Cramlington school on 9th (DM). 60 plus were at Bamburgh on 7th and 60 all month, including many juveniles at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) (RS). 40 plus were at Bamburgh on 14th (BRS). 40 plus were also at Wark on 18th (PRM). 30 at Longhoughton on (JAR). One to 18 were at three further sites.

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

Counts of 16 to 65 were noted at Cresswell Pond on 12th, where ten were present on 6th (DM/PA/AJR/TRD). 45 were seen at East Holywell all month (MNC). 40 were on feeders at Chugdon Wood on 2nd (TB). A flock of 26 fed in stubble at St. Mary's on 25th, where eight flew S. on 23rd (ASJ). 20 were at Haughton Mains on 19th (SW). 13 was the peak at Tynemouth on 22nd where birds were present all month (DRW). Two to four were at five other sites, including a pair feeding young in a nest in a church wall cavity at Horton (Blyth) on 15th (LJM).



A regular visitor to a Woolsington garden
A Tree Sparrow by John Littleton on 25th August

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

Two were seen at Jesmond Dene, a Marden Estate garden and at Spartylea during the month.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava flavissima*

Well reported with birds observed over the period 1st to 14th along the shore at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) with two, increasing to ten, then 14 and three juveniles on 3rd (AP). Ten at the regular site of Whittle Dene on 20th was the month's peak count there (SR). Southward movement was observed on many dates at St. Mary's Island, with a minimum of 21 birds involved. Nine juveniles paused to feed on the causeway on 3rd, with possibly up to 12 present. Six plus seen on 2nd, four on 4th and four flying S. on 6th. Two also moved through on 23rd and 25th and singles on 9th, 11th and 30th (ASJ/AC/MSH). Elsewhere, three were at Newbiggin on 1st, 3rd and 14th (MJC/STH/NFO) and three were seen at Monks' House Pool on 3rd (GPK). Two were at Alnmouth on 8th and at Monks' House on 10th, with two juveniles also at Derwent Reservoir on 13th (IFO). A pair, then two males were seen at Newbiggin on 2nd and 4th (RS). Singles were seen at a further 13 locations.



A Dunnock in a Rothbury garden
Tim Dean on 28th August

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Three were at Jesmond Dene on 5th and at the Breamish Valley on 25th (MJCo/MJC). Singles were at seven other sites during the month.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

Some good counts this month, with a peak at a pre-roost gathering at Low Newton beach on 21st of 65 birds. 21 were still here on 25th (SW/GB). 46 observed heading S from Seaton Sluice Watch Tower during the month, with four N. 32, mostly juveniles were at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd and 27 (20 juveniles) fed on the beach at St Mary's Island the following day, with 21 present here on 4th (IFO/ASJ). 26 were noted at Amble on 20th (TB). 15 were near Charlton Mires on 25th (GB).

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba alba*

A male was seen on 31st at East Chevington (NFO).

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

160 were counted in the Breamish Valley on 25th, with 60 there on 28th (MJC/DJC). 16 were at Ellington on 29th, 25 on 30th, with 20 present the following day (TB). Four were on Newcastle Town Moor on 10th. Migration began to be observed with 12 flying W at Gosforth Garden Village on 25th, with six over the following day. 12 went S at Guile Point on 27th (MJC). 12 were also noted at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 28th and three on 30th (RS).

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

Three records only this month, with a family group of six being seen at Linacres on 28th and a migrant at Chare Ends (Holy Island) on 13th (AJR/MJC). Another passage bird was seen and heard at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 28th (RS).

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Singles were seen at Cullercoats, North Blyth and Tynemouth during the month.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

A minimum of 50 were seen at Wooler Common on 18th (DF). 43 were counted across Holy Island on 13th (MJC). One to four were at three further sites.

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

12 first-year birds ringed (four retraps) at Mickley Square on 12th (DLe). Five juveniles were at Howdon on 17th (CB). Five seen in Holywell Dene on 31st (MJC). A pair with two juveniles were seen throughout the month at a Morpeth garden (TD). Four were at Howick on 20th (JAR). Pairs were noted at five locations and one to three seen at a further seven sites.

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

Only four records this month, with 14, including juveniles, feeding on Rose Hips at St. Mary's Wetland on 25th (ASJ). Family parties of five were at Newcastle Exhibition Park on 10th and at feeders in a Marden Estate garden on several dates (GB/ASJ). Four were seen at Spartylea all month (CT).



A species becoming less common in recent years
A male Greenfinch in Woolsington
John Littleton on 25th August

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

Seaton Sluice Watch Tower recorded light passage all month, with a total of 142 S and nine N. 80 were noted at Lincoln Hill on 16th (SW) and a flock of 70 at Derwent Reservoir on 6th (IFO). 40 at Berwick Drift (Lynemouth) on 11th and 30 at St. Mary's on 23rd (TB/ASJ). 25 were at Chugdon Wood on 17th and 23 plus seen at East Chevington on 9th (TB/PRM). One to 15 were noted at six other sites during the month.

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis caberet*

Two were seen at Grindon on 7th and at Wark on 18th (PRM)

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

Flocks of 30, seven and five noted at Thrunton Woods on 14th (JD). Singles were seen at Wark on 18th and flying S at the coast at East Chevington on 27th (PRM/CB).

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Very well recorded with 128 counted feeding at Beacon Lane (Cramlington) on 12th, around 120 feeding at Mickley Square on 17th and at St. Mary's/Old Hartley on 29th (DM/DLe/ASJ), the latter flock, including many juveniles, having increased from 55 on 12th. 100 plus, also including many juveniles, were counted at Arcot Pond on 12th and 80 plus at Northumberlandia (Cramlington) on 1st (LJM). 80 also noted at Holy Island village on 13th(MJC). 60 plus were at West Hartford on 1st (LJM). 50 seen at East Holywell on 19th and at Airy Holm Reservoir, mostly juveniles, the same day (MNC/IFo). 42 were at Hauxley on 25th. At Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin), up to 35, including juveniles, present all month and at Spartylea, up to 30 noted all month (RS/CT). One to 26 seen at a further eight locations.

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

Seven at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) were calling as they flew S on 28th (RS). Three birds were observed at Bamburgh on 29th (BRS) and a single was at Grindon on 7th.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

Six, including four singing males, were near Holywell Pond on 3rd and five were noted at Beacon Lane (Cramlington) the following day (ASJ/DM). Four seen at Haughton Castle on 19th (SW). Three were at Holywell Pond on 29th and two at Big Waters on 2nd (ASJ/GB). A single was heard singing at Newton Red House on 5th and one was at Arcot Lane on 9th (DM/GM/PG).

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Few reports this month with six at St. Mary's (two females) on 20th and five remaining by 28th being the peak counts (ASJ). Three were at Airy Holm Reservoir on 1st (IFo). Singles were seen at Arcot, Cresswell Pond and Newton Pool during the month (DM *et al.*).

ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN**Escapes**

No sightings

Hybrids

No sightings

Birds of Unknown Origin

No sightings

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

R.Ahmed, A.Allen, A.H.Banks, S.R.Barrett, D.H.W.Blair, T.Blake, G.Bowman, C.Bradshaw, A. & L.Brunst, J.Bucknall (JBu), D.J.Carr, E.F.Carr, M.J.Carr, M.N.Coates, M.J.Cook (MJCo), A.Curry, T.Daley, T.R. & J.Dean, I.R.Douglas, M.Eccles, T. & J.Farooqi (TF / JFa), P.C.Fletcher, I.Forsyth (IFo), P.Gilbert, A.Hall, A.S.Hart, C.Hartley, A.J.Hewitt, M.S.Hodgson, S.T.Holliday, M.Hutcheson (MHu), A.S.Jack, A.Janes, I.Johnson, I.Kerr, M.Kirby (MKi), C.G.Knox, G.P.Knox, L.J.McDougall, D.Mckeown, A.D.Mclevy, M.Nattrass, A.J.Newson, N.F.Osborne, A.Priest, A.J.Richards, S.Rippon, J.A.Roper, C.Saunders, R.Stevens, A.L.Todd, T.Watson, S.Westerberg, T.Wiffen.

Alnwick & District Natural History Society (R Poyer), Berwick Wildlife Group, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

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

This bulletin was compiled by Graeme Bowman (Geese to Mergansers), Steve Laing (Red Grouse to Cormorant), Trevor Blake (Hawks to Falcons), Tom Brewis (Oystercatcher to Godwit), Clive Hampton (Turnstone to Redshank), Eddie Crabtree (Kittiwake to Puffin), Tim Dean (Escapes, Hybrids and Unknown Origin, List of Contributors, Highlights), Peter Fletcher (Doves to Larks), Mike Richardson (Tits to Stonechat), Alan Jack (Dipper to Buntings).

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 records for the month to ntbc.records@googlemail.com

Please email for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and grid references: Please use of standard location names and 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

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 online resource for anyone interested in birds. There are:

Photo Galleries – Here you can view hundreds of photos of birds from Northumberland, Newcastle and North Tyneside. Members are encouraged to contribute their own photos. Simply send them to galleries@ntbc.org.uk

Sightings – Here you can view reports of birds recently reported in the County. Anyone who would like to contribute and post sightings to this page, please email sightings@ntbc.org.uk Please note this section is moderated, so there may be a short delay before your record appears.

There are also County Checklists, Records Committee updates, Information on important Surveys, useful articles and reports on Bird ID and Overseas Birding Trips....and much more...

Please submit any other new content for the website to the main club email address at ntbcorg@gmail.com

New content such as Birding Trip Reports etc., is always welcome and very much appreciated.
To find out more please visit www.ntbc.org.uk

COUNTY RECORDS COMMITTEE

Martin Kirby will complete his four-year spell on the committee in December 2018. Hence there will be a vacancy on the CRC to be filled. Please could anyone wishing to apply to join the committee let the County Recorder Tim Dean know, either by email or letter. Applicants need to have a comprehensive knowledge of Northumberland's birdlife and will be required to attend three 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.

Tim Dean
2, Knocklaw Park
Rothbury
NE65 7PW

email : t.r.dean@btinternet.com

Ornithological reports for Northumberland and Durham 1935 to 1950

The early bird reports for Northumberland and Durham were initially published as a single report in The Vasculum and then in The Naturalist, the first one being for 1935. It will come as no surprise that the early reports are very hard to find but, with the help of others, I have now put a run together for the years 1935 to 1950 and have decided to produce a number of hard copies for NTBC members and anyone else who is interested. The copy will be produced in a wire comb-binder for ease of use, with an appropriate title page and acetate covers and runs to c.100 A4 size pages.

Before finalising this one-off print run I am looking to take pre-orders in advance of finalising a total print run. I am not looking to make any profit from this exercise and consequently the cost will be only £11 each including postage or £7 without postage.

If you are interested, please email or text me your details including name, address (if posting), number of copies required and indicating how you would like to pay e.g. cash, bank transfer or via PayPal. My plan is to arrange printing before the end of the year and I'll be in touch again as the printing process nears completion.

Steve Holliday
07786 213699
steveholliday@hotmail.co.uk

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2018 No 9

MONTHLY SUMMARY SEPTEMBER 2018

7th November 2018



CONTENTS

Tyne Kittiwake Partnership

Scope for sale

Subscription reminder and BIN 2017 update



A Common Tern at Tynemouth by Colin Bradshaw

CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Mandarin	Singles at two sites where rarely seen, St Mary's Wetland & Branton GP.
Ruddy Shelduck	Two at Widdrington Moor Lake on 16th
Garganey	One or two still at East Chevington & Bothal Pond up to 14th.
Red-crested Pochard	Single at Gosforth Park on 16th.
Balearic Shearwater	Single N past Druridge on 5th.
Red-necked Grebe	Singles at Boulmer, St Mary's and unusually inland at Airy Holm Reservoir.
Avocet	A juv at Arcot Pond on 20th was first for site in Autumn. Also only record all month.
Black-tailed Godwit	Large count of 148 at Monk's House Pool on 18th.
Pectoral Sandpiper	One at Whittle Dene Res. Unusual site record, Possibly first since one in Oct 1985
Jack Snipe	Early autumn record of one at St Mary's on 14th.
Wood Sandpiper	Singles at East Chevington and Holy Island.
Spotted Redshank	Up to three at many sites. Noticeably productive autumn.
Little Gull	Poor autumn again with only 1-2 at East Chevington, Seaton Sluice and St Mary's
Mediterranean Gull	Another county record with 137 counted at Cresswell Pond on 4th.
Great Black-backed Gull	One noted eating an Octopus at Holy Island on 16th !
Caspian Gull	Polish ringed 'PKCS' present until 6th at Amble Harbour.
Black Tern	Only record was one at Boulmer roosting on 2nd.
Long-tailed Skua	Singles at end of month at Seaton Sluice and Holy Island
Black Guillemot	A juvenile moved S past Seaton Sluice on 2nd
Hoopoe	One on Holy island on 29th was only watched for 5 minutes before disappearing
Hooded Crow	One in fields at Boulmer from 20th.
Greenish Warbler	One at East Chevington on 1st midway along north Pool
Barred Warbler	Two together at St Mary's Wetland on 6th and 7th. One stayed until 8th
Pied Flycatcher	Only two singles noted all month, a sign of the lack of easterlies.
Black Redstart	Single at North Blyth on 30th.
White Wagtail	Three noted at both Hallington Reservoir and Holy Island
Common Rosefinch	Juvenile seen at very close range in Holy Island village on 21st
Lapland Bunting	Two over Vicar's garden on Holy Island on 8th.

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 are;

Chris will tell about his work with Arctic Terns on the Farnes, and their exciting travels

8th November

Rick Taylor community outreach officer, Scottish Borders

An update from the **South of Scotland Golden Eagle Project**, on the first translocations and release this year, and the progress of the three young eagles.

The talk by Professor Martin Collinson on DNA has been moved to **14th February 2019**

13th December

Dr Chris Redfern Terns and other seabirds

Chris will tell us about his work on the Farne Islands with Arctic Terns, and their impressive travels.

FIELD TRIPS

Contact Steve Anderson seaswan@btinternet.com

CLASSIFIED LIST

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

At Lindisfarne NNR, records of pale-bellied *hrota* birds in the Fenham Flats section included 70 on 2nd (MJC/ADM), 700 on 9th (IK), a minimum of 1,700 on 15th (DF) and about 2,300 on 22nd (DF), while 40 were at Budle Bay on 19th (GPK) and 11 flew N at Boulmer on 29th. Counts of un-raced birds included 500 at Fenham Flats on 7th (JPL) and 2,000 there on 29th (ASJ), and 1,625 at Beal Point on 29th (ADM).

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

90 (in two skeins) flew S at Monkseaton on 16th (MSH) when 40 flew S at Shiremoor (CGK), 35 flew W at Wark on 26th (PRM), 25 N and seven S at Ellington on 30th (TB), and three N and 17 S at Seaton Sluice on 30th (SSWT). QEII CP Lake held 394 on 9th (CDH), 80 were at Grindon Lough on 30th (PRM), 76 at Budle Bay on 20th (CGK/GPK/RA), 60 at Bothal Pond on 1st (TF/JFa), 15-46 at Castle Island, West Ord and Whittle Dene Reservoirs,

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Singles were at New Water Haugh, QEII CP Lake and the Tweed Estuary between 6th-9th. Three at Budle Bay on 22nd (CGK/GPK) heralded an influx, with numbers increasing there to 244 on 24th, 700 on 25th, 8,000 on 29th and 10,000+ on 30th (DF/CGK/GPK et al.). Other peak counts included 1,024-2,000 at Beal Point (ADM) and Elwick (ASJ), and 600 at Goswick (ASJ) on 29th, and 193 at Fenham Flats on 24th (BS). A total of 1,878 N and 687 S at Seaton Sluice was a site record for September, and included 1,734 N and 654 S on 28th (SSWT), while 350 flew N at Tynemouth between 28th-30th (CB/DRW), 220 W at Belford on 29th (DF), and 26-58 N at Annstead and St Mary's on 24th-25th. Groups of 18-54 were also at East Chevington, Grindon Lough, Warkworth and Widdrington Moor Lake between 28th-30th. Inland, two flocks were heard flying W at Wark on the evening of 29th (PRM) and three were at Derwent Reservoir on 27th (IFo).

A Barnacle Goose
over Mike Carr

Goswick

25th September



Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

About 70 flew E at Cramlington on 6th (DM), 36 N at Cocklawburn on 24th (MHu), nine N at Seaton Sluice and seven S at Humshaugh. The largest congregations involved 1,050 at Airy Holm Reservoir on 23rd (IFo), 500 at Budle Bay on 26th (JPL), 140 at Prestwick Carr on 13th (PCF), and 70-92 at Arcot Pond and Haughton Castle, and 25-40 at Bothal Pond, Castle Island and Widdrington Moor Lake. One to ten were also at Arcot Pond, Grindon Lough, QEII CP Lake and Spartylea.

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

A total of 249 N and 3,594 S at Seaton Sluice was a record site total for September, and included 840 S on 29th (SSWT). The first of the month were 45 flying SW at Holywell Dene on 6th (MJC), followed by 34 at Budle Bay on 12th (CGK/GPK), and eight to 170 at/over Budle Bay (DF), Cresswell Pond (TF/JFa), East Chevington (MSH), Ellington (TB), Hauxley (MJC), Heddon-on-the-Wall (AA), Shield on the Wall (SW) and St Mary's (MSH) on 13th-14th. Budle Bay held 300 on 15th (CGK/GPK), when 150-166 were at/over Alnmouth and Cresswell Pond and smaller numbers at several further sites. On 17th, 1,270 were at Widdrington Moor Lake (MSH); 600 at Budle Bay on 21st (DF) increased to 2,100 on 22nd (CGK/GPK), and about 2,500 by 23rd (DF). Steady movement to SW of many small skeins, some at great height, was noted at Holy Island between 20th-24th (IK). Other peak concentrations involved 3,500 at Widdrington Moor Lake on 29th (TF/JFa), 3,000 at Goswick on 25th (MJC), 2,000 S at Ellington on 30th (TB), and 400 at Fenham Flats on 23rd (NNBC). Inland, 102-200 flew S/W at Airy Holm Reservoir (IFo), Beanley (TRD/JD) and Bridge End (SW) between 23rd-28th, and a flock was heard over Hexham at 2100h on 23rd (AJH). Ten to 75 were at/over Derwent Reservoir, Doddington, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Embleton, Horncliffe, Howick, Quarry House Moor and Tynemouth between 21st-30th.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Eight flew N at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). The Tweed Estuary attracted 367 on 6th (MHu), 105 were at QEII CP Lake on 8th (CDH), 97 at Killingworth Lake on 12th (LJM), 49 at East Chevington (TD), and 16-31 at Bothal Pond, Castle Island and West Ord. Five to eight were also at Greenlee Lough, Holy Island Lough and 'Northumberlandia' (Cramlington).

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

The over-summering individual remained at Budle Bay all month (CGK/GPK/RA et al.) and one was at the Tweed Estuary on 6th (MHu). Five were at Fenham on 22nd (DF), one at Elwick on 24th (BS), six flew S at Seaton Sluice on 25th (SSWT), and seven were near Ross on 26th (CH).

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

A total of 60 N and two S was a September record at Seaton Sluice (SSWT), and four flew N at Tynemouth on 29th (DRW). 300 were at Fenham Flats on 25th (MJC), 287 at Budle Bay on 28th (DF), and one to three at Arcot Pond, Castle Island and West Ord.

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*

Two were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 16th (ADMc).

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

A drake, in eclipse plumage, was at St Mary's Wetland on 8th (AC/IJ/DRW) and 9th (PJA/DM), and one was at Branton GP between 15th-23rd (IBDa/KDa).

Garganey *Spatula querquedula*

Two were at East Chevington on 1st (TF/JFa) when one was also at Bothal Pond (TF/JFa). One was also at the former site on 13th-14th (BS/MSH et al.), and one at Widdrington Moor Lake on 16th (ADMc).

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

A total of eight flew N at Seaton Sluice between 3rd-24th (SSWT). East Chevington held a peak of 71 on 14th (MSH) and numbers at Budle Bay peaked at 40 on 28th (CGK/GPK). Five to nine were at Arcot Pond (LJM), Bothal Pond (TF/JFa) and Monks' House Pool (JPL/JDL), and two to four at Embleton Quarry Pond, Grindon Lough and Linton Ponds.

Gadwall *Mareca strepera*

At Seaton Sluice, four flew S on 10th and five S on 18th (SSWT). Peak counts were 60 at East Chevington on 11th (TRD/JD), 41 at Linton Ponds on 9th (CDH), 36 at Gosforth Park NR on 16th (MJC), and 14 at Caistron (JD) and Castle Island (DM/PJA). Five to nine were also at Bothal Pond, Killingworth Lake and St Mary's Wetland, and threes at Ladyburn Lake and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Wigeon *Mareca penelope*

At Seaton Sluice, 1,815 flew N and 14 S, including 786 N on 29th (SSWT), 292 flew N at Annstead on 24th (DF), and ten to 57 N at Snab Point, St Mary's and Tynemouth. 3,000 were at Fenham Flats on 23rd (NNBC), while numbers at Budle Bay increased from 70 on 1st to 700 by 14th, 1,100 by 24th and 1,300 by 28th (DF/CGK/GPK). Elsewhere, peak counts involved about 400 at East Chevington on 29th (TD), 74 at Grindon Lough (PRM), and 30 at Branton GP. Two to 13 were at seven further sites, including, unusually, two at Craggside on 17th (TRD/JD).

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Best counts were 257 at Budle Bay on 14th (DF), 191 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 5th (SR), 185 in a stubble field at Old Hartley on the evening of 24th (MNC), 103 at Derwent Reservoir on 1st (IFo), and 66-80 at Bothal Pond, Castle Island, St Mary's Wetland and the Tweed Estuary. Groups of 20-44 were also at Grindon Lough, Haughton Castle, Killingworth and Ladyburn Lakes, Linton Ponds, Northumberland Park (North Shields), Prestwick Carr, Shield on the Wall and Spartylea, and ten to 17 at Airy Holm Reservoir, Arcot Pond and Warkworth.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

A total of 63 N at Seaton Sluice was a September record for the site, and included 28 N on 25th (SSWT), nine flew N at Annstead on 23rd (CGK/GPK), and one N at St Mary's on 2nd (AC). Variable numbers at East Chevington included a peak of 32 on 13th (TF/JFa), eight were at Budle Bay on 2nd (CGK/GPK), seven were at Grindon Lough on 26th (BS), and one to two at Cresswell Pond and Derwent Reservoir.

Teal *Anas crecca*

A total of 3,911 N and 242 S was a September record for Seaton Sluice, and included 1,117 N and nine S on 3rd and 914 N on 29th (SSWT); 600 flew N at Tynemouth between 0710-0900h on 29th (DRW), and 65-90 N at Annstead, St Mary's and Stag Rock. Numbers at Budle Bay peaked at 1,100 on 24th (CGK/GPK), 809 were at Grindon Lough on 8th (MRS), 116-154 at Arcot Pond, Derwent Reservoir and St Mary's Wetland, and 77-79 at Bothal Pond and Monks' House Pool. Ten to 30 were also at Haughton Castle, Linton and Middle Ord Ponds, and West Ord.

Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina*

One was at Gosforth Park NR on 16th (MJC).

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Six were at East Chevington on 29th (TF/JFa), three to four at Branton GP (AA), Derwent Reservoir (IFo), Grindon Lough (BS) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs (SR), and singles at Bothal Pond and Killingworth Lake.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Three flew N at Seaton Sluice on 26th (SSWT). Peak counts were 63 at Greenlee Lough on 8th (MRS), 37 at 'Northumberlandia', Cramlington on 30th (LJM), 26-28 at Castle Island (DM/PJA) and Grindon Lough (MRS), and 11 at Bothal Pond. Eight were also at Haughton Castle, and one to three at six further sites including one at Budle Bay on 20th (GPK).

Scaup *Aythya marila*

A total of six flew N at Seaton Sluice between 21st-24th (SSWT) and one to two flew N at Newbiggin (ASH et al.) and Tynemouth (DRW) on 28th. Four were at Fenham Flats on 25th (MJC) and one was at East Chevington on 29th (TF/JFa).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

At Seaton Sluice, 177 flew N and 69 S during the month (SSWT), 71 were at North Blyth on 30th (STH), and two to nine at Holy Island causeway and the Tweed and Tyne Estuaries.

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 782 N and 151 S (SSWT), 32 were off Cocklawburn on 9th (MHu), and five were off Cresswell at East Chevington. An unusual inland record concerned a drake at Airy Holm Reservoir (near Shotleyfield) on 1st (IFo).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Singles flew N at Annstead on 24th (DF) and Seaton Sluice on 30th (SSWT). Seven were at West Ord on 27th (MHu), four were at New Water Haugh on 9th (MHu), four at the Tweed Estuary on 6th (MHu), and singles at Branton GP and Grindon Lough.

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

A record September total of 90 N and 16 S was recorded at Seaton Sluice, and included 16 N on 3rd (SSWT). The Tweed Estuary held 42 on 6th (MHu), 25-26 were at Cocklawburn and West Ord, ten to 13 at Branton GP, Derwent Reservoir and Greenlee Lough, and five to eight at the Blyth Estuary and off Monks' House. One to two were also found at Boulmer, Castron, Rothbury and Spartylea.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Six flew N at Tynemouth on 29th (DRW), and three flew N and three S at Seaton Sluice between 12th-25th (SSWT). One to three were at Boulmer Haven, East Chevington and Newbiggin.

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

Seven, all males, were at Spartylea on 13th (CT).

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

Two flocks of a dozen plus various singles totalled 28 birds at Simonside on 18th (JD). Two were at Addycombe (Rothbury).

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

Ten at Walwick on 10th was the highest count (*per SW*) with low numbers generally, presumably because of few releases, the only other sightings being of one to four at Beanley, Old Bewick and Quarry House Moor.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

The party at Lincoln Hill (Humshaugh) noted last month had increased to 48 birds on 10th (*per SW*). Some encouraging totals came from elsewhere with 19 at East Holywell (MNC), 15 at Ellington, 14 in fields at St. Mary's and Old Hartley, 12 in Budle Bay, ten at Earsdon, nine (an adult with eight well-grown young) at Holywell Pond NR, eight at Longhirst, seven at Elwick and two at Spartylea.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

Between two to five were at Spartylea all month (CT).

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

Record passage numbers for September were recorded at Seaton Sluice with a total of 500 (174N, 326S) in 104 hours of watching (SSWT). This abundance was reflected in records from elsewhere along the coast by several other observers throughout the month.

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*

One flying S past Annstead Point (Seahouses) on 23rd was followed by a good count there on 25th when four birds were moving south into a very strong headwind (CGK/GPK).

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

Again the day of 25th was the most productive with five N past St Mary's (ASJ) and one S at Annstead Point (CGK/GPK). A single flew N at Annstead on 23rd.

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

The only movement of note was at the start of the month with 30N in two hours at St Mary's on 4th (MSH) and 58N in 80 minutes past Annstead on 5th (DF). Later in the month a full nine hours sea watching in total on 23rd and 25th only recorded 11 past Annstead Point (CGK/GPK). Three to eight were sighted at seven other localities including a pelagic trip off Newbiggin on 1st.

Sooty Shearwater *Puffinus griseus*

Passage numbers were generally low for the time of year with Seaton Sluice recording only 11 (nine N and two S) in 104 hours, with the peak movement being six N on 24th - a poor September showing for the eighth consecutive year (SSWT). Reports from elsewhere included nine N in two hours past Howick on 23rd (BS), six N past Newbiggin during the evening of 23rd (ASH), and singles sighted at St Mary's.

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 290 (248N, 42S) in 104 hours, again a low September count, the peak period being 198N between 23rd-24th (SSWT). Similar passage was experienced elsewhere with counts on 23rd including 74N at Howick (BS), 64 past Annstead Point (CGK/GPK), 54 past Newbiggin (ASH) and 23 at Boulmer. One to five were seen from various other viewpoints.

Balearic Shearwater *Puffinus mauretanicus*

A single of this red listed species flew N in the sea off Druridge Pools at 19:37 on 5th (TF/JFa).

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) peaked at 20 on 1st, reducing to 19 on 9th and 11 on 20th (TF/JFa/TD/IRD). A group of 19 were together at Hauxley NWT on 29th (CDB), 16 were at Castle Island on 9th (DM), 15 were found on the River Tweed between Gainslaw House to Horndcliffe on 10th (CH), 14 were at Caistron, 13 at Killingworth Lake on 1st included five adults with a mixture of aged young, 12 were at Grindon Lough and also a flock of 12 were on the River Aln at Alnmouth. One to nine were at Airy Holm Reservoir, Budle Bay, Chain Bridge (R Tweed), Craggside, East Chevington, Haughton Castle, Howick, Linton Ponds, Marden Quarry and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

One sat on the sea at Boulmer on 1st (BS), a single flew N past St. Mary's at 18:20 on 4th (AC/MSH) and a juvenile was in residence at Airy Holm Reservoir on 26th and 27th (IFo).

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Numbers generally reduced this month with Widdrington Moor Lake still recording the highest total of nine on several days (TRD/JD/MSH). One to four were at Airy Holm Reservoir, Derwent Reservoir, Killingworth Lake, the River Tweed, and Seaton Sluice.

Bulletin August 2018 omitted in error**Black-necked Grebe** *Podiceps nigrocollis*

The only sighting was a single at Cresswell Pond on 4th (GB).

Bulletin August 2018 omitted in error

Eurasian Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

Three were watched flying N over Chevington North Pool on 2nd (ADMc) and also N over Warkworth beach at 08:58 that day (STH).

Bulletin August 2018 omitted in error

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

At East Chevington North Pool, one flew from south of the pool to the north east corner at 17:25h on 30th (TE/AJ/ASH/Ajn).

Bulletin August 2018 omitted in error

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

The Tweed estuary peaked at a healthy 26 during a WeBS count on 10th (MHu) with the same total reported from Widdrington Moor Lake on 17th (TB). 12 were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs during a visit there on 30th (SR), 11 at Arcot Pond on 1st included several juveniles (LJM) and Seaton Sluice Watch Tower had a monthly total of nine which included two flying S on 14th approximately three miles out to sea (SSWT). Nine were at present during a WeBS count at Castle Island on 12th and one to eight were at many other localities.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

The Tweed estuary peaked at 23 during a WeBS count on 6th (MHu), 19 were at Howdon on 26th (CB) and 15 were observed making random movements past Seaton Sluice throughout the month (SSWT). Double digit counts also came from Whittle Dene Reservoirs, with 13 present on 5th (SR), and 12 at Castle Island on 9th (DM). One to eight were seen at Bridge End (R. North Tyne), Corbridge, Holy Island, Monk's House Pool, Linton Ponds, North Blyth staithes, QE11 CP Lake and Spartylea.

Bulletin august 2018 omitted in error

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

The maximum monthly count at Budle Bay was eight on 23rd (CGK/GPK), five were at Alnmouth on 8th and three were seen at Arcot Pond, the Blyth estuary, Holy Island, Sleek Burn, the River Wansbeck, Warkworth Weir and West Ord. One to two were at Amble, Borough Woods (Morpeth), Castle Island, Cresswell Pond NWT, Derwent Reservoir, East Chevington, Ellington, Foxton Bends (R Aln), Furnace Bank, Longhirst Flash, the River Coquet and Warkworth Lane (Ellington).

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

The peak total at Fenham Flats was a tally of 12 between Beal-Elwick on 24th (BS), whilst a high tide roost at "The Cages" at Fenham Mill contained 11 birds on the 9th (DF). Budle Bay had a maximum monthly count of nine present from 2nd-8th (CGK/GPK/PHa), and one to three were at Beanley, the Blyth estuary, Boulmer, Caistron, Castle Island, Chain Bridge (R. Tweed), Druridge Pools, Holy Island, Horncliffe, North Seaton (R. Wansbeck), Sleek Burn, Swinhoe, Warkworth Weir and West Ord.

Bulletin august 2018 omitted in error

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

Passage numbers gradually rose during the month with 232 (191N, 41S) past Annstead on 6th, 500N per hour at Seaton Sluice on 11th increasing to up to 1200N per hour on 26th (SSWT) with similar large numbers until the month end. 250 were clustered in a group near shore either on the water or diving in at Chevington Burn beach on 19th (TD) and smaller numbers were reported from several nearby coastal locations.

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

Significant passage was well underway at the start of the month with a peak of 860 per hour heading N past Berwick Pier at midday on 3rd (MHu). Counts on 4th included 540 per hour past Seaton Sluice (SSWT) and a total of 620N past St Mary's in two hours (MSH). At Annstead, 1180N went past in 80 minutes on 5th and a total of 840 (523N, 317S) in 75 minutes on 10th (DF). Large numbers of movement continued throughout the month with totals of 350N at Annstead in 80 minutes on 17th, 355S in one hour at Cocklawburn on 18th and 600N in 80 minutes at Annstead on 24th (DF). Further counts of two to 200 came from several other coastal points with many juveniles obvious towards the month's end. At Alnmouth Bay on 11th a group were plunge diving in shallow water where the River Aln flows in to the sea (MKi).



An immature Gannet passing Newton Point by Tim Dean on 18th September

Bulletin august 2018 omitted in error

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

The total from Seaton Sluice was ten (three N, seven S) in what is traditionally a poor month for this species (SSWT). The roost at Meadow Haven (Berwick) peaked at 28 on 23rd (MHu) and three were at Low Newton on 1st.

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Seaton Sluice reported an increase in sightings this month, but no real signs of passage, with a monthly total of 45N and 60S (SSWT). Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) peaked at an impressive 164 on 18th (MSH) but apart from that only one to eight were reported from three other locations.

Bulletin august 2018 omitted in error

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Passage was noted at Annstead on 6th with 26N and 13S (DF). East Chevington peaked at 102 birds on 17th (SRB)TF/JFa), 81 were on old staithes on the River Coquet on 31st, 60 were at Hadston on 20th (TB) and one to 25 were at Amble Braid, Amble Harbour, Birling Carrs (Warkworth), Castle Island, Chevington Burn beach, Cresswell, Derwent Reservoir, Hauxley NWT, Meadow Haven, Newbiggin Breakwater, the Tweed estuary, West Ord and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

No obvious passage was recorded at Seaton Sluice, however peak counts were 57S on 20th and 65S on 23rd (SSWT). East Chevington peaked at 124 birds on 15th (IRD), North Shields Fish Quay hosted 42 on 1st (DM), 26 were at Castle Island on 9th, 20 was the monthly maximum at Derwent Reservoir on 25th (IFo) and 17 were in the Meadow Haven (Berwick) roost on 2nd (MHu). One to 14 were noted from elsewhere.



A Cormorant at Boulmer by Tim Dean on 23rd September

Osprey *Pandion haliaetuss*

Derwent Reservoir had two birds present on 1st (IFo) and one bird there on 3rd and 4th (IFo). Other single birds were noted at Wark (North Tyne) on 4th (PRM), Holy Island causeway on 9th (DF) and at Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) which flew S (AC).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Two females were seen together at Ellington on 10th (TB) and two birds were also at Alnmouth on 15th and Gosforth Park NR (MJC). Single birds were noted at 19 sites including one using the observer's garden bird bath at Tynemouth on 5th (CB).



A Sparrowhawk in a Tynemouth garden by Colin Bradshaw

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

A juvenile male was seen chasing a Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus* at height without success at Quarry House Moor on 29th (SW).

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

A female and a juvenile were at East Chevington North Pool on 3rd and at Widdrington Moor Lake on 16th (ADMc). Single birds were also seen at East Chevington throughout the month (ADMc *et al*) and birds were at Derwent Reservoir on 4th (IFo), Castron on 6th (JD), S at Cresswell Pond on 6th (ADMc), Longbridge End (Beal Point) on 9th (CH), Widdrington Moor Lake on 15th (ADMC) and S over Newbiggin Golf Course on 20th (AP)

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

On 4th a ringtail was mobbed by a couple of Carrion Crows *Corvus corone* at Druridge Pools before gaining height and flying S (AA).

Red Kite *Milvus Milvus*

Only three records this month with single birds at Derwent Reservoir on 1st (IFo) and at Spartylea on 16th and 17th (CT).

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Seven birds were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 15th (SR), five were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 17th (MSH) up to four were seen throughout the month at Spartylea (CT) and three birds were seen at East Chevington on 9th (MSH). One to two birds were noted at 13 sites.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Four adults were seen at East Chevington on 13th (TF/JFa) and one to three birds including a juvenile were seen on several dates (TRD/JD *et al*). Two birds were at Arcot Pond on 5th (LJM) and single were either heard or seen at Cheswick Dunes on 9th (CH), St Mary's Wetland on 12th (AC) and at Druridge Pools on 14th (MSH) and 15th and 20th (IRD).

Late record for August 2018**Spotted Crane** *Porzana porzana*

A single bird was seen at Newton Pool on 15th and 16th (IBDa/KDa)

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Ten birds were at Linton Pond on 9th including a newly hatched chick (CDH). Eight birds were at Castle Island (DM) and QEII CP Lake (CDH) on 9th, five birds were seen at Jesmond Dene (Newcastle) on 23rd (MJCo) and four were noted at St Mary's Wetland on 9th (DM). One to two birds were at Arcot Pond, Haughton Castle, Spartylea and St Mary's Wetland.

Coot *Fulica atra*

The highest count this month came from Killingworth Lake with 85 birds present there on 12th (LJM), followed by 33 at Grindon Lough on 30th (PRM), 28 at Linton Ponds on 9th (CDH), 27 at Grindon Lough on 8th (MRS), 26 at QEII CP Lake on 9th (CDH) and 11 at Bothal Pond on 9th (TD). The only other record were of six birds at Shield on the Wall on 8th (MRS) and a single bird in Budle Bay on 1st and 5th (GPK/RA).

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Holy Island, St Cuthbert's Island had by far the largest count with 310 at roost on 2nd (ASJ). On the same day 122 were counted at roost at St Mary's (ASJ), while on 30th 103 were at North Blyth Staithes (SH). Newbiggin, Beacon Point reported 94 roosting on 3rd and 92 on 15th (AP), also at roost, 83 were counted on 20th at Cullercoats (ASJ) and 53 were at Bamburgh, Stag Rocks on 18th (MH). Counts of 16-50 were made at Alnmouth, Newton (Newton Point) and the Tweed estuary. Smaller counts came from Holy Island causeway and St Mary's South Bay.

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

A late juvenile was at Arcot Pond on 20th – a new bird for this site (reported by LJM and found by GMi).

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

East Chevington reported 900 birds on 29th (TD), the largest count for this site since 2011. The Tweed estuary had a count of 844 on 6th (MHu) and St Mary's wetland had 800 on 25th (TB). On 15th, Alnmouth had 415 birds (MJC), 400 were at Lindisfarne NNR, Fenham Mill on 30th (DF) and 376 were at Cocklawburn on 9th – the largest peak count in the last ten years (MHu). Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) had a peak count of 300 on 11th (TF/JFa) with the same number was at Earsdon on 17th (ASJ) and at Derwent Reservoir on 24th (IFo). Counts of 120-275 came from Castle Island, Cresswell Pond, Holywell Pond, Low Newton, Old Hartley and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Smaller counts came from Arcot Pond, Berwick (West Ord), Blyth Links, Boulmer (Howdiemont Sands), Cresswell (Snab Point), Ellington, Grindon Lough, Linton Ponds, Monk's House Pool and Shield on the Wall.

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

A peak count of 3500 was made at St Mary's on 25th (TB), an increase on the 2000 on 23rd (ASJ). An estimate of 2000 on 24th at Holy Island (MJC) evolved into a precise 1878 on 25th after diligent counting from photographs (ADM). On 17th and 23rd estimates of 1400 were made independently at Lindisfarne NNR, Fenham Flats (DGB, NNBC). Boulmer had an estimated 40 on both 2nd and on 23rd (TRD, TRD/JD), 250 were at Newton (Newton Point) on 18th (TRD) and the same number were at Blyth Links on 25th (TB). On 28th there were 170 birds at Newbiggin, Beacon Point (STH), 115 were at Seahouses, Annstead on 5th (DF) and on an undisclosed date 110 were seen at Ryal, Mootlaw Quarry, circling, possibly looking for a roost site or suitable feeding. Smaller counts came from Bamburgh (Stag Rocks), Berwick (Ord Moor, Billylaw), Boulmer (Howdiemont Sands), Cocklawburn, Derwent Reservoir and Old Hartley.



Two images of popular coastal visitors,
Golden Plovers

Top at at Boulmer by Tim Dean on 23rd
September

left at St. Mary's by Alan Jack on 30th
September

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Twenty-nine were present at Fenham-le-Moor on 29th (ASJ), 12 were at Budle Bay on 14th (GPK), two were at Boulmer on 23rd (TRD) and a single was seen on the Holy Island causeway on 29th (CDB).



Grey Plover at Boulmer with a Redshank. Tim Dean on 6th September

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Budle Bay had the largest count with 180 on 19th (GPK). St Mary's had a count of 38 on 20th (ASJ), Alnmouth had 17 on 3rd (STH) and 14 were at Cocklawburn on 4th (MHu). Counts of 1-6 came from Berwick (Little Beach), Boulmer, Castle Island, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, St Mary's South Bay and Tweed Estuary (Calot Shad).

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Records of passage continued until 9th with the highest count of 16 at Beal Point on 8th (MJC). Seaton Sluice Watch Tower reported 1N and 10S between 1st and 4th (SSWT) and three were reported at Fenham-le-Moor on 9th (AH). Counts of singles came from Alnmouth, Boulmer, Budle Bay, Cullernose Point, Druridge Pools, Holy Island and Tynemouth (Spanish Battery).

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

A large count of 320 was made at Boulmer on 23rd (TRD). Nearby Alnmouth had a count of 162 on 15th (MJC) and on the same day 114 were at Howdiemont Sands, just to the north of Boulmer (MKi). The Tweed Estuary had 88 on 6th (MHu), Cresswell Pond had 60 on 11th (PG) and Monk's House Pool had 60 on 17th (DF). Fifty-six were seen at St Mary's on 19th (ASJ) and 26 at Cocklawburn on 24th (MHu). Counts of seven and less were made at Castle Island, Holy Island causeway, Linton Ponds, Newcastle (Gosforth Garden Village), St Marys South Bay and Wansbeck Estuary.



A Curlew finds a snack
Chris Barlow on 22nd September
Holy Island

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

As usual, St Cuthbert's Island at Holy Island had by far the largest count with 366 roosting birds on 22nd (ASJ). A count of 28 was made at Boulmer on 14th (BS) and 25 were at Budle Bay on 19th (GPK). Other counts of two to 12 came from Cocklawburn, Holy Island causeway, Holy Island (Sandham Bay), Low Newton, Seahouses (Annstead Point), Seaton Sluice Watch Tower, St Mary's Wetland and Tweed Estuary (Calot Shad).



Bar-tailed Godwits

Above a group by Tim Dean at Boulmer on 23rd September
and below at Holy Island on 29th September by Chris Barlow

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

On 18th Monks' House Pool reported 148 birds (MSH). East Chevington had a count of 62 on 5th (JBu) and R Wansbeck, Castle Island had 30 on 12th (PG). Like Monks' House Pool, birds were present throughout the month at Budle Bay where the peak count was of 28 on 16th (CGK/GPK). Counts of 14 and less came from Arcot Pond, Berwick (New Water Haugh) Berwick (West Ord), Boulmer, Hauxley NWT and Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Numbers were reduced from last month with the highest counts coming from Annstead Point (Seahouses) with 80 on 17th (DF) and 45 on 23rd (CGK/GPK). Other counts in double figures were 40 at Boulmer on 23rd (TRD) and 16 at Newton Point on 24th (MKi). One to eight were reported from Cocklawburn, Holy Island causeway, the River Tweed Estuary and St Mary's Island.



A Turnstone enjoys the sun at St. Mary's
Alan Jack on 5th September

Knot *Calidris canutus*

A notable count of 1500 was made at Holy Island on 23rd (NNBC) with 500 also being seen at a roost on St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) the previous day. The highest number reported elsewhere was 25 at Birling Carrs on 2nd (CSa). One to four were at Boulmer, Hauxley NWT and St Mary's Island.

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

Birds were again concentrated in the wetlands in the Druridge Bay area with the peak count being 17 on 20th at East Chevington (IRD) with birds being present all month. Other sites in the Druridge area attracting birds were the Budge Fields with a high of six on 10th (CB), Cresswell Pond with five on 12th (DF), Widdrington Moor Lake held five on 15th (ASJ) and Druridge Pools had three birds present on 9th (IRD). Away from these locations the maximum was ten at Monk's House Pool on 2nd (DL). One-two were reported from Bothal Pond, Boulmer, Budle Bay, Castle Island, Cocklawburn and Low Newton.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

Following last month's light passage an influx was apparent including juveniles. Three juveniles were at Druridge Pools on 7th (ADMc) which had reduced to one by 14th (MSH). Three were seen at East Chevington on 3rd (ADMc) and Cresswell Pond on 4th (IRD/ADMc). Two juveniles were at Boulmer from 7th-10th (CSa) with one being reported on 12th (BS). A single was reported from Castle Island from 8th-9th and further singles were at Holy Island on 2nd and 16th and at Newbiggin on 10th.

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

The St Mary's Island area continued to attract the highest numbers with birds reported on several days through the month, with the peak count being 131 on 20th (ASJ/IJ/MSH/AC). Much smaller numbers were present further north with 18 at Cocklawburn and Sandham Bay (Holy Island), ten at Budle Bay and six at Chevington Burn beach.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Passage at Seaton Sluice was 56 S between 14th-16th (SSWT). The exceptional numbers reported from Budle Bay in August were much reduced with the highest count being 300 on 2nd (GPK/RA). The maximum count elsewhere on the coast was 121 at Boulmer on 15th (MKi) and on freshwater the peak number was reported from Druridge Pools with 71-80 on 12th-14th (DF/MSH). Nearby at East Chevington, a high of 49 on 2nd had declined to ten by 29th (TF/JFa/TD *et al.*). Elsewhere, 20 were at St Mary's Island on 8th (IJ) and 12 at Berwick Little Beach on 4th (TRD/JD). One to nine were reported from Branton GP, Castle Island, Cocklawburn, Derwent Reservoir, Grindon Lough and Monk's House Pool.



Above A Dunlin flock at Boulmer
6th September
Tim Dean

Right a Jack Snipe
Cresswell
Alan Janes

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

Still scarce with few reports received this month. Five were at both Newbiggin Bay and Stag Rocks on 6th and 18th (CH/MSH). Two were at Low Newton on 24th (MKi) and Seaton Sluice on 9th (SSWT).

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

Singles were seen at Cresswell Pond from 8th-21st (MSH/JBu/TB *et al.*), East Chevington on 10th (CB), St Mary's Island on 13th-14th (ASJ) and Druridge Pools on 17th (AJ).

Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos*

One was reported from Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 21st (no observer details).

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyrtus minimus*

One arrived from the N at St Mary's Wetland on 14th and was also present the next day.



Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Immigration was noted at Budle Bay during the month with birds 'in-off' the sea from 12th with a maximum of five on 22nd (CGK/GPK) and ten were also seen 'in-off' at Druridge Pools on 10th (TD). The highest count made was of ten at Castle Island on 9th (DM) with seven at both Bothal Pond on 20th and Grindon Lough on 30th (TD/PRM). Six flew W at Quarry House Moor on 29th (SW) and counts of four were made at St Mary's Island and Whittle Dene Reservoirs (ASJ/SR). One to two were at Arcot Pond, Boulmer, Derwent Reservoir, East Chevington, Howdon, Howick and Airy Holm Reservoir.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Only singles were reported from Annstead Point, Beal, Castle Island, Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Holy Island and St Mary's Island.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Passage was reduced this month as birds moved on. Two were at both Bothal Pond on 2nd (TF/JFa) and Beanley on 23rd (TRD/JD). Single birds were at Alnmouth, Arcot Pond, Berwick Hill bridge, Branton GP, Bridge End (River North Tyne), Castron, Derwent Reservoir, Hauxley NWT, Whittle Dene Reservoirs and Widdrington Moor Lake,

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Budle Bay continued to hold good numbers with a maximum of 264 on 12th reducing to 175 by 28th (DF/MHu/CGK/GPK). The regular WeBS survey at the River Tweed Estuary revealed 243 on 6th (MHu) and 98 were at the River Blyth Estuary on 9th (LJM). Other significant counts were 92 at Alnmouth, 90 at St Mary's Island 68 at Howdon and 45 at Beal at various dates during the month. On 9th, 27 were at Castle Island and 20 downstream at the River Wansbeck Estuary. Newton Pool attracted 14 on 24th and three were still well inland at Derwent Reservoir on 1st.



A Redshank at Holy Island by Alan Jack on 29th September

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Singles were seen at opposite ends of the month with one at East Chevington on 2nd (TF/JFa) and one at the Rocket Fields on Holy Island on 30th (AH).

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

Cresswell Pond hosted birds from 7th-21st with a maximum of three being reported (IRD/AJ/JBu *et al.*) The regular adult remained at Budle Bay all month being joined by other birds with the highest count of four being made on 24th (CGK/GPK/TF/JFa/DF). Three were seen at Widdrington Moor Lake on 16th (ADMc) and two were at both East Chevington on 5th (TRD/JD) and Monk's House Pool on 18th (MSH). One was at Fenham Flats (Lindisfarne) on 24th (BS) and one flew S at Goswick on 25th (MJC).

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

The Lindisfarne area continued to hold notable numbers all month with ten at Budle Bay (CGK/GPK), nine at Beal Point (MJC/DF/Ch *et al.*), five at Fenham Flats on 24th (BS) and one at Holy Island causeway on 29th (CDB). Three were at Castle Island on 9th (DM). Two birds remained from August well inland at Derwent Reservoir on 1st with singles being reported from there until 24th (IFo). Two birds were also seen at Cresswell Pond on 4th (IRD), West Ord (Berwick) from 9th-27th (MHu), Alnmouth on 15th (MJC) and Widdrington Moor Lake on 20th (IRD). Singles were seen at East Chevington and the River Tweed Estuary on 5th-6th.



A Greenshank
Holy Island
Chris Barlow
29th September

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

The maximum of several large movements at Seaton Sluice during the early month was 1,000S in one hour on 7th (SSWT) and 30 moved N at Newton Point on 18th (TRD). Gatherings of 70 fed offshore at Holy Island on 29th (SW) with 45 in the River Tweed estuary on 6th (MHu) and up to eight were seen at Cullernose Point and East Chevington offshore (TRD/JD).

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

The largest counts were 810 in the River Tweed estuary (MHu) and 550 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs (SR), with smaller groups of 300-320 at Guyzance, Howdon and in the River Blyth estuary (CB/LJM/JR), 90-250 at Acklington, Bothal Pond, Castle Island, Linton Ponds and the QE II CP Lake (CDH/JR/TD/DM) and up to 45 at five other localities.

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

There was a continued presence of one or two birds, including one adult, at East Chevington until mid-month (*many observers*) and elsewhere single immatures were recorded offshore at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) (*pelagic trip*) and at St Mary's Island (AC).

Mediterranean Gull *Ichthyaetus melanocephalus*

The unprecedented influx continued this month peaking with a record count of 137 at Cresswell Pond on 4th (ADMc/IRD) with smaller gatherings there of 11-31, the majority adults, on 11th-13th (TF/JFa/TRD/JD/ASH). Elsewhere, 40 were at Sandy Bay, Newbiggin on 27th (BS), 19 in Newbiggin Bay on 6th (CH) with up to 21 at Ellington on three dates from 15th-29th (TB); numerous other sightings of one to seven were reported throughout the month, mainly from the Cresswell-Ellington and nearby areas, but one to three were also noted further afield at Bamburgh, Boulmer, Budle Bay, Fenham Mill, Holy Island, Seaton Sluice, St Mary's wetland and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.



Mediterranean Gulls on the coast on 23rd September.
Above by Alan Jack at St. Mary's and below by Tim Dean at Boulmer



Common Gull *Larus canus*

Two large counts came from Budle Bay with 2,300 and 1,500 on 25th and 8th respectively (CGK) with, from 5th-9th, 400-450 at Acklington and Whittle Dene Reservoirs (SR/JR) and 200 at Guyzance (JR).

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

Few records with 26 seen at Longhoughton Steel on 15th (MKi) and 20 in the River Tweed estuary on 6th (MHu); singles were at Linton Ponds and Holy Island.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

Budle Point hosted large numbers throughout with a maximum of 2,000+ on 8th with lesser counts of 1,200 and 400 later in the month (CGK/GPK). The River Tweed estuary held 256 on 6th (MHu), 150 were at Acklington and Guyzance (JR), 62 at Linton Ponds (CDH), 20+ at Bothal Pond and Castle Island (TD/DM). A marked bird in the River Tweed estuary carried a green darvic ring, PVS (MHu).

***Caspian Gull** *Larus cachinnans*

The regular late-summer visitor to Amble Harbour, marked PKCS, was again seen on 6th (CSa).

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

A double-figure count was 11 at Derwent Reservoir on 3rd which declined to only two by the month end (IFo); other records were four at Castle Island on 9th (DM/PJA) and one in Jesmond Dene on 11th (MJCo).

Sandwich Tern *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

Passage was recorded at Seaton Sluice throughout with the maximum of 155 N on 4th and 114 S on 21st (SSWT). Gatherings of up to 54 were recorded at St Mary's Island on 4th with 23 still there in the roost on 28th (ASJ) and double-figure counts elsewhere comprised 10-24 at Bamburgh, Budle Bay and Cullernose Point; beyond mid-month, counts declined to a maximum of seven recorded at around a dozen sites between Berwick and Whitley Bay (*many observers*). A leucistic bird spent time in the roost at Beacon Point, Newbiggin on 1st before flying off S (AP).

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*

At the Boulmer roost, 25 (19 adults, six juvs.) gathered on 2nd (BS). Records elsewhere from 1st-15th were one to three at Beacon Point (Newbiggin), Budle Bay and Tynemouth (AA/ASJ/DRW/AJ/CB/ADMc) and the last record was an adult at Annstead Point (Seahouses) on 25th (CGK/GPK).

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Small numbers were sighted throughout at Seaton Sluice with a daily maximum of 65 (SSWT). Gatherings of 60-65 were recorded during the first week at the Black Middens, Tynemouth (DRW/*pelagic trip*) with 25 still at St Mary's Island on 27th (ASJ) and ten along the pier at Tynemouth on 10th (CB). Other localities, Berwick, Boulmer, East Chevington and the River Tweed estuary, held one or two from 4th-23rd (MHu/TRD/JD)

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

A single record came of seven flying S at St Mary's Island on 20th (ASJ).

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

A juvenile was in the evening roost at Boulmer on 2nd (BS).



A Roseate Tern at Tynemouth

24th September by Colin Bradshaw

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

An 'extremely low' monthly total of 13 (ten N, three S) were seen in 104 hours watching at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). Eight flew N at Annstead Point (Seahouses) on 23rd (CGK/GPK), five moved N distantly offshore at Budle Bay on 10th (DF) and one to three were recorded on other dates throughout up to 24th, the majority moving N, at Annstead Point, Bamburgh (Stag Rocks), Newbiggin incl. Beacon Point, Newton Point, St Mary's Island and Tynemouth (ASH/DF/DRW/MSH/TRD/CGK/GPK/AP).

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

On 16th, two flew past Boulmer and on 23rd singles were seen flying N at Boulmer (IBDa/KDa) and Newbiggin (ASH *et al*). Also on 23rd, four moved N past Annstead Point (CGK/GPK) and another sighting there on the following day, 24th, comprised an immature flying N (DF).

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

A total of 71 (32 N, 39 S) were counted at Seaton Sluice in 104 hours watching, described as 'a very poor monthly total' (SSWT). On 23rd, nine flew N at Annstead Point with five moving N there on 25th (CGK/GPK) and during this period, 23rd-26th, other records of singles flying N at Bamburgh, Boulmer and Cresswell (TRD/DF/TB) may have included individuals also recorded at Annstead Point. Three were at Newbiggin on 4th (IRD) but all other records were of one or two birds, almost all flying N on dates between 4th-28th, at ten other localities between Boulmer and Tynemouth (*many observers*).

Long-tailed Skua *Stercorarius longicaudus*

Two records comprised a single at Holy Island on 29th (IBDa/KDa) and on 30th a sub-adult moved N at SSWT.

Auk *sp*

At St Mary's Island 24 flew N in two hours at mid-morning on 4th (MSH).

Common Guillemot *Uria aalge*/ **Razorbill** *Alca torda*

The first large-scale movement of the autumn was witnessed at Seaton Sluice on 29th when 400 per hour flew N (SSWT).

Common Guillemot *Uria aalge*

On 6th, 72 were on the sea off Cambois (CH) and 45 were counted off Tynemouth/Whitley Bay on 1st (*pelagic trip*). Three to five were seen elsewhere at Boulmer, Cresswell and Cullernose Point (TRD/JD)

Razorbill *Alca torda*

One feeding in Embleton Bay on 24th (Mki) and two offshore at Whitley Bay on 1st (*pelagic trip*) were the only records.

Black Guillemot *Cepphus grylle*

A juvenile flew S at Seaton Sluice on 2nd (MH/SSWT).

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

Two were sighted flying N at Seaton Sluice on 3rd (SSWT) and a single was off St Mary's Island on 1st (*pelagic trip*).

Rock Dove *Columba livia*

High count of 75 at Stakeford Railway Bridge on 9th (DM/PJA), 23 on roof of Red Lion PH (Bedlington) on 27th (BS) and present at Jesmond Dene .

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Howdon was the continued stronghold with 34 on 26th (CB). 12 were at Cresswell Pond on 4th with five there on 9th (IRD/MSH) and six at Airy Holm (Shotleyfield) on 27th (IFo). One to three were at Derwent Reservoir and Jesmond Dene.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

Between two and ten seen at Spartylea all month (CT) and five in Jesmond Dene on 30th (MJCo).

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Between 17 and 27 came to feeders at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) all month (BS), six at Dinnington on 29th, two all month at Spartylea and one at Howdon on 10th.

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

A late bird at Widdrington on 8th (MSH).

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Two were present all month at Spartylea and at Bridge End (River N Tyne) until 27th (CT/SW). Singles were seen regularly at Holy Island and at 12 other widespread locations all in the last week of the month. Three birds almost ready to fledge at Holy Island were found dead, the victims of Stoat predation as happened to two from an earlier brood at the same location (IK) and one long dead full grown chick was found at Whitfield on 10th (SW).

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Four females called at Ellington on 9th (TB), three at Bridge End (River N Tyne) on 27th (SW) with two all month at Spartylea, pair calling in garden at Manor Drive (Longbenton) on 5th and two calling at Warren Mill Caravan Park on the same date. Singles were at eight other locations.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

One to two were at Druridge Pools all month (IRD et al) with two at Derwent Reservoir on 23rd & 24th (IFo) and one at Lionheart Industrial Estate (Alnwick) at 9.52 on 24th (MKi).

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

One was seen at Holy Island all month though likely two individuals as described as 'pristine and not the tatty individual' on 8th (IK/ADM et al).



An inspriing (and pristine) sight.
A Long-eared Owl checks out Mike Carr
Holy Island
23th September

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

One to two were regularly at Holy Island (ADM et al) with singles at Fenham-le-Moor on two dates (GPK/AH), Newbiggin GC on 1st and Longbridge End on 29th. Birds 'in off' at Seaton Sluice, St Mary's Island on 16th and East Chevington on 25th with two there on 13th and singles also at Shield on Wall on 4th and Druridge Pools on 7th.

Swift *Apus apus*

Singles S on three dates at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) from 2nd to 15th (TB), Holy Island on 2nd (MJC/ADM/SR/AH), Bamburgh Castle / Seahouses on 9th and 11th (GH/JL), hawking along cliffs at St Mary's Island on 14th (ASJ) and S at Seaton Sluice on 15th (SSWT).

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Only one multiple sighting of two at Branton GP during the month (IBDa/KDa) with singles noted on 11 days at Budle Bay (GPK/RA) and at three coastal and five inland locations. A juvenile was trapped and ringed at Bamburgh on 5th (BRS).

Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

One was watched for five minutes at the Snook (Holy Island) on 29th before disappearing into bracken never to be seen again (ADM).

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Low reporting rate with two at Spartylea all month and at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 2nd (CT/TB). Singles were at Haughton Castle on 5th, Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 6th and Morpeth on 20th.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

No reports

Kestrel *Falco tinninculus*

Three birds were hovering together north of Holy Island Lough on 8th (ANHS) and three were seen on Holy Island on several dates (ADM/MJC). Three were also seen at St May's Island on 23rd (ASJ). One to two birds were at 24 sites including single birds came in off the sea at Seaton Sluice on 7th and 21st (SSWT).



Mike Carr gets up close to a Kestrel
Goswick
25th September

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

A bird was noted in Budle Bay on four dates throughout the Month (CGK/GPK). Single birds were noted at Boulmer on 2nd (BS), Swinhoe (nr Beadnell) on 4th (JPL), Monk's House Pool on 8th (JBu), Tynemouth on 9th (CB), Widdrington Moor Lake on 15th (ASJ), Holy Island on 16th, 23rd and 29th (SR/AH/ADM), Cocklawburn (MHu) and Fenham Flats (BS) on 24th.

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

An adult and a juvenile were noted at Budle Bay on throughout the month (CGK/GPK). Two immature birds were at Fenham Flats on 24th (BS). Single birds were noted at Seaton Sluice diving at Gannets *Morus bassanus* on 7th, an adult male North on 10th and one N homing in on a Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata* forcing it to plunge into the sea on 14th (SSWT). A bird was seen 3 mile offshore North of Tynemouth during a Pelagic Trip chasing a Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus* on 1st (LJM/DM). Other birds were on or near the coast at Budle Bay, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Fenham, Hauxley, Holy Island, Old Hartley, St Mary's Island and at Tynemouth. The only inland record was of an adult at Grindon Lough on 30th (PRM).

Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

Present all month at Heaton Park with over 30 reported during the month (DHWB) and five all afternoon of the 23rd (TW) with one to two from 23rd to 30th.

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Counts of three were made at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 6th and 9th, Morpeth on 14th, Hepburn Woods on 15th, Attlee Park on 20th and Jesmond Dene on 23rd. One to two were at 18 other widespread localities.

Magpie *Pica pica*

Nine were at Alexandra Park (Cramlington) on 29th (DM), seven at Jesmond Dene on 30th (MJCo), a flock of six at Hexham on 11th (AJH) and two at Druridge Bay CP on 29th (CDB).

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

On 26th 37 were at Howdon (CB). Eight to 26 were at Spartylea (CT) all month and ten at Jesmond Dene on 11th (MJCo).

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

There was one report of three at Spartylea on 28th (CT).

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

22 was the peak count at Beaconhill (Cramlington) on 22nd, 16 at Alexandra Park (Cramlington) on 15th with 11 there on 3rd (DM). Six were at Jesmond Dene on 16th with a family group of five coming to food at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) all month. Five over the sea at Seaton Sluice between 8th and 20th were possible migrants with one at Fawdon on 30th.

Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix*

One was at Boulmer from 20th till 23rd (BSt/TRD).

Raven *Corvus corax*

Four flew W over the Snook (Holy Island) on 2nd (MJC), two were at Harthope Valley on 18th (DGB/RHB) and singles at Kidland Forest on 12th, Spartylea on 17th, Upper Coquetdale on 25th, Harbottle on 27th and Quarry House Moor on 29th.

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

At Waren Mill Caravan Park (Bamburgh) six were regular at feeders during the month and also at Attlee Park (GPK/JR), four all month at Spartylea (CT) with singles at Jesmond Dene and Longbenton.

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

A pair was at Simonside on 9th (ASJ). One was regular on feeders at Rothbury, and at Shilbottle till 22nd with one in mixed tit flock at Swallowship Hill (Hexham) on 30th.

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

Six were at Holywell Dene on 3rd, three at Plessey Woods CP on 17th (MJC) with two at Ellington on 1st, East Chevington on 2nd with singles on two dates, Hauxley NWT on 8th with singles on two dates and Prestwick Carr on 27th. Singles were also at Craster, Derwent Reservoir and Guyzance.

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

A large gathering of 23 was in the observer's garden at Fairfield, (Longbenton) on 14th with three other tit species. 12 were at Attlee Park on 20th (JR), six all month at Spartylea (CT) with two at Fawdon and Jesmond Dene.

Great Tit *Parus major*

Nine were at Attlee Park on 20th (JR), eight all month at Spartylea (CT) with three at Fawdon and Jesmond Dene.

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

High counts of 80 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 20th (SR), 57 S over Snook (Holy Island) on 24th, 55 at St Mary's Island on 20th, 42 at Beal on 22nd, 35 at Elwick on 29th (ASJ) and 32 at Low Newton on 23rd (MJC). 28 flew S over St Mary's Island on 20th, 20 at Doddington on 11th and one to 13 at seven other locations movement south noted from 24th till month end.

hirundine sp. Passage S of 16-18 was noted on 27th at Cresswell.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

On 14th 50 were at Hauxley NWT (MJC), 34 at Horncliffe on 13th (JDL), 14 over Holy Island on 2nd (MJC/ADM) with eight at Cullernose Point on 2nd and Bothal Pond on 15th. One to three six other locations the last reports being singles at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) and Holy Island on 22nd.

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Large counts at Holy Island with 430 from four locations on 2nd (MJC/ADM), 327 S at Alnmouth on 15th (MJC), 100 N at Seaton Sluice on 6th and 88 S there on 14th (SSWT). 80 were at Humshaugh on 12th, 60 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 5th and 55 at St Mary's Island on 26th with 24-50 at seven locations. One to 20 were at 18 widespread localities with the latest two at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 30th.



A Swallow at St. Mary's by Al an Jack on 5th September

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

150 over Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 22nd was the peak (TB), 120 at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 28th (BS), 106 S at Alnmouth on 15th (MJC) and 100 feeding at Cullercoats on 20th (ASJ). 20 – 57 were at eight locations with one to 12 at a further seven, the last being ten over Cullercoats / Rockliffe / St Mary's Island on 30th (ASJ/IJ)

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

20 at Hauxley NWT on 8th was the largest gathering (MJC). A further 18 were noted at Dudley on 23rd, 15 were at East Chevington on 2nd and 14 at Tynemouth on 10th. Counts of 12 came from East Sleekburn and Gosforth Garden Village, eight were reported from Cramlington (Valley Park), Ellington and Longbenton, five at Jesmond Dene and three at Beanley Plantation and Spartylea.

Additional August records

A flock of 15 was at Cramlington (Southfield Green) on 21st, ten at Arcot Hall GC and eight at North Seaton on 12th.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

A total of 16 were found at Holy Island on 2nd (MJC/ADM). Ten passage birds were at Boulmer on 22nd, five were at Derwent Reservoir on 4th and one to two at a further nine localities to 22nd.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Some notable coastal counts included 28 at Alnmouth on 15th (MJC), 21 at Craster on 1st and at Hauxley NWT on 15th, and 19 at Hauxley NWT on 8th, 17 at Holy Island on 20th and 16 at Low Newton on 23rd, whilst inland a total of 17 (16 first year) were caught and ringed at Corbridge Common on 15th. Elsewhere, eight were at Woodhorn Church on 19th, seven at Simonside on 9th, five at Howick Hall on 8th and one to four at a further 20 localities.

Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides*

One was found at East Chevington on 1st (TF/JFa).

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Two were at St Mary's Wetland on 8th (MSH/AC) and singles at Caistron on 6th, Holy Island on 2nd, St Mary's Wetland on 15th and Tynemouth on 7th.

Additional August records

Three were at Arcot Pond on 4th.



A Sedge Warbler at Caistron by Janet Dean
This late bird was seen on 5th September during a WeBS count

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

Only casual recording from the Cramlington study area produced 21-22 territories this year, including seven in the Arcot Pond area, six at Brockwell, four at West Hartford and two at Northumberlandia (STH).

Additional August records

One was 'reeling' at Bellasis Bridge on 8th (AHB).

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Six were noted at St Mary's Wetland on 6th (MJC), five at Howick Hall on 15th and three at Alnmouth on 15th and at Tynemouth on 30th. Two were reported from Hauxley NWT on 14th and singles at Airy Holm Reservoir, Bamburgh, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Craster, Druridge Pools, Haughton Castle, Hepburn Woods, Fulbeck (Morpeth) and Rothbury.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

One at Bamburgh on 6th was the only record (GPK).

Barred Warbler *Sylvia nisoria*

Two first-winter birds were seen together at St Mary's Wetland on 6th-7th, one remaining to 8th (MSH/AC *et al.*).

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

Singles were noted at Holy Island on 2nd (MJC/ADM) and at Bamburgh and New Hartley on 6th (CPK/MJC).

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

Seven at New Hartley on 6th was the highest count, followed by four+ at St Mary's Wetland also on 6th. There were three at Alnmouth on 15th, one to two at Ellington on 1st and 22nd, one at Howick Hall on 15th and one at St Mary's Island on 19th.

Additional August records

Two were at Arcot Pond on 4th and one at Cramlington (Dam Dykes) on 9th.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Eight were at Simonside on 9th (ASJ), while on the coast seven were noted at Alnmouth on 15th, five at Craster on 1st, four at Hauxley NWT on 14th, two to four at Holy Island from 20th-24th and one at New Hartley on 6th. One to two were at Cramlington (Valley Park) on six dates and one at Cramlington (Beacon Lane) on 22nd.

Additional August records

One to two were at Cramlington (Valley Park) throughout and one at Arcot Hall GC on 12th.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Seven were in Atlee Park (Bedlington) on 20th (JR) and one to two at Jesmond Dene, Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) and Spartylea.

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Counts of four came from Atlee Park (Bedlington) and Jesmond Dene. Two's were noted at Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Cramlington (Northumberlandia), Derwent Reservoir, Eshott, Guyzance, Hartburn and Morpeth and singles at Branton GP, Bridge End (North Tyne), Budle Bay, Ellington, Rothbury and Spartylea.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Three were at Craster on 1st (MJC) and singles at East Sleekburn, Haughton Castle, Hauxley NWT, Hepburn Woods, Jesmond Dene and Spartylea.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

A flock of 150 was at Blyth links on 25th (TB), while 120 were at Whitley Bay links on 10th. Elsewhere, 93 were at Acklington on 9th and up to 80 at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) by 14th. Seven to eight were also reported from Boulmer and Fawdon.

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

A small influx produced 13 at Holy Island on 24th (MJC). Counts of six came from Atlee Park (Bedlington) on 20th and Spartylea throughout, while two were at Jesmond Dene and singles at Berwick Pier (Continental bird) and Fawdon.

Additional August records

A loose flock of 12 were foraging on a bowling green at Cramlington (Alexandra Park) on 20th (DM) and three juveniles were at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 26th.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

Five S over an Ellington garden on 30th were the first autumn arrivals (TB).

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Four were at Holy Island on 2nd and at St Mary's Wetland on 6th (MJC/ADM) and two at Spartylea on 1st.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

A flock of 11 at Howick Hall on 15th was the largest gathering (PHa). Up to eight were noted at Spartylea throughout the month, eight were at Howick on 27th, three at Horton (Blyth) on 20th and two at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 23rd.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

A family party of five was still at Wallington Hall on 1st (AJR). On Holy Island, four to five were noted on 2nd (MJC/ADM/JBu), three were here on 20th and one on 24th. Elsewhere, two were at Rising Sun CP on 8th and at Alnmouth on 15th and singles at Boulmer on 22nd, East Chevington on 10th and Woodhorn on 13th.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Four to eight at Holy Island on several dates increased to 16 by 20th and peaked at 29 on 24th (MJC). Eight were at Woodhorn Church on 12th and seven at Atlee Park (Bedlington) on 20th, with two to six also reported from Jesmond Dene, Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) and Spartylea.

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Singles were at Craster on 1st (MJC) and the Farne Islands on 2nd (*per* NNBC).

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

One was at North Blyth on 26th and 30th (ADMc/STH).

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

One was at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 14th (BS).

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

At St Mary's Island / Wetland numbers were variously reported as follows, with one on 2nd, two on 6th, three on 7th, four on 12th, five on 13th, six on 15th, five on 18th and two on 25th (ASJ); all bar one were juveniles. Elsewhere, two were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 20th and single at Beal on 21st, Boulmer on 2nd and 22nd and Holy Island on 2nd, 4th, 6th and 8th.

Additional August records

At Newbiggin, four were at Beacon Point on 17th and two at the Ash lagoon bank on 20th (AP).

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

The highest count was three at Cresswell Pond on 1st (TB); other peak counts were of two at Druridge Pools, Holy Island, Low Newton and Shaftoe Crags, while singles were noted at Monks' House Pool, St Mary's Island and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Additional August records

Two were at Bamburgh dunes on 25th.

Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Up to seven were at Boulmer during the month, with a peak on 14th (BS); six were in the St Mary's Island area on 22nd and five at Howick Bay on 12th. Three to four were noted at Holy Island early in the month and three at East Chevington on 1st. Counts of two came from Grindstonelaw, Hadston Carrs and Stag Rocks, while singles were noted at a further nine localities, including the final report of the month from Howick on 30th.

Additional August records

One was at Newton Pool on 25th.



A Wheatear at Hauxley by Mike Carr on 24th September

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

The only records this month were two at Spartylea on 2nd and one at Hethpool on 12th.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

A good count was made in the village and at Coombs Farm at Holy Island of 340 on 20th (ADM). Up to 75 were at Cullercoats Bay during the month (ASJ). 60 birds came to garden feeders at Quarry cottage (Newbiggin) all month (RS). 50 plus counted at Wark on 11th (PRM).

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

45 plus were present all month at Waren Mill Caravan Park (GPK). Up to 14 attended feeders at Shilbottle during the month (MKi). At the coast, five flew S at St. Mary's on 7th and 16 on 28th (ASJ). 13 were seen at Doddington on 29th (JD). Eight were at Wark on 11th and at Hauxley on 9th (PRM/DM). Two to four at four further locations, including garden feeders in Tynemouth on 29th.

Duncock *Prunella modularis*

Four were at Jesmond Dene on 16th and twos at Spartylea and Marden.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava flavissima*

Numbers much reduced this month as birds headed S. Twos were seen at Holy Island, Whittle Dene, St. Mary's and Boulmer up to 22nd. Singles passed through St. Mary's on four days and at Holy Island on 2nd, Cullernose Point on 1st, Boulmer on 15th and East Chevington on 2nd (ASJ/MJC/MKi/TF/JFa). One seen flying N at Alnmouth on 15th (MJC).

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Three were seen in Jesmond Dene on 30th (MJCo). Two at Atlee Park on 20th (JR). Singles were noted at eight other sites including Whitley Bay town centre.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla Alba Yarrelli*

38 counted at Berwick Golf Course on 30th (MHu). 24 at Prestwick Carr on 27th (PCF). 20 were along the North Shore, Holy Island on 16th (ADM). 17, mostly juveniles were seen at Derwent Reservoir on 1st and 16 at Whitley Bay Links on 20th (IFo/ASJ). 13 at Lincoln Hill on 23rd and 11 at Warkworth Golf Course on 5th (SW/STH). Three to six at three further sites.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba alba*

Three were noted at Hallington Reservoir on 9th and at Holy Island church on 22nd, with one to two probables at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 28th (SW/IK/STH).

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Large numbers observed moving S this month, with Seaton Sluice watchers counting a total of 580 from 8th and a daily peak of 216 on 22nd. An impressive 435 moved through Holy Island on 2nd, around 200 on 8th and 107 counted on 24th (MJC/ADM). At St. Mary's Island, 330 flew S during the month, with 55 plus on 21st the daily peak (ASJ). 20 plus S here on 6th, with light passage noted on 15th (MSH). 310 S at New Hartley on 6th and 144 at Alnmouth on 15th, 100 at Low Newton on 23rd and 74 flew SW on 5th, 50 likewise at Gosforth Garden Village on 23rd (all MJC). At Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin), birds moved S. throughout the month with peak counts of 120 on 10th and 60 in an hour on 17th reducing to single figure counts by the month's end (RS). One to eight also flew S at five Cramlington sites during the month (DM). One to three were at four further sites.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Four noted at Cullercoats Bay on 30th (ASJ). Three at Newton Point on 24th (MKi). Twos were seen at Little Beach (Berwick), Boulmer on two dates, Snab Point, Beacon Point and Tynemouth, with singles at St. Mary's and North Blyth during the month.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

16 flew SE at Snook (Holy Island) with two remaining there on 2nd (MJC/ADM). Four present all month at Spartylea (CT). Two flew S at Newbiggin on 24th, and one on 22nd (RS). A pair fed at garden feeders all month at Marden Estate (Cullercoats).

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Nine were at Howick on 24th and seven at Craster on 1st (JAR/MJC). One to four noted at a further six sites during the month.

Common Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus*

One lucky observer was able to watch a juvenile feeding from his kitchen window in Holy Island Village on 21st (IK).

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

Up to 20 fed on Rosehips at St Mary's on several dates (ASJ). Nine were observed at Guyzance on 9th (JR). Eight were at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 25th and four seen there on 14th (RS). Four were also at feeders in a Marden Estate garden all month (ASJ). Six were at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 24th (DM). Two spent the month at Spartylea (CT).

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

Some large flocks noted this month, with an estimated 300 at Fenham Mill on 15th the biggest (DF). Around 250 gathered west of Waren Mill, (along the Belford road) on 22nd and another flock in the area comprised of 220 birds on 25th at Waren Mill Caravan Park (ASJ/GPK/CGK). 200 plus fed in stubble at Woodhorn on 15th (ASJ). 180 were counted at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) on 29th and around 150 seen at St. Mary's Wetland/fields on 11th, remaining all month (MJC/ASJ). 130 were seen at Howick on 17th (JAR) and about 100 were at Snook (Holy Island) on 25th with 50 there the previous day (ADM/MJC). 40 plus were at Old Hartley on 14th (MSH). Elsewhere one to 23 were observed at four further locations during the month.

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis cabaret*

Eight flew E at Ellington on 15th (TB). Three were seen flying S that day at Alnmouth (MJC). One also headed S at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 22nd (DM). A single was noted at Grindon Lough on 30th (PRM).

Crossbill *Lexia curvirostra*

Around 30 were at Cragside on 17th, with 20 noted at Thrunton Woods on 14th (TRD/JD). Three were seen at Cartington, Beanley and Grindon during the month and two at Blakehopeburnhaugh, Thrunton and Hepburn Woods.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

An estimated 150 were noted at Belford on 5th (DF). 110 at St. Mary's on 12th was the peak count of the regular flock there (ASJ). Around 100 were seen near Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 4th and at Derwent Reservoir on 24th, with 80 there on 4th (DF/IFo). 95 were counted at Howick on 4th (JAR). Groups of around 60 were seen at Haughton Mains, Fenham Mill and East Chevington during the month (SW/DF/MSH). 50 were at Straight Lonnen (Holy Island) on 2nd and up to 40 present at Spartylea all month. 40 were also at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 20th. One to 30 were seen at four other sites.

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

At Hauxley 25 flew S on the 8th (MJC). 23 flew S at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) in two flocks on 17th with one to six also S on three other dates (RS). Eight also S at Castle Island on 9th and six likewise at Barns Park (Cramlington) on 22nd (DM).

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

11 were at Beanley on 23rd (TRD/JD). Six were noted at Doddington on 29th and three were there on 11th (JD). Five were at East Holywell on 28th (MNC). Three found at Waren Mill on 22nd (ASJ). Singles were at Beacon Lane (Cramlington) on 1st and at Airy Holm Reservoir on 28th (IFo).

Reed Bunting *Emberiza Schoeniclus*

At fields / hedgerows near St. Mary's Island up to 12 were noted on 16th and on several other dates. Also ten plus at nearby Old Hartley on 14th, may have involved the same birds. Four plus were there on 3rd (ASJ/MSH). Eight were seen at Snook (Holy Island) on 2nd (MJC/ADM). A lone bird was at Arcot on 22nd (DM).

Lapland Bunting *Calcarius lapponicus*

At Holy Island on 8th, two were seen to head W over the Vicars Garden (MJC).

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

There were two reports this month, with one flying SE over Snook (Holy Island) on 24th and one heading N inland at Grindon Lough on 30th (MJC/PRM).

ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN**Escapes**

No sightings

Hybrids**Mallard x Gadwall** *Anas*

platyrhynchos x *Mareca strepera*

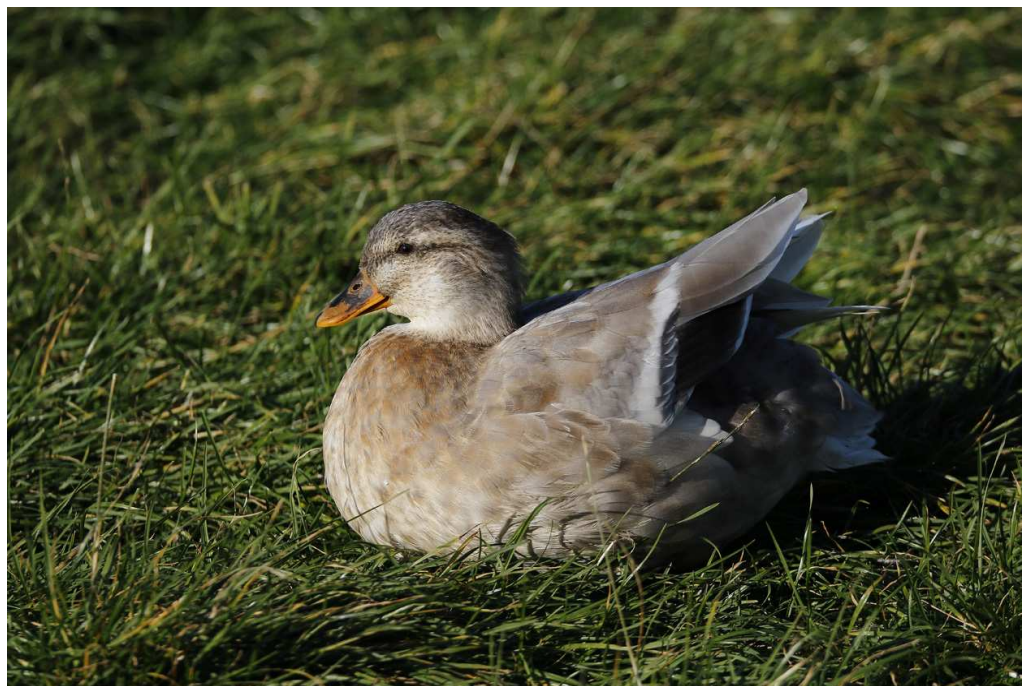
One was noted at Druridge Bay CP on 29th September (CDB). An unusual cross with photo showing features of both species.

The Gadwall/Mallard hybrid

Druridge Bay CP

Chris Barlow

29th September



Birds of Unknown Origin

No sightings

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

R.Ahmed, A.Allen, A.H.Banks, C.D.Barlow, D.G. & R.H.Bell, D.H.W.Blair, T.Blake, C.Bradshaw, J.Bucknall (JBU), M.J.Carr, M.N.Coates, M.J.Cook (MJCo), A.Curry, T.Daley, I.B. & K.Davison, T.R. & J.Dean, I.R.Douglas, T. & J.Farooqi (TF / JFa), P.C.Fletcher, D.F.Forshaw, I.Forsyth (IFo), P.Gilbert, A.Hall, C.D.Hampton, P.H.Hanmer, A.S.Hart, C.Hartley, A.J.Hewitt, M.S.Hodgson, S.T.Holliday, C.Hooper, M.Hutcheson (MHu), A.S.Jack, A.Janes, I.Johnson, I.Kerr, M.Kirby (MKi), C.G.Knox, G.P.Knox, D.Leat, J.D.Lough, J.P.Lumby, P.R.Massey, L.J.McDougall, D.Mckeown, A.D.Mclevy, A.D.Mould, M.Nattrass, A.J.Newson, A.Priest, A.J.Richards, J.Richardson, S.Rippon, J.A.Roper, C.Saunders, M.R.Smith, B.Steel, R.Stevens, A.L.Todd, C.Tudge, D.R.Watson, T.Watson, S.Westerberg, T.Wiffen.

Alnwick & District Natural History Society (R Poyer), Bamburgh Ringing Station, North Northumberland Bird Club, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

Apologies for any accidental omissions

Alnwick & District Natural History Society (R Poyer), Berwick Wildlife Group, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

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

This bulletin was compiled by Graeme Bowman (Geese to Mergansers), Steve Laing (Red Grouse to Cormorant), Trevor Blake (Hawks to Falcons), Tom Brewis (Oystercatcher to Godwit), Clive Hampton (Turnstone to Redshank), Eddie Crabtree (Kittiwake to Puffin), Tim Dean (Escapes, Hybrids and Unknown Origin, List of Contributors, Highlights), Peter Fletcher (Doves to Larks), Mike Richardson (Tits to Stonechat), Alan Jack (Dipper to Buntings).

Thanks to David Sanders of NNBC for providing data.

Mail distribution by Paul Stewart.

Edited by Steve Barrett NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com

RECORD SUBMISSION

Please email records for the month to ntbc.records@googlemail.com

Please email for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and grid references: Please use of standard location names and 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

2018-2108 subscriptions are now due.

Don't forget Birds in Northumbria is free, only to members.

BIN 2017 should be issued at the December indoor meeting.

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

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 online resource for anyone interested in birds. There are:

Photo Galleries – Here you can view hundreds of photos of birds from Northumberland, Newcastle and North Tyneside. Members are encouraged to contribute their own photos. Simply send them to galleries@ntbc.org.uk

There are also County Checklists, Records Committee updates, Information on important Surveys, useful articles and reports on Bird ID and Overseas Birding Trips....and much more...

Please submit any other new content for the website to the main club email address at ntbcorg@gmail.com

New content such as Birding Trip Reports etc., is always welcome and very much appreciated.

To find out more please visit www.ntbc.org.uk

TYNE KITTIWAKE PARTNERSHIP

A Partnership meeting was held on 26th September.

The Partnership includes the RSPB, Natural History Society of Northumbria, Durham Wildlife Trust, Northumberland Wildlife Trust, local Councils, Natural England, Newcastle University and NTBC.

The Partnership was formed to safeguard the Tyne Kittiwake colonies by raising awareness of the species, to improve understanding of Kittiwakes in an urban environment and take action when nest sites are threatened.

FOR SALE

Opticron ES 80 GA ED V3 angled telescope body only plus stay-on-case.

Lightly used, boxed, £250.

Contact Tim Robinson

email: tg00rob@yahoo.co.uk

Try before buy a possibility.



A Fulmar glides past Cullernose Point

Tim Dean

2nd September

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2018 No 10

MONTHLY SUMMARY OCTOBER 2018

3rd December 2018



BULLETIN SUPPLEMENT OCTOBER 2018 PHOTOGRAPHS

Purple Sandpipers

Right at St. Mary's by Alan Jack

Below at Church Point by Chris
Barlow





The Haltwhistle Bee-eater.
Above by Alan Jack and below by Tim Dean





Two images of Holy island Barred Warblers.
Above by Jonathan Farooqi and below by Mike Carr





The Gull-billed Tern from Houghton Strother.
Above by Tim Dean and below by Duncan Watson





A Snow Bunting on Holy Island Crooked Lonnen.
Top by Duncan Watson and below by Alan Jack





Two Mike Carr photographs from Holy Island
Above a Chiffchaff and below a Brambling





Two Tynemouth images by Colin Bradshaw.
Above a cock Blackbird and below a Tree Sparrow





Above ringed Black headed Gull at QEII CP by Chris Barlow
and below a Sparrowhawk in Tynemouth by Colin Bradshaw



Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2018 No 10

MONTHLY SUMMARY OCTOBER 2018

3rd December 2018



CONTENTS

BIN 2017 will be issued at the Indoor Meeting on 13th December. For details see note.

A photograph supplement will be issued with the electronic bulletin.



A splendid visitor to Haltwhistle
Mike Carr took this photograph on 9th October

CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Taiga Bean Goose	Four seen over Cresswell on 23rd.
Greenland White-fronted Goose	One at Longhirst Flash on 25th.
Bewick's Swan	Two adults at East Chevington on 31st.
Mandarin	Interesting Newcastle record at Exhibition Park on 2nd.
Pintail	High count of 40 past Dunstanburgh Castle on 18th in one flock.
Surf Scoter	Drake past Emmanuel Head on Holy Island on 6th.
Black Scoter	Returning drake back at Cocklawburn / Cheswick from 8th.
Storm Petrel	Several sightings during big seawatch weekend of 27th / 28th.
Leach's Petrel	Several sightings during big seawatch weekend of 27th / 28th.

Red-necked Grebe
 Bittern
 Whimbrel
 Black-tailed Godwit
 Gull-billed Tern
 Black Tern
 Pomarine Skua
 Little Auk
 Black Guillemot
 Bee-eater
 Great Grey Shrike
 Hooded Crow
 Waxwing
 Bearded Tit
 Woodlark
 Cetti's Warbler
 Pallas's Warbler
 Barred Warbler
 Ring Ouzel
 Brambling
 Hawfinch
 Common Rosefinch
 Little Bunting
 Lapland Bunting

Several seawatch sightings on 27th / 28th plus a bird at Amble Marina from 16th.
 One showed well at Woodhorn from 4th to 16th.
 Late record on 5th at Howick.
 Large count of 118 at Amble Braid on 16th.
 Stunning record of two first-winters at Haughton Strother GP from 4th to 26th.
 One at East Chevington north pool on 19th.
 Large movement on 28th with 19 past Seaton Sluice.
 Steady movement on 27th / 28th with at least 40 both days.
 Single sightings on 27th and 28th at Tynemouth.
 One showed well at Haltwhistle from 6th to 10th.
 One on Holy Island on 11th and 12th.
 One in fields at Boulmer again from 6th to 15th.
 Singles at Holy Island and Bamburgh on 29th and 31st.
 Influx of 19 at East Chevington from 5th and single at Holy Island.
 Surprise sighting of one on Holy Island on 11th.
 One at Holy Island on 20th & 21st. First record for the island.
 One on Holy Island on 11th.
 1-2 on Holy Island on 28th and 29th.
 Peak count of 18 on Holy Island on 11th.
 Peak count of 315 on Holy Island on 16th.
 One at Kielder on 20th and three at Wallington on 28th.
 Juvenile at Beal Pt on 14th.
 First-winter at Beal Pt on 14th.
 Several sightings in Beal / Holy island area.

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 are;

13th December

Dr Chris Redfern – "Terns and other Seabirds". Chris will tell us about his work with Arctic Terns on the Farne Islands, and the exciting news of their movements.

FIELD TRIPS

Contact Steve Anderson seaswan@btinternet.com

CLASSIFIED LIST

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

Records of pale-bellied *hrota* race birds involved about 4,000 at Lindisfarne NNR on 4th (TRD/JD), about 2,900 on 14th (ASJ) and about 3,600 at 'the end of the month' (IK). Passage included 53 N at Seaton Sluice, including 42 N on 27th (SSWT), when 52 flew N at Newbiggin (GB/STH/LAR et al.) and 37 N at Howick (BS) and Tynemouth (DRW). Dark-bellied *bernicla* race birds included 164 at Holy Island on 28th (MJC/ADM/ASH) and about 400 there on 30th (GB/LAR), 12 N at Boulmer on 7th (BS), seven N at Seaton Sluice on 28th (SSWT), one to four N at Newbiggin, Stag Rocks and Tynemouth, mainly between 27th-29th, while one was at St Mary's Wetland briefly (MSH).

Pale-bellied
 Brent Geese

Fenham Flats

Tim Dean

4th October



Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Groups of 25-50 flew N/NW at Ellington on three dates between 11th-26th (TB), 20+ moved NW at Bamburgh on 17th (BRS), and 15 flew S at Ashington on 25th (TB). Grindon Lough held a peak of 410 on 17th (MRS), 204 were at Linton Ponds on 7th (CDH), about 200 at Warkworth on 24th (MKI), and 101-134 at Airy Holm Reservoir (IFo), Haughton Strother GP (MR), Killingworth Lake (LJM) and QEII CP Lake (CDH). Counts of 60-96 came from Amble, the Tweed Estuary and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, and 20-35 were at Big Waters, Low Cocklaw, Marden Quarry, Newcastle Exhibition Park and Widdrington Moor Lake.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

A total of 637 flew N and 17 S at Seaton Sluice during the month (most between 1st-3rd), including 467 N on 3rd (SSWT), a total of 210 flew N at Ellington between 1st-7th (TB), 78 N at Newbiggin on 27th (TF/JFa/NFO *et al.*), while 100+ flew S at St Mary's on 1st (MSH). Groups of 11-45 flew N at Longhoughton Steel, Newbiggin and Tynemouth between 1st-3rd. A flock of 26 flew W at Hauxley Reserve on 4th, after resting on the reserve, leaving one injured bird (AJ/ASH/AJN).

5,000 at an evening roost at Budle Bay on 2nd (CGK/GPK) gradually diminished during the month, with about 4,000 on 8th (DF) 2,500 on 21st (SRB) and 1,400 on 28th (DF), while 1,350 were at Beal Point, Lindisfarne NNR on 14th (CH) and 1,000 at Goswick on 23rd (JD). About 160 were at Hauxley on 9th (ANHS), and 14-38 at East Chevington and Widdrington Moor Lake.

Inland, 163 flew in to Derwent Reservoir from the E, remained for 40 min. and then departed E on 3rd (a notable count for the site; IFo). Also on 3rd, 115 were at Grindon Lough (PRM), and 16-21 at Haughton Strother GP (MR) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs (SR). A yellow-ringed ('APC') individual was at Haughton Strother GP on 24th (BS).



Barnacle Geese over Fenham Flats

4th October

Tim Dean

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Two flew N and five S at Seaton Sluice between 19th-27th (SSWT), 52 moved W at Cramlington on 9th (DM), 42 N at East Ord on 10th (MHu), 33 N at Ellington on 1st (TB), while 30 flew S at Ashington on 25th (TB). Peak counts included 1,250 at Airy Holm Reservoir (IFo), 1,000+ at Derwent Reservoir on 10th (IFo), 780 at Haughton Strother GP on 2nd (MR), 300 at Big Waters on 14th (GB) and 300 at nearby Prestwick Carr on 19th (PCF), 150 at Brier Dene Farm, and 72-87 at Linton Ponds and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Counts of 20-31 came from Ellington and Grindon Lough, and two to five were also at Cresswell Pond and Wark.

Taiga Bean Goose *Anser fabalis*

Four flew in off the sea at Cresswell Pond on 23rd (MH/AA).

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Peak passage involved 10,000 S at Ellington (TB) and 5,000 S at Druridge Pools (TF/JFa) on 14th, a monthly total of about 8,000 NW and 6,000 SE at Low Cocklaw (Berwick)(TBr), ca.700 S at Quarry Cottage between 6th-24th (BSt), 570 W at East Ord on 2nd (MHu), 500 S at Ellington on 3rd (TB), and 393 N and nine S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). Groups of 43-200 were also noted over (in various directions) Bamburgh, Castle Island, Cramlington, East Ord, Ellington, Haltwhistle, Haughton Strother GP, Howick, Linden Hall, Newbiggin, North Blyth, Ponteland and Tynemouth on various dates all month.

An evening roost at Budle Bay numbered 4,200 on 5th declining to 2,900 on 8th, and 1,100 on 21st (CGK/GPK), 3,500 were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 11th (ANHS), 1,200 at Cresswell Pond (AJH) and Holywell (MNC) between 19th-22nd, and 500-800 at Baldersburyhill (Berwick), Druridge, Hemscott Hill, Holy Island and West Chevington. Counts of 195-350 came from Airy Holm Reservoir, East Chevington, Ellington, Old Moor (Berwick) and Widdrington Moor Lake, while 48-90 were at Airy Holm Reservoir and Hauxley. A small flock was heard over Wark on the evening of 25th (PRM). One, with Canada Geese, at Killingworth Lake on 13th was the first at this locality for the observer in 45 years of visits (LJM)!

White-fronted Goose *Anser flavirostris*

One, of the Greenland *flavirostris* race, was at Longhirst Flash on 25th (TF).

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

At Seaton Sluice, 11 flew N and two S during the month (SSWT). Peak counts came from Killingworth Lake, with 87 on 13th (AJ), QEII CP Lake, with 64 on 7th (CDH), Castle Island, with 37 on 14th (DM/PJH), and the Tweed Estuary, which held 35 on 10th (TBr/MMcN). Groups of 25 were at Beal, Bothal Pond and East Chevington, 11-18 at Big Waters, the Coquet Estuary, Howdon and Whiteadder Water, and seven to eight at Holy Island, Ladyburn Lake, Whittle Dene Reservoirs and Woodhorn Flashes. A local cygnet was released from the back of a police van at Newcastle Exhibition Park on 8th (having presumably been picked up nearby; GB)!

Bewick's Swan *Cygnus columbianus*

Two adults were at East Chevington north pool on 31st (TF/JFa).



The Bewick's Swans at East Chevington

31st October

Jonathan Farooqi

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

At Seaton Sluice, one (a juvenile) flew N and 61 S (SSWT), 13-17 flew S at Boulmer (BS), Budle Bay (ASJ), Ellington (TB) and Tynemouth (DRW) between 21st-28th, 11 S at St Mary's on 16th (ASJ), and nine W at Howick on 6th (JAR). At East Chevington, 11 on 4th (CB) increased to 45 (seven juveniles) by 18th (NFO) and 63 on 26th (IRD); 49 were at Low Newton on 20th (BS), 23 at Elswick on 20th (BS), 17-18 at Brier Dene Farm (MNC) and the Coquet Estuary (ANHS), and 11-12 at Beal, Big Waters and Shield on the Wall. Five to ten were also at Branton GP, Budle Bay (including the summering individual), Castle Island, the Coquet Estuary, Cresswell Pond and Haughton Strother GP, and one to four at/over Bothal Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Ellington, Gosforth Park NR, Grindon Lough, Low Cocklaw, Monks' House, QEII CP, Tynemouth and Wark.

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Northerly movement involved a monthly total of 28 at Seaton Sluice, including 17 on 28th (SSWT), and 12-22 at Annstead, Newbiggin and Tynemouth on several dates between 6th-28th, while one flew S at Newbiggin on 29th. Numbers at Budle Bay peaked at 452 on 22nd (DF), and singles were at East Chevington and West Ord.

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

A duck was at Newcastle Exhibition Park on 2nd (GB).

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Six flew N at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), four to five N at Cullercoats (CB/CGK) and Newbiggin (GB/TF/JFa), and one N at Tynemouth. Swallow Pond attracted 56 on 23rd (CPK), 52 were at Budle Bay on 17th (DF), 33 at Arcot Pond on 12th (LJM) and 26 at East Chevington north pool on 6th (GB/LAR). Three to five were at Linton Ponds and Woodhorn Flashes, and singles at Big Waters, Bothal and Cresswell Ponds, and Marden Quarry.

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Seven flew N at Seaton Sluice (SSWT) and Tynemouth (DRW) on 28th. The largest counts involved 83 at Big Waters on 9th (GB), 51 at Linton Ponds on 9th (LJM), 22 at Marden Quarry on 16th (KWY), and ten to 11 at Caistron (JD) and East Chevington (TRD/JD). Eight were at Widdrington Moor Lake, three to five at Castle Island, Holy Island, Ladyburn Lake and St Mary's Wetland, and singles at Cresswell Pond, and Ladyburn and QEII CP Lakes. A freshly dead drake (with no obvious signs of injury) was at Newbiggin Church Point on 29th (GB/LAR/ADMc).



A Gadwall at Ladyburn Lake by Chris Barlow

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

A total of 3,042 flew N and 110 S at Seaton Sluice, including 2,123 N and 30 S on 27th-28th (SSWT), 1,334 flew N at Newbiggin on 27th-28th (GB/TF/JFa/STH *et al.*), 1,239 N at St Mary's between 27-29th (JBu/AC/MSH), 905 N at Tynemouth on 27th-28th (CB/DRW), and 735 N at Howick on 28th (BS). Earlier in the month, 160 flew N at Annstead Point on 1st (CGK/GPK) and 150 N at Tynemouth on 15th (CB). About 10,000 were at Fenham Flats on 4th (TRD/JD) and 11,000 on 20th (BS), while 3,000 were at Budle Bay on 10th (MJC/MSH), 1,300 at East Chevington north pool on 27th (NFO), 320-400 at the Coquet Estuary and Whitley Bay, 157-185 at Cresswell Pond and Grindon Lough, and 54-94 at Airy Holm and Colt Crag Reservoirs, and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Smaller numbers were at several further sites including, unusually, seven at Cragside on 6th (TRD/JD).

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

At Seaton Sluice, 206 flew N during the month, including 162 on 27th (an October day count record; SSWT), 90-100 at Newbiggin (GB/LAR/STH) and Tynemouth (DRW), and 17 N at Snab Point (JR) on 27th-28th. The Tweed Estuary held 207 on 10th (TBr/MMcN), 194 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 27th (SR), and 102-112 at Colt Crag and Derwent Reservoirs (IFo/MR). Counts of 29-56 came from Allen Banks, Bothal, Cresswell and Linton Ponds, Castle Island, Killingworth and Ladyburn Lakes, Marden Quarry, Newcastle Exhibition and Leazes Parks, Rockcliffe, St Mary's Wetland and Whiteadder Water, and 18 at Greenlee Lough.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

At Seaton Sluice, 22 flew N during the month, including 15 N on 27th (SSWT), 15 flew N and one S at Newbiggin (GB/LAR/TF/JFa *et al.*) and eight N at Hauxley (HRS) and Tynemouth on 27th-28th (CB/DRW). A single flock of 40 flew S at Dunstanburgh Castle on 18th (BS). Five were at Colt Crag Reservoir on 30th (MR), three to four at Cresswell Pond (MSH), East Chevington (TF/JFa *et al.*) and Fenham Flats (TRD/JD). One to two were also at Budle Bay, Derwent Reservoir, Haughton Strother GP, Longhoughton Quarry, Swallow Pond and Whitley Bay.

Teal *Anas crecca*

A record October total at Seaton Sluice involved 896 N and 231 flew S, including 601 N and 40 S on 27th-28th (SSWT). Strong movement on 27th was also evident at Hauxley (HRS), Newbiggin (TF/JFa), St Mary's (JBu/AC/MSH) and Tynemouth (DRW) where 148-270 flew N, 180 flew N at Howdon on 24th (CB), and 60 N and 11 S at Newbiggin on 1st. Numbers at Budle Bay peaked at 1,150 on 5th (CGK/GPK), 352 were at Derwent Reservoir on 14th (IFo), 307 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 30th (MR), 206 at Howdon on 24th (CB), and 109-114 at Big Waters (GB) and Castle Island (DM/PJA). Counts of 52-97 came from Arcot Pond, the Coquet Estuary, Grindon Lough and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, while 24-49 were at Bothal and Linton Ponds, Brown's Bay, Haughton Strother GP, Low Cocklaw and West Ord, and 14 at Airy Holm Reservoir. More unusual were five at Marden Quarry on 16th (KWY).

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Northerly passage involved four at Annstead Point (CGK/GPK) and one at Newbiggin (GB/LAR) on 6th, four at St Mary's on 27th (ASJ), and two at Cullercoats on 28th (CGK/CB). 25 (mainly drakes) were at Greenlee Lough on 17th (MRS), eight at Swallow Pond on 23rd (GPK), three at Whittle Dene Reservoirs (SR), and one to two at Branton GP, East Chevington, Grindon Lough and Haughton Strother GP.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

A total of 17 flew N at Seaton Sluice between 26th-29th, including 13 on 27th (a site record day count; SSWT), and one to four N at Annstead, Newbiggin and Snab Point, mainly on 27th-28th. At Greenlee Lough, 165 on 17th were still present at the end of the month (MRS). Other peak counts were much lower, with 38 at Killingworth Lake on 28th (GPK), 32 at Linton Ponds on 7th (CDH), 26 at Ladyburn Lake (LJM), 20-22 at Castle Island (DM/PJA) and Ladyburn Lake (DM/LJM), and 12-15 at Bothal Pond, Grindon Lough and Haughton Strother GP. One to nine were also at Airy Holm Reservoir, Budle Bay, East Chevington, Newcastle Exhibition Park and QEII CP Lake.

Scaup *Aythya marila*

Northerly movement involved four at Seaton Sluice on 26th (SSWT), three to four at Hauxley (HRS), Howick (BS) and Newbiggin (TF/JFa) on 27th, four at Cullercoats (CGK/CB) and one at Seaton Sluice on 28th. Fenham Flats held 11 on 1st (BS), and one to two were at Cresswell Pond, East Chevington (offshore), Ladyburn Lake and off Old Hartley-Seaton Sluice on scattered dates.

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

A total of 547 N and 49 S at Seaton Sluice was a record site count for October, and included a peak of 262 N and three S on 27th-28th (SSWT). Northerly movement was also evident at several other coastal sites; 240 N at Newbiggin (GB/STH/LAR) and 143 N at Cullercoats (CB/CGK/GPK) on 28th-29th, and 50-67 N at Annstead Point, St Mary's and Tynemouth between 27th-29th. Offshore, 30-48 were at Birling Carrs (STH), Boulmer-Howick Haven (BS), Newbiggin (BSt) and North Blyth (STH), and 12-20 at the Coquet Estuary, Hauxley and Spittal-Cocklawburn. Display was noted at Howick on 15th (JAR).

Surf Scoter *Melanitta*

An adult drake flew N at Holy Island on 6th (RA/AH/SR).

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

A total of 42 flew N and four S at Seaton Sluice between 21st-30th, including 19 N on 28th (SSWT), 40 moved N at Newbiggin between 26th-29th (GB/CDB/TF/JFa/STH *et al.*), 36 N at Howick in 4 hrs on 28th (BS), and seven to 23 N at Annstead, Cullercoats, St Mary's and Tynemouth between 27th-29th. Earlier in the month, five flew N at Whitley Bay on 2nd (IJ) and one to three at Snab Point and St Mary's on 1st-2nd. Nine were at Holy Island on 28th (SR/AH) and two to three at Brown's Bay (Whitley Bay), Cocklawburn and Hadston Carrs between 25th-31st.



Velvet Scoter at Cocklawburn by Chris Barlow on 25th October

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

An above-average 3,856 flew N and 156 S at Seaton Sluice, including 2,696 N and 44 S on 27th-28th (SSWT). Strong movement elsewhere involved 1,375 N at Newbiggin (GB/STH/LAR *et al.*), 955 N at Tynemouth (DRW) and 400-745 N at Cullercoats (CGK/CB), Cullernose Point (TRD/JD), Howick (BS), Snab Point (JR) and St Mary's (JBu/AC/MSH) on 27th-28th. Earlier in the month, peak movement involved 255 N and 15 S at Annstead between 6th-8th (DF/CGK/GPK). Offshore, 150 were at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 27th (IJ), 150 at Old Hartley on 30th (LJM), 127 at Holy Island north shore on 28th (ADM), 80 at Spittal-Cocklawburn, and 20-29 off Birling Carrs, East Chevington, Meadow Haven (Berwick) and North Blyth. Two were in the Tweed Estuary on 31st (MHu).

Black Scoter *Melanitta americana*

An adult drake was off Cocklawburn-Cheswick on several dates between 8th-25th (CDB/TRD/JD/CH).

A Black Scoter

Cocklawburn

25th October

Chris Barlow

**Long-tailed Duck** *Clangula hyemalis*

An impressive 57 moved N at Howick in five hours on 27th (BS). A total of 48 N at Seaton Sluice between 27th-31st was a record October total for the site and included 23 N on 28th (SSWT). Good numbers were noted elsewhere, with 40 N at Newbiggin (GB/TF/JFa/STH *et al.*), 26 N at Tynemouth (DRW), and 11-15 N at Snab Point (JR) and St Mary's (JBu/AC/MSH) on 27th-28th, when two to eight flew N at Annstead and Cullernose Points, Cullercoats, Hauxley, North Blyth and Stag Rocks. Four were at Holy Island on 28th (MJC/ADM), one to two at Beal and Whitley Bay between 27th-30th, and singles were at Hauxley Reserve on 27th and East Chevington north pool on 31st. Fewer were noted earlier in the month, with one N at Annstead Point on 1st and a drake still in full breeding plumage at Ladyburn Lake on 2nd (AA/MH *et al.*).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

The Seaton Sluice monthly total was 171 N and seven S, including 163 N and six S between 26th-28th (SSWT). Strong movement on 27th involved 85 N at Tynemouth (DRW), 80 N and eight S at Newbiggin on 27th (GB/STH/LAR), and ten to 32 N at Hauxley (HRS), St Mary's (JBu/AC) and Stag Rocks (DF). Eight to 17 also moved N at Annstead Point, Newbiggin, Stag Rocks and Tynemouth on 24th and 28th-29th. Passage aside, peak site counts were 22 at East Chevington on 24th (TRD), 20 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 27th (SR), and five to six at Colt Crag Reservoir, the Tweed Estuary and Whiteadder Water. Three to four were also at Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Hauxley, Shield on the Wall, the Tyne Estuary, Whitley Bay and Widdrington Moor Lake, and singles at Big Waters, Castle Island, Grindon Lough, Haughton Strother GP and Holy Island.

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

A monthly total of 16 N and 27 S at Seaton Sluice was a record October count for the site, and included 19 N on 15th (SSWT), and five flew N at Hauxley on 27th (HRS). Seven flew S at East Chevington on 14th (DM/PJA) and nine flew inland at Cresswell village on 4th (CB). Peak site counts were 20 at the Tweed Estuary on 10th (TBr/MMcN), 13 at Whiteadder Water on 18th (TBr), ten at Derwent Reservoir on 17th (IFo), and eight at West Ord (MHu). Three were at Beal, Castle Island and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, and one to two at Alnmouth, Brown's Bay, Caistrion, Linhope Spout, Marden Quarry, Morpeth and Shillmoor.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

At Seaton Sluice, 21 flew N and two S during the month, including 16 N on 27th (SSWT). Nine flew S at Cocklawburn on 25th (CDB). Three to eight flew N at Cullercoats (CGK/GPK), Newbiggin (TF/JFa/STH) and St Mary's (ASJ), and between 27th-29th. Peak counts were 35 at Fenham Flats on 20th (BS), 13 at Budle Bay on 13th (GPK), and five to six at East Chevington (burn mouth and north pool). One to two were also at Boulmer, the Coquet Estuary, Stag Rocks and the Tweed Estuary, and Ladyburn Lake. One was well inland at Colt Crag Reservoir on 30th (MR). Four displayed at East Chevington on 26th (IRD).

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

35 at Hedgehope on 22nd was the only double-figure report (IRD). One to five were at Addycombe, Dow Cleugh (Breamish Valley), Dudlees (MOD Range), Widehope and Winter's Gibbet.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

Ten were at Lowick on 21st (TRD), five were seen at Budle Bay on 20th and four were at Caistrion on 14th. Three were in a mixed group with Grey Partridge at Hipsburn on 14th and a single was at Alwinton.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Some good counts this month with the largest being a covey of 23 encountered at Druridge Links on 18th (MH). 15 were at Ellington on 3rd (TB), 14 were seen at Brier Dene Farm, Spittal (Newbiggin) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs and counts of 12 came from Old Hartley on 27th, Quarry Cottage (RS) all month and on two dates at Druridge Pools. Nine were in a mixed group with Red-legged Partridge in a stubble field at Hipsburn on 14th and nine were also at Woodhorn Flashes. Five were at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) and three were at Gunnerton.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

Seven birds attended an evening roost at Northumberlandia (Cramlington) on 31st (STH) and one to three were at Castle Island, Hadston Carrs, Newbiggin Water Treatment Plant, Old Hartley and Valley Park (Cramlington).

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

Following a record September passage at Seaton Sluice, a new monthly site record was also set for October with a total of 382 (266N and 116S) in 85 hours of observation. These numbers were reflected in reports from other coastal sites including 50N in five hours of the morning of 28th at Newbiggin (STH) with similar numbers from Tynemouth and Cullercoats also on that day (CB/CGK/GPK). Records of one to 27 were received from many observers at coastal locations from Tynemouth-Berwick, including 23 on a flat calm sea in Cambois Bay on 5th and a possible family party of two juveniles and a breeding-plumaged adult in the sheltered bay south of Cullernose Point (Craster) on 8th.

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*

Two N on 27th and 28th were the only sightings at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). Two passed St Mary's on the morning of 28th (AC/MSH/JBu) and likely the same birds were subsequently seen from Newbiggin (STH) and Cullernose Point (TRD/JD). Singles were observed at other localities on several dates.

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

Seaton Sluice reported a "good" monthly total of 11 (Ten N and one S) with five N on 28th being yet another new site record day count (SSWT). A total of ten N, in two flocks of five, had passed St Mary's on 27th (BS) and six N were spotted past Newbiggin during the morning of 28th (STH). One to four, mostly flying N, were reported throughout the month from the whole of the coastal stretch.

Storm Petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus*

Reports on 27th constituted at least two, probably three, and maybe four birds with a single N past Seaton Sluice at 08:25h (SSWT), one N at Church Point (Newbiggin) mid-morning (NFO), singles N past Tynemouth at 15:55h (CB) and 16:25h (DRW), and two N past Howick at unspecified times (BS).

Leach's Petrel *Oceanodroma leucorhoa*

Almost certainly two were observed on 28th. The first was reported flying N past Howick at 07:57h (BS). The second was well-watched travelling N up the coast later mid-morning. Sightings came from Tynemouth (CB/CGK), Cullercoats where it came close inshore (CGK/CB again), close inshore at St Mary's (AC/MSH/JBu), Seaton Sluice (SSWT) and finally Newbiggin (JFa/GB/STH/TF/JFa).

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

The only sightings were two N past Hauxley on 27th (HRS) and a single bird, during a four-hour sea watch, heading N past Church Point (Newbiggin) on an undisclosed date (TF/JFa).

Sooty Shearwater *Puffinus griseus*

Seaton Sluice Watch Tower recorded only two during the whole month (singles N on 1st and 27th), however an excellent showing of 39 were observed flying N past Annstead Point on 1st (CGK/GPK). Singles were recorded flying N from several other viewpoints and dates towards the beginning and the end of the month.

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

95 flew N on what proved to be a very good shearwater day at Annstead Point (Seahouses) on 1st (CGK/GPK). Seaton Sluice recorded a monthly total of 62 (56N, six S) in 85 hours of watching with a maximum of 23N on 1st and a late flurry of 15N between 26th-28th (SSWT). Elsewhere 23 flew N past Howick in four hours on 28th (BS), 22N past Newbiggin on 1st and one to 17 noted from other locations on dates mainly towards the beginning and end of the month.

A Manx Shearwater passes
Church Point

Chris Barlow

28th October



Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

The best count of the month was a grand total of 31 at East Chevington North Pool on 15th (MH), closely followed by 28 at Castle Island on 14th (DM). 14 were present at Caistron on 14th (JD), 13 were at Druridge Bay CP on 2nd (MH/AA), Bothal Pond peaked at 11 on 7th (TD) and 11 were also counted along the River Tweed between Gainslaw House-Horncliffe on 16th (CH). One to nine were at Airy Holm Reservoir, Alnmouth, Amble, Big Waters NWT, Boulmer, Branton GP, Colt Crag Reservoir, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Exhibition Park, Haughton Strother GP, Killingworth Lake, Linton Ponds, Marden Quarry, Newton Pool, Old Waters (Coquet Estuary), Widdrington Moor Lake and Woodhorn Flashes.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

Single birds on passage were seen flying N on 27th and 28th from Church Point (Newbiggin), Cullercoats, Howick, St Mary's, Seaton Sluice and Tynemouth. An adult arrived at Amble Marina on 16th and remained, providing excellent close views, until at least 20th (TRD/TB/AJ/MN *et al.*). One was also at the south east corner of Cresswell Pond on 28th (DLo) and a further single was at Holy Island, also on 28th (SR/AH).



A Red-necked Grebe has a feed at Amble Marina
Tim Dean on 23rd October

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Big Waters peaked at eight on 14th with two of this year's juveniles attempting display (GB) and six were at Birling Carrs (Warkworth) on 21st (ANHS). At Derwent Reservoir two adults and two juveniles present on 1st reduced to one adult still catching food for a single juvenile by 10th (IFo). One to four were at Airy Holm Reservoir, Boulmer, Chevington Burn mouth, Fenham Flats, Haughton Strother GP, Killingworth Lake, North Seaton Colliery, QE11 CP Lake, St. Mary's, Seaton Sluice, Tynemouth, Whittle Dene Reservoirs and Widdrington Moor Lake.

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

The first sightings of this winter were singles with birds on the sea off East Chevington on 8th (DLo), on the sea at Dunstanburgh Castle on 18th (BS), at Stag Rocks on 22nd, one flying N at St.Mary's on 27th, singles N past Cullercoats and Tynemouth on 28th and one at Widdrington Moor Lake on 30th.

Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

One was found at South Low (Beal) on 14th (ASJ).

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

One was showing well at Woodhorn Flashes from at least 6th to 16th (GB/IRD/ASJ/TRD/TB/DM).

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

The Tweed Estuary peaked at 15 during a WeBS count on 10th (TBr/MMcN), 15 were at Howdon on 24th (CB) and nine were observed making random movements past Seaton Sluice throughout the month, including one N some three miles out to sea on 29th (SSWT). A count of nine came from Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 4th (SR), eight were at Castle Island during a WeBS visit on 14th (DM) and six were in the Blyth Estuary on 18th (LJM). One to four were seen at Amble Estuary, Brown's Bay (Whitley Bay), Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir, East Chevington, Holy Island, Leazes Park, Marden Quarry, North Blyth, Rockcliffe, Valley Park (Cramlington) and Woodhorn north flash.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Peak site totals were reduced from last month with birds spreading out around the county. Totals of five were recorded at Beal, Budle Bay, Holy Island Causeway and South Low (Lindisfarne) and one to four were at 14 other locations including one at Craggside (Rothbury) on 16th which was considered unusual for the site (JD).

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

Similar to shearwater sp. sightings, passage peaked at the beginning and the end of the month with the two highest counts being 487N past Stag Rocks in one hour and 40 minutes on 1st (DF) and 473N past Annstead in three hours and ten minutes on 29th (DF). Records from Seaton Sluice Watch Tower also revealed this pattern. Many reports were received of lower numbers from several other locations on many days, usually flying N, however Berwick bucked the trend with 270 per hour heading S past Spittal Bay on 23rd (MHu)



A Gannet with a cross to bear passes Church Point
Chris Barlow on 28th October

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Seaton Sluice reported a monthly movement total of 104 (36N and 68S), the peak period being 14th-15th with some 53S (SSWT). The roost at Meadow Haven (Berwick) contained a large gathering of 24 during stormy seas on 21st (MHu). Six were at Cullernose Point on 28th (TRD/JD) and five were present during a WeBS count from Spittal-Cocklawburn on 19th (TBr/MMcN). One to three were seen at Amble, Boulmer, Church Point (Newbiggin) and Stag Rock.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

23 were resting on staithes at North Shields Fish Quay on 17th (STH) and 38 were counted during a WeBS survey from Spittal-Cocklawburn on 19th (TBr/MMcN). 32 were roosting at Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 21st and 16 were on the "Couple" breakwater in Newbiggin Bay on 5th. 16 were also at Derwent Reservoir on 6th and 11 were counted at Colt Crag Reservoir on 25th. One to six were at several other typical locations.

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

A minimum of four birds were observed in a 2km radius of Low Cocklaw (Berwick) during the month (TBr). On Holy Island three birds were present on 28th (MJC/ADM) and two birds were seen at Fenham-le-Moor on 4th (TRD/JD), Holy Island on 11th (MJC/ADM), Castle Island on 14th (DM/PJA), East Chevington South Pool on 15th (MH) and at Crooked Oak Farm on 16th (IFo). Single birds were noted at 20 sites.



A Sparrowhawk makes short work of a Blue Tit in Denis Lovatt's garden on 27th October

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

Two birds were noted at Harwood forest on 18th (STE) and a female gave excellent views over Nelly's Moss Lake (Cragside) on 7th (TRD/JD).

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

A juvenile was seen at East Chevington on 2nd - 5th and 16th (MH/AA/ADMc/TRD).

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

An adult male flew NW into the distance from Cresswell Pond on 7th (TF/JFa).

Red Kite *Milvus Milvus*

Two birds were seen at Crooked Oak Farm on 17th with a different bird noted there on 16th (IFo).

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Five birds were over a wood at East Sleekburn on 10th (JR) and four birds were at Lambley Viaduct on 24th (AJH) and at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 25th (SR). Up to three birds were at Ellington throughout the month (TB) and two birds were noted at Netherwitton on 14th (JR) and at Seaton Sluice on 25th (TB). Single birds were seen at 17 sites.



A Buzzard over a Wooslington (Newcastle) Garden
John Littleton on 15th October

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Three were at East Chevington on 4th (IRD) while two birds were at Cresswell Pond on 4th & 8th (IRD/DLo), Holy Island on 14th (MJC/ADM), 21st & 30th (MJC). Singles were either seen or heard at Big Waters NWT, Cambois, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington and Holy Island.

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

19 birds were at Big waters NWT on 9th (GB), 14 were seen at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 8th (DM) and 12 birds were at QEII Lake on 7th (CDH) and at Castle Island on 14th (DM/). 10 birds were noted at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 8th (DM). One – seven birds were at Arcot Pond, Druridge Bay CP, Cresswell Pond, Jesmond Dene, Leazes Park (Newcastle), Linton Pond and three unfledged young were being attended to by adults at St Mary's Wetland on 1st (MHS).

Coot *Fulica atra*

Once again the highest count this month came from Killingworth Lake with 102 on 13th (LJM), 80 were seen at East Chevington on 24th (TRD) followed by 66 at Branton GP on 3rd (JD) and 52 at Big Waters NWT on 9th (GB). Grindon Lough peaked at 37 birds on 17th (MRS *et al.*). 19 were at Linton Ponds on 7th (CDH), 12 were at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 8th (DM). One to ten were at Bothal Pond, Cresswell Pond, Leazes Park (Newcastle) and at Shield on the Wall.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

A count of 99 was made at North Blyth staithes on 2nd with a count of 94 at Newbiggin Church Point on 5th (STH). Hauxley NWT had 80 on 26th (EC/JSB), 62 were seen in the Blyth Estuary on 18th (LJM) and 50 were counted during the WeBS at Spittal-Cocklawburn on 19th (TBr/MMcN). Counts of 29-40 came from Bamburgh (Stag Rocks), Tweed Estuary and Warkworth (Birling Carrs) while smaller counts came from Coquet Estuary, East Chevington and Hadston Carrs.

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

East Chevington counts continued at a high level with 875 reported on 6th (IRD). The peak count at Derwent Reservoir however, showed a big increase to 800 on 14th (IFo) and Budle Bay had an estimated 650 on the same day (DF). The Tweed Estuary held a total of 520 on 10th (TBr/MMcN) and 420 were counted at both Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 14th (SR) and at Holywell Pond on 16th (ASJ). Further inland, a count of 335 was made at Grindon Lough on 16th (PRM) and 320 were seen at Humshaugh, Haughton Strother GP on 2nd (MR). St Mary's had 310 birds throughout the month (ASJ), the Coquet Estuary also had 310 on 9th (ANHS), 250 were on Holy Island on 28th (MJC) and 212 were at Cresswell Pond on 4th (IRD). Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) had a count of 135 on 4th and Spittal-Cocklawburn a count of 197 on 19th. Smaller counts came from Big Waters NWT, Castle Island, Dudlees (Otterburn MOD Range), Ellington, Hepscott Park (Bedlington), Prestwick Carr and West Hartford

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

Counts at Holy Island varied between 2,000 and 3,000 (ADM, ASJ, TD) and a similar range of counts was made at Old Hartley-St Mary's (ASJ, MNC). An estimated 1,300-1,700 birds were at East Chevington on 28th (RMHa/PMHa), 1,200 were at Boulmer on 22nd and on the same day 800 were seen at Beadnell (BS). An estimated 700 were at Goswick on 31st (DF) and nearby Cocklawburn had a count of 630 during a WeBS on 19th (TBr/MMcN). Grindon Lough had 549 birds on 16th (PRM), 450 were in the Coquet Estuary on 14th (ANHS) and between 200-400 were counted at Cullercoats, Druridge, Low Newton, Newbiggin (Beacon Point) and Whitley Bay (East Holywell). Smaller counts came from Black Callerton/Airport, Colt Crag Reservoir, Cresswell Pond, Edlingham (Widehope), Ellington, Monks' House Pool, Newcastle Town Moor, Prestwick Carr, Stannington and West Hartford.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Reports were well up on last month with the highest count of 52 coming from Budle Bay on 3rd (CGK/GPK). Boulmer had a count of 31 on 22nd (BS). Counts of eight or fewer came from Berwick (Little Beach), East Chevington, Holy Island (causeway), Holy Island (Emmanuel Head), Lindisfarne NNR (Fenham Flats), Tynemouth and Warkworth (Birling Carrs).



A Grey Plover at Holy Island causeway on 15th October by Chris Barlow

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

A count of 72 was made at Budle Bay on 3rd (CGK/GPK), 43 were at Cocklawburn on 25th (CH), 41 in the Blyth Estuary on 15th (LJM), 36 at Alnmouth, Buston Links on 1st (STH) and 31 at St Mary's on 30th (ASJ). Counts of 15-29 were made at Bamburgh (Stag Rocks), Low Newton, Spittal-Cocklawburn and Warkworth (Birling Carrs) while smaller counts came from Boulmer, Coquet Estuary and Tynemouth.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

One late bird was spotted at Howick on 5th (JAR).

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

In a stubble field near Alnmouth Buston Links, 68 birds were seen on 1st (STH) and the same number of birds were seen at Warkworth Gut on 18th (IRD). Coquet Estuary held 57 on 24th (MKi), a presumed melanistic individual was seen on Holy Island, near the Crooked Lonnen, among 50 birds on 11th (ADM) and 36 were counted during a WeBS at Spittal-Cocklawburn on 9th (TBr/MMcN). Counts of eight or fewer came from Amble, Berwick (Whiteadder Water), Big Waters NWT, Cresswell (Blackmoor Farm), Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Rockcliffe, Tweed Estuary, Wansbeck Estuary and Whittingham.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

A count of 33 was made on Holy Island (Emmanuel Head) on 31st (MKi), 27 were at Budle Bay on 22nd (GCK/GPK), 20 were seen at both Beal Point and Fenham Flats (Lindisfarne NNR) on 4th (TRD/JD) and 18 were at Boulmer on 22nd (BS). Counts of ten or fewer came from Coquet Estuary, Cresswell Pond, Hauxley, Holy Island causeway, Newbiggin (Beacon Point), Tynemouth and Wansbeck Estuary.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

The apparent trend of Black-tailed Godwits outnumbering Bar-tailed Godwits continues, with 118 present at Amble on 16th (TRD). This estuary was the focus of many of the higher counts with numbers ranging between 59-69 in the latter half of the month (ASJ, MKi, ANHS). The nearby Warkworth Gut reported counts which may have included some of those counted in the open estuary. These included 47 on 18th (IRD) and 45 on 26th (AA). Monks' House Pool had 60 on 22nd (DF), East Chevington had 27 on 4th (AJ/ASH/AJN) and seven were in the Blyth Estuary on 17th (LJM). Counts of four or fewer came from Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond, Holy Island, Lindisfarne NNR (South Low) and Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Birds were present along the coast in limited numbers from Cocklawburn in the north to Newbiggin in the south. Stag Rocks attracted the highest number with 50 on 24th (DF). At Newbiggin 30 were reported on 5th with the same number at Boulmer on 26th (STH/MKi). There were 21 at Cresswell Pond on 15th (MKi) and 20 were present on 19th on the Spital-Cocklawburn stretch of coast during a WeBS survey (TBr/MMcN). At Hauxley, 18 were counted on 30th (RMHa/PMHa), 14 were at Birling Carrs (Warkworth) on 21st (ANHS), 12 at Snab Point (Cresswell) (TRD) on 2nd and eight at Low Newton on 15th.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

Good numbers were still at Lindisfarne with 500 at Beal point (TRD/JD) on 4th, 85 at Budle Bay on 5th (CGK/GPK) and 55 at St Cuthbert's Island on 20th (ASJ). Birds were virtually absent from the rest of the coast with four at Boulmer and singles at Cresswell Pond, East Chevington and flying N at Tynemouth.

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

Well reported all month from East Chevington with the maximum recorded being 12 on 16th (TRD) declining to two by 31st (TF/JFa *et al.*). The only other sites attracting birds were Cresswell Pond with one-two from 7th-9th (NFO/MSH) and Boulmer with singles on 7th and 28th (BS).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

The St Mary's Island area continued to hold the largest flock with 122 seen there on 25th (ASJ). This month saw a build up of numbers at other sites with Hadston-Bondicarr attracting 59 on 18th (MH), 55 at Budle Bay on 17th (DF), 47 at Newbiggin on 16th (STH), a peak of 40 at Cocklawburn on 21st (TRD) and 40 also at Hadston Scars on 31st (DM). Elsewhere 33 were seen at Boulmer on 22nd (BS) and 28 on the Spital-Cocklawburn stretch of coast on 19th (TBr/MMcN). Ten-12 were seen at Beal Point, Birling Carrs and Snab Point (Cresswell).



A juvenile Sanderling

St. Mary's Island

Alan Jack

18th October

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Well reported from the coast, coastal wetlands and also some still at inland localities. As last month the highest counts came from Lindisfarne NNR and Boulmer with 73 at Boulmer on 2nd increasing to 135 by 20th (MKi/MJC) and declining to five by 28th (BS/TRD/JD *et al.*). At Fenham Flats, 100 were seen on 4th and 50 were at Beal Point on the same day (TRD/JD). Budle Bay held 50 on 5th ((DF). The River Coquet Estuary at Amble held 76 on 31st (ANHS) and the wetlands of Druridge Bay attracted flocks of 42 at Cresswell Pond on 11th (MKi) and 35 at East Chevington on 6th (GB). Birds had moved on by the end of the month with two remaining at Cresswell Pond on 24th and eight at East Chevington the same day (TRD/GB/NFO *et al.*). Three to six were reported from Stag Rocks and the River Tweed Estuary. Inland, birds were still at Derwent Reservoir with three on 12th (IFo) and singles were at Colt Crag Reservoir, Grindon Lough and Haughton Strother GP.

A Dunlin
St. Mary's Island
Alan Jack
18th October



Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

At Seaton Sluice, 14 flew N between 26th-28th (SSWT). Low numbers were reported from the favoured site of Stag Rocks early in the month, with ten on 4th (TRD/JD) but a significant increase to 90 by 24th (DF). Birds were still scarce on the rest of the coast with nine at Newbiggin on 5th (STH) and seven at Birling Carrs (Warkworth) on 21st (DF). One-five were at Boulmer, Cullercoats, Hadston-Bondicarr, Holy Island and St Mary's Island.

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Immigration was apparent this month with singles at Craster on 13th (PG) and at the 'excavations' on Holy Island on 16th (ADM). From 21st-30th, birds were conspicuous at Holy Island with a maximum of six reported on 30th with two at the Straight Lonnen and singles at the Crooked Lonnen, 'excavations', Lough and the Snook. At Tynemouth, two flew 'in-off' the sea on 27th (DRW) when two were also at Howdon (CB). Singles were seen flying through Cresswell village on 26th (AA) 'in-off' the sea at Newbiggin on 27th (TF/JFa) and over the A1 at Seaton Burn on 28th (MJC/ADM). Further singles were reported from the coast at Bamburgh, Budle Point and Howick on 29th (MJC/JAR).

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyrtus minimus*

A noticeable influx occurred and birds were reported throughout the month. The first was found in front of the hide at Cresswell Pond on 4th remaining until 8th (ASH/AJ/DLo *et al.*). The next day one was flushed from the path at East Chevington South Pool (TB) and on 6th singles were at Snab Point (Cresswell) (TB/ADMc) and Woodhorn Flashes (GB). Two were found at Pegswood Moor on 9th (IRD) and a single was flushed from the cliff top at St Mary's Island on 11th (MSH). Further singles were reported from 16th-30th at Beal, Chain Bridge (River Tweed), East Chevington North Pool and Holy island (EC/JSB/CH/ASJ/MJC).

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Immigration continued to be observed this month at Budle Bay with ten 'in-off' the sea on 5th and 10th (CGK/GPK). The peak count was made at Hauxley NWT with 31 on 30th (JAR) and other double figure counts were 17 at Houghton Strother GP on 15th (MR), 16 at Cresswell Pond on 11 (TRD/JD) and ten at St Mary's Wetland on 24th (CB). Further counts came from Derwent Reservoir with seven on 5th (IFO) and seven were also seen at Howdon on 15th (CB). One-five were reported from Arcot Lane Flash, Big Waters, Bothal Pond, Branton GP, Caistron, Chevington Burn, Ellington, Grindon Lough, Holy Island, Low Newton scrape and Prestwick Carr.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Stragglers were noted at Woodhorn Flashes on 7th (LJM) and St Mary's Island on 8th (ASJ).

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

The only report was of one at the regular haunt of Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 3rd (SR).

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Significant numbers were still at sites on Lindisfarne NNR with 190 at Beal on 6th (DF) and 134 at Budle Bay on 5th (DF). The WeBS count on the River Tweed Estuary recorded 187 on 10th (TBr/MMcN), 157 were at Howdon on 24th (CB), 125 feeding at St Mary's Island on 1st (ASJ) and 120 were at the River Blyth Estuary on 18th (LJM). At other localities on the coast, 70 were at Hauxley NWT on 30th (RMHa/PMHa), 64 at the River Coquet Estuary on 31st (ANHS), 63 at Cresswell Pond on 16th (IRD), 61 at a high tide roost at St Mary's Wetland on 14th (MSH), 50 at Boulmer on 26th (MKi), 27 at Newbiggin on 5th (STH) with 23 at nearby River Wansbeck Estuary on 14th (DM). The WeBS count at Spital-Cocklawburn recorded a count of 14 on 19th (TBr/MMcN). One-three were at Bothal Pond, Castle Island and East Chevington.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

The good autumn for this species continued with birds remaining at Cresswell Pond with two reported from 2nd-18th (AA/DLo/MSH *et al.*). Counts of two also came from Beal (MJC/ADM/DF *et al.*) and Monks' House Pool (IRD) during the first half of the month. The resident adult was noted throughout at Budle Bay (CGK/GPK/DF) and singles were also noted at East Chevington (DLo) and the River Coquet Estuary (MKi).

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Still well reported this month with virtually all reports coming from the Lindisfarne NNR. Beal was again the most popular haunt with a maximum of eight on 14th decreasing to one by 31st (ASJ/DF/MJC). Budle Bay held a maximum of six on 2nd (CGK/GPK) with a single remaining until 17th (DF). Two were reported from Holy Island causeway on 15th (SRB) and one was at South Low on 21st (NFO). The only report away from Lindisfarne NNR was a single at West Ord (Berwick on 4th (MHu).

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

Very few were reported until the advent of strong northerly winds towards the month-end when 145/h moved N.at Spittal Bay, Berwick on 23rd (MHu). On 28th very large numbers passed Seaton Sluice where 8,500 were counted moving N in eight hours (SSWT) and on the same day counts of 800+ N came from St Mary's Island (MSH), 400-550 N at Cullernose Point, Newbiggin and Tynemouth (CB/STH/TRD/JD) and 265 N at Stag Rocks, Bamburgh (DF). On the following day, 29th, movement N was still apparent with 1,025 passing Annstead in three hours (DF).

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

The largest count was 1,000 in newly-ploughed fields at West Minsteracres (nr. Derwent Reservoir) on 1st (IFo) and elsewhere, gatherings of 250-400 were recorded at Bamburgh, Berwick and the River Blyth Estuary (DF/MHu/LJM) with 100-200 at Berwick (Whiteadder Water), Boulmer, Holywell Pond, Jesmond Dene and the QEII CP Lake. Smaller groups of 30-100 were at Amble, Arcot Pond, Bothal Pond, Castle Island, East Chevington, Exhibition Park, Hauxley beach, Leazes Park and Linton Ponds. A mixed flock of 2,400 Common/Black-headed Gulls was in the roost at Budle Bay on 16th (DF).

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

At Seaton Sluice the monthly count was 36, all moving N, of which 34 were seen on 15th all except three being adults (SSWT). Two were at Newbiggin on 14th (STH) and four sightings of singles, on dates from 14th-28th, came from Berwick (Little Beach), Monks' House Pool and Newbiggin, Church Point (MHu/CDB/DF),

Mediterranean Gull *Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus*

Six singles passed Seaton Sluice during the month, 4N, 2S (SSWT). The maximum group counts came from the favoured Newbiggin south beach where 26 gathered on 5th (STH) with eight seen there on 10th (CH) and at Quarry Cottage, Newbiggin 10-15 fed daily in the garden throughout (BS). Elsewhere, numerous records throughout the month included four at Boulmer (BS), three at Ellington (TB) and one or two at many sites close to Cresswell/Ellington/Newbiggin but also further afield at Amble, Bamburgh, Budle Bay, Goswick, St Mary's Island and Tynemouth (many observers).



A Mediterranean Gull
Amble
Chris Barlow
26th October

Common Gull *Larus canus*

A very large evening roost at Budle Bay included 3,500 on 20th (CGK) with smaller gatherings elsewhere of 1,500 near Lilburn Grange on 8th (JR), 600 in newly-ploughed fields at West Minsteracres (nr. Derwent Reservoir) (IFo), 500 at Haughton Strother GP (MR) and 160 at West Ord (MHu). Groups of 50-100 were also recorded at Bamburgh, Berwick (Whiteadder Water), Bolam Lake, Dudlees (MoD Range) and Whittingham. A mixed flock of 2,400 Common/Black-headed Gulls was in the roost at Budle Bay on 16th (DF).

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

A field by the Woodhorn north pool held ca.350 on 19th and 160 were at East Chevington north pool on 26th (EC/JSB). Gatherings of 50-60 were in the Coquet Estuary (MKi) and Druridge Pools (IRD), 30 at Spital Point, Newbiggin (BS) and up to 15 elsewhere at Castle Island, Grindon Lough, Linton Ponds, the QEII CP Lake and Rockcliffe.

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

A 1st-winter bird flew S past Beacon Point (AP) and Church Point, Newbiggin on 29th (ADMc).

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

A large flock, estimated at ca.2,000, was recorded feeding in fields at Baldersburyhill, Berwick from 19th-26th (TBr), ca.1,250 were in the gull roost at Budle Bay on 17th (DF) with 265 at Monks' House Pool (DF) and 200 from a WeBS survey at Spittal-Cocklawburn (TBr/MMcN). Smaller numbers were 30-50 at Linton Ponds, the QEII CP Lake and Warkworth, Coquet Estuary (MKi/CDH) with one to seven at four other localities.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

Of several counts throughout at Grindon Lough a maximum of five were seen on 17th (MRS/PRM) and elsewhere three were at Colt Crag and Derwent Reservoirs with one to two at five other localities, Airy Holm Reservoir, Cramlington, East Chevington, Haughton Strother GP and Jesmond Dene; one observer noted no wintering adult at Southfield Green, Cramlington, the first time since 2003 (LJM).

Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica*

Two extremely rare visitors to the county were a winter-plumaged pair which arrived at the Haughton Strother GP on 4th, staying until the onset of cold weather on 26th. This was an exceptionally late date and it was only the third county record since the turn of the century. The pair spent much time in the company of gulls on the island in the GP lake with regular feeding visits over the surrounding fields, allowing excellent views of the pair at rest and in flight (MR/TRD *et al.*).



A Gull-billed Tern from Haughton Strother
Duncan Watson
19th October

Sandwich Tern *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

The monthly count at Seaton Sluice was 18, comprising six N and 12 S, with the last sighting on 17th (SSWT). Eleven were at St Mary's Island on 2nd (ASJ) but all further records were of only one or two at five coastal localities between Berwick (Spittal) and St Mary's Island with a latest date of 27th (MSH).

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Seventy-six, consisting of 34 N, 42 S, moved past Seaton Sluice during the month, all birds after 12th being juveniles (SSWT). Twenty were at St Mary's Island on 2nd (ASJ), eight juveniles were at Boulmer on 4th (BS), six at Cresswell, Snab Point on 2nd (TRD) with one or two at Amble, offshore at East Chevington, Hadston Bondicarr, Monks' House and Warkworth (Birling Carrs); the latest sighting was on 26th. A Commic Tern *S. hirundo/paradisaea* flew N at Hauxley on 27th (HRS).

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

Three were recorded during the month at Seaton Sluice (SSWT) and four were seen at Cresswell, Snab Point on 2nd (TRD). Two moved N at Newbiggin on 1st (STH) and two adults lingered in the bay off East Chevington on the 27th (NFO); a Commic Tern *S. hirundo/paradisaea* flew N at Hauxley on 27th (HRS).

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

An adult dropped briefly onto the island at East Chevington North Pool before heading off S on the late date of 19th (EC/JSB).

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 15 N, with eight on 1st and 6 from 26th-28th (SSWT). At Annstead Point 18 flew N on 1st (CGK/GPK) and good numbers were recorded elsewhere during the northerly blow on 28th when 14 went N at Tynemouth (CB/CGK), ten N at nearby Cullercoats (CGK/CB) and four N at Howick in four hours (BS). Three were also recorded at Annstead on 1st and 29th (DF) with one or two seen at seven other widespread coastal sites between Tynemouth and Spittal/Cocklawburn on ten dates from 1st-30th (many observers).

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

A very productive month for this uncommon passage visitor. The Seaton Sluice observatory recorded 27 during the month, almost all moving N, with four on 26th, 19 on 28th and four on 30th, the majority being pale-phase adults with just a few juveniles. A light passage N was recorded during the first week when two were seen at Tynemouth on 6th (DRW) and singles at Annstead Point on 6th (CGK/GPK) and 8th (DF). The strong northerly winds on 26th-30th produced many birds with 11 flying S in a flock at Tynemouth on 26th (DRW), two and three at Tynemouth/St Mary's on 27th (JBu/AC/DRW) and the peak day of 28th when 14 were seen at Cullercoats (CGK/CB), nine at Newbiggin (ADM/CDB/TF/JFa/GB), four at Tynemouth (CB/DRW), three at Howick (BS) and one-two at Low Hauxley beach (CSa) and Cresswell Snab Point (JR). The numbers dropped rapidly thereafter on 29th and 30th with one and two seen at Annstead, Hadston/Bondicarr and Snab Point (MH/AA/DF).



Pomarine Skuas passing Church Point
28th October
Chris Barlow

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

A monthly count of nine, five N, four S, came from Seaton Sluice (SSWT). The peak count came during the first two days of the month when 12 were recorded at Annstead (CGK/GPK) and eight at Newbiggin (STH) on 1st with four at Newbiggin on 2nd (MH/AA). Further singles moving N were recorded at Newbiggin on three days between 3rd-6th, at Annstead on 8th and Hadston on 18th. Another active period occurred from 27th-31st with one-two at St Mary's/Tynemouth on 27th, five at Cresswell Snab Point (JR), two at Boulmer and one at Newbiggin on 28th, two at Annstead on 29th and singles at Hadston and Warkworth beach on 30th/31st.

Auk *sp*

Very few reported at Seaton Sluice until 28th when 1,500 flew N in eight hours and on 30th 460 flew N in two hours (SSWT).

Little Auk *Alle alle*

An influx occurred towards the month end as birds were blown south into the North Sea during a period of strong northerly winds and all the many records were of birds moving N as they returned to their normal wintering area in the North Atlantic. At Seaton Sluice, 41 were counted from 28th-30th with 37 seen on 28th (SSWT) and other maximum counts that day were 40 during a five-hour seawatch at Newbiggin (STH), 26 at Cullercoats (CGK/GPK), 22 at Church Point Newbiggin (CDB), 18 at Tynemouth (CB) with one to seven recorded from 27th-29th at nine other coastal localities between Boulmer and St Mary's Island (many observers).

Common Guillemot *Uria aalge*

Many reports which included peak counts of 72 on the sea at Newbiggin on 18th (STH) and 71 at Spittal-Cocklawburn on 19th (TBr/MMcN). Records elsewhere, on other dates throughout the month, were ten at Bamburgh (TRD/JD), Brown's Bay (IJ) and Spittal Bay Berwick (MHu) with one to six at twelve widespread localities between Berwick and Whitley Bay (many observers).

Razorbill *Alca torda*

Three records in the first week comprised four on the sea at Newbiggin (GB) and singles at Howick (MKi) and Longhoughton Steel (MKi).

Black Guillemot *Cephus grylle*

Single birds, thought to be probably the same individual, were seen at Tynemouth on 27th (CB/DRW) and a single flew N at Tynemouth on 28th (CB).

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

Singles were recorded at Tynemouth on 6th (DRW), Holy Island on 15th (TD), Hauxley on 27th (HRS) and Howick on 28th (BS).

Rock Dove *Columba livia*

High counts of 253 in Morpeth town centre on 6th (DM), 150 in Blyth town centre on 11th (BS), 60 at Blyth Docks on 31st, 34 at Newbiggin town centre and 33 at Blakemoor Farm (Creswell) on the same date, 20 at Stakeford Railway Bridge on 14th and one to seven at Cramlington and Jesmond Dene.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

On 7th 54 were at Howdon with eight at West Hartford on the same date (CB/STH) and one to two at Dukeshouse (Hexham), Jesmond Dene and Prestwick Carr.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

Around 200 at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) throughout the month and 200 leaving roost at dawn at Arcot Grange (Cramlington) on 31st (TBr/DM), five at Jesmond Dene on 14th and two young begging at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 7th.

A Wood Pigeon

Tynemouth

Colin Bradshaw

18th October

**Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto*

19 at Dinnington on 2nd (PCF), a maximum of 18 at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) between 16th and 31st (BS), 18 at Ogle on 16th and nine at Saltwick on 23rd (AHB).

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Two found at separate locations near Whittingham on 30th (CW) with the resident pair hunting at Holy Island during the afternoon on many occasions during the month (IK); singles there on three dates and seven other locations. Road casualties reported at Dissington and Fenrother.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Two males were calling at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 13th and Harwood Forest on 18th (TB/STE). Singles were at Ellington on three dates and nine other locations including one flushed near Collingwood Monument (Tynemouth).

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Reported at Derwent Reservoir on five dates with two on the 7th (IFo) and one near Ponteland on 25th at an established site (AHB).

Asio sp.

One 'in off' at Seaton Sluice on 11th (SSWT) and south at Tynemouth on 21st (DRW).

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

One at Holy Island from 10th to 16th (MJC *et al.*), at Seaton Point (Boulmer) on 11th & 28th (CSa), across the A1 in darkness at Ellingham on 16th and roosting in Hawthorn at Northumberlandia on 31st (CSt).

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Regular at Holy Island all month with a peak 7/8 in the last half of the month and four on 14th & 20th (IK/MJC *et al.*). Three were at Prestwick Carr on 19th (PCF), two 'in-off' at St Mary's Island on 15th (ASJ) and two hunting at Newbiggin Ash Lagoons on 29th (MH). Singles were at all the above sites and Cresswell Pond, East Chevington Pools and Widdrington Moor Lake also 'in-off' at Seaton Sluice and Tynemouth.

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

On 14th two were at Jesmond Dene (MJCo), singles at Castle Island on 14th, Derwent Reservoir and River Wansbeck on 17th, Seaton Sluice and Boulmer on 19th, Colt Crag Reservoir on 25th, Whittle Dene Reservoir on 27th and Howick on 29th.

Bee-eater *Merops apiaster*

One was at Haltwhistle from 6th to 10th (PRM *et al.*).

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

The only multiple sightings were four at Hauxley NR on 14th, three at Derwent Reservoir on 8th and two at Woodhorn Church on 9th (HRS/IFo/DM/GB). Singles were at four other locations with a 1st winter trapped and ringed at Bamburgh on 15th and adult female on 20th.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

No reports

Kestrel *Falco tinninculus*

Holy Island had up to four birds present throughout the month (MJC/ADM). Two birds were noted at Beal, Denton Burn (Scotswood), Derwent Reservoir, Ellington and at Prestwick Carr. Single birds were at 19 sites including single birds in off the sea at Seaton Sluice on 11th & 16th (SSWT).

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Two birds were on Holy Island on 11th (MLC/ADM *et al.*) and a bird was noted in Budle Bay on eight dates (CGK/GPK). Other single birds were seen at Beal, Boulmer, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Goswick, Gunnerton (Barrasford), Haughton Strother GPs (Humshaugh), Holy Island Causeway, Low Newton, Newbiggin, Seaton Sluice, St Mary's Island & Warkworth Dunes.

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

A pair were at Holy Island village on 20th (ASJ) and single birds were noted on or near the coast at Brown's Bay, Budle Bay, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Church Point (Newbiggin), Cresswell Pond, Fenham Mill, Holy Island, Howick, Low Cocklaw (Berwick), St Mary's Island and Widdrington Moor Lake. The only bird reported inland was at Gowk Hill (Rothbury) on 21st (TRD).

Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

Four over Town Moor (Newcastle) on 5th and three on 15th (TD/GB) with two at Heaton Park Bowling Green on 7th and a male calling at Gosforth all month (MJCo/MJC).

Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor*

A first winter was on Holy Island on 11th and 12th (NFC/MJC).

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Well reported as birds stored food for winter with five the peak at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 3rd and Derwent Reservoir on 16th (TB/IFo) with four at the latter site on the 1st and East Sleekburn on the 17th (JR). Three were at Bedlington on 8th, East Sleekburn on 10th and Jesmond Dene on 21st with one to two at 21 widespread localities.

Magpie *Pica pica*

A fox carcass at Ellington attracted 25 on 6th and 22 the previous day (TB). The evening roost at Cramlington numbered 18 on 31st with six at Newbiggin Water treatment plant on 7th and Jesmond Dene on 28th.



Above: a black and white Jackdaw at Amble and below: a Magpie in Tynemouth by Colin Bradshaw

**Jackdaw** *Corvus monedula*

A high count of 198 on seeded fields at Beacon Hill (Cramlington) on 7th, 158 at Hartford Bridge on 6th (DM), 110 the peak at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 6th with 40 the average count daily for the month (BS). 60+ were at Benton on 29th, 50 at Budle Bay on 2nd and 46 at Howdon on 24th with one to nine at four other locations.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

Large counts around 280 at Low Cocklaw and Baldersbury Hill (Berwick) on 30th (TBr), 24 at Woodhorn Church on 14th and six at Beacon Hill (Cramlington) on 7th (DM).

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

39 on recently seeded fields at Beacon Hill (Cramlington) on 7th, eight at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 8th (DM) and one to four at four other locations.

Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix*

One at Boulmer on 6th & 7th (BSt).

Raven *Corvus corax*

Five were above Alwinton Village on 10th (NFO), three over Whittingham Vale on 21st (CW) and two at Derwent Reservoir on 11th, Grindon Lough on 16th, Hedgehope on 22nd with one at Widehope on 15th.

Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus*

One flew along the Straight Lonnen (Holy Island) on 29th and one flew west at Bamburgh on 31st (BRS).

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

At Bamburgh 25 were trapped and ringed during the month indicating movement through the area (BRS). Three were at Cambois Railway Line on 7th (STH) and Jesmond Dene on 28th (MJCo), two at Holy Island on 10th & 29th and at Prestwick Carr on 15th. Singles were regularly at Holy Island and at four other locations.

A Coal Tit

A Tynemouth garden

Colin Bradshaw

2nd October

**Marsh Tit** *Poecile palustris*

All reports were of singles at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on five dates (NFO), visiting a feeder at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 9th & 26th (TBr) and at Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth) on 21st (TD).

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

Four were at Prestwick Carr on 15th with three there on 3rd and two on 7th (PCF/AJ), two at Craster on 15th (TRD) and Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 25th (NFO). Singles were also at Derwent Reservoir, Hauxley NR, Newbiggin GC and Woodhorn Church Flash.

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

At Bamburgh 62 were trapped and ringed during the month indicating movement through the area (BRS) with four trapped and ringed at Hauxley on 14th and seven on 18th (HRS). 11 were in a mixed tit flock visiting a garden at Longbenton on 5th (ADM), seven at Fawdon on 27th and at Holy Island on 30th with five there on 14th being high counts for the island. Nest boxes at Low Carritheth had five pairs with 44 eggs and 12 young, fledging five as three boxes were predated by Squirrel (JRi).

Great Tit *Parus major*

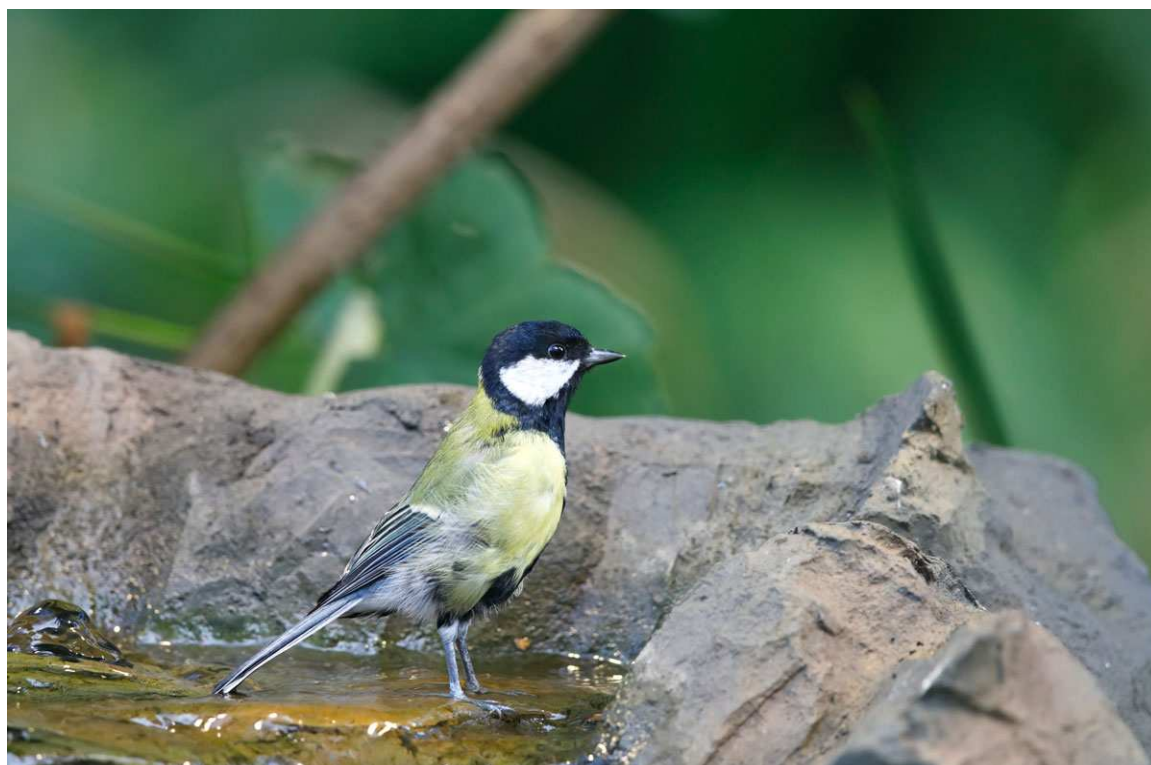
19 were trapped and ringed during the month at Bamburgh (BRS) with three ringed at Hauxley NR on 14th (HRS). Nest boxes at Low Carritheth had five pairs with 35 eggs and 32 young, fledging them all whilst boxes at Tarsset held nine pairs with 60 eggs and 51 young again all fledging (JRi). Four were at Jesmond Dene on 28th and two at Fawdon on 27th.

A Great Tit

Tynemouth

Colin Bradshaw

2nd October



Bearded Tit *Panarus biarmicus*

At S. Pool East Chevington a peak of seven were present on 5th (TB), six moving from N. Pool to S. Pool on 9th (ADMc) with a single found on 7th. A male and female were at the Lough (Holy Island) on 14th (MJC) with one there on 25th.

Woodlark *Lullula arborea*

On 11th one was found at the Crooked Lonnen (Holy Island) by Kent Birder Barry Chambers.

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Movement was generally south over Holy Island with 147 on 16th, 136 on 10th and 107 at Beal on 18th (MJC/ADM). Around 70 including flock of 35 at Whiteadder Water (Berwick) on 16th (TBr), 55 at St Mary's Island on 3rd (ASJ), 50 at Haughton Strother GP on 12th and Beal on 14th, 40 at East Chevington on 15th and 38 at Prestwick Carr on the same date. One to 30 were at 17 other locations.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

One late bird at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 4th (TRD/JD).

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Movement noted on 14th when 20 hawked along cliffs heading south at Snab Point (Cresswell) with eight at Cresswell Village, ten south at East Chevington on the same date (DM/PJA/AJ). Five at Cresswell on 1st, four at Holy Island on 3rd and Wark on 4th with one to three at 14 other locations the last sighting being one west at Crooked Oak Farm on 17th (IFo). In Coquetdale 24 pairs laid 156 eggs with 11 young all of which fledged (JRi)

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

High count of 15 at Derwent Reservoir on 1st (IFo), six at Rockcliffe on 2nd (IJ) and East Chevington on 14th (DM/PJA), four at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 9th and Hauxley NR on 14th (NFO/HRS) with one to two at three other locations the sightings on 14th being the latest recorded.

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*

A visiting birder from Kent found a bird at Holy Island Lough on 20th; it was still present on 21st (BCh/MJC).

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

Two separate flocks at Whiteadder Water (Berwick) totalled 27 birds on 17th (TBr), while likewise two flocks at Prestwick Carr numbered 24 on 7th (PCF). A further 19 were at Tynemouth Pier on 5th and 'tribes' of 16 were reported from Byker Farm on 26th, Hauxley RS on 14th and Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 18th. Other sizeable flocks included 15 at Holywell Dene on 30th and on the coast at Beal on 15th, Holy Island (Straight Lonnen) on 20th and Howick on 18th. Ten to 12 were noted at Bamburgh, East Chevington and Marden Estate; eight to nine were at Cramlington (Alexandra and Valley Parks) and eight at Colt Crag Reservoir, Craster, Leazes Park and St Mary's Island. Two to six were reported from a further seven localities.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

There were two at Holy Island on 14th, when singles were also at Beal and Boulmer. Another was at Holy Island on 21st.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Numbers fluctuated widely at Holy Island, where the peak counts were 20 on 11th (MJC/ADM/AH/SR/BCh/PMu) and 11 on 14th, with one to six on a further 13 dates. Elsewhere, four were at Prestwick Carr on 3rd, three at Derwent Reservoir on 1st, two at Leazes Park on 8th and at Newbiggin (Spital) on 9th and singles at a further 18 localities.

Pallas's Warbler *Phylloscopus schwarzi*

One at Holy Island (Snook Plantation) on 11th was the only report of this increasingly rare visitor (MJC/ADM).

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*

An influx began with one at St Mary's Island on 6th (ASJ) followed by another at Low Newton on 7th and one at Woodhorn Church on 9th. Numbers peaked during the second week of the month and in particular on the 11th, when 19 were on Holy Island (MJC/ADM/AH/SR/BCh/PMu), eight at St Mary's Island, at least five at Budle Point, three at Chugdon Wood (Ellington), two at both Cresswell Pond and Tynemouth and a single at Boulmer from 11th-12th. Eight to 13 remained at Holy Island from 12th-14th and four were present on 16th. At least four were at Tynemouth on 14th, when two were also at Hauxley RS and at St Mary's Wetland. One to two were noted at Prior's Park (Tynemouth) on 15th-16th and elsewhere singles were reported from Budle Point on 10th and 13th-14th, Beal Point on 12th, Warkworth on 12th and 17th, Craster on 13th and 20th, Druridge Pools on 14th and Tynemouth (Collingwood Monument) on 15th.



A Yellow-browed Warbler on 14th October on Holy Island by Jonathan Farooqi

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Light passage produced a peak of 12 at Holy Island on 11th (MJC/ADM/AH/SR/BCh/PMu), with two present there on 14th and 16th and singles on 7th and 28th. Five were noted at Prior's Park (Tynemouth) and four at St Mary's Wetland on 14th, while a total of only seven were trapped and ringed at Bamburgh during the month. In addition singles were reported from Cresswell Pond on 11th, Derwent Reservoir on 10th, East Sleekburn on 17th, Hauxley RS on 18th, Rothbury on 1st and Woodhorn Church on 9th.



A Barred Warbler on Holy Island by Neil Osborne on 29th October

Barred Warbler *Sylvia nisoria*

One was seen briefly at Hauxley RS on 18th (HRS). At Holy Island, one was at Chare Ends on 28th-29th (MJC/ADM/NFO/PMHa/TF/JFa) and another, reported as a different bird, at Mallard Cottage on 29th (SY).

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

On Holy Island one was present on 11th, two on 14th and one to two from 28th-30th. Singles were also noted at Boulmer on 11th and 14th, St Mary's Island on 13th and Beal Point on 14th.

A Lesser Whitethroat

Holy Island

14th October

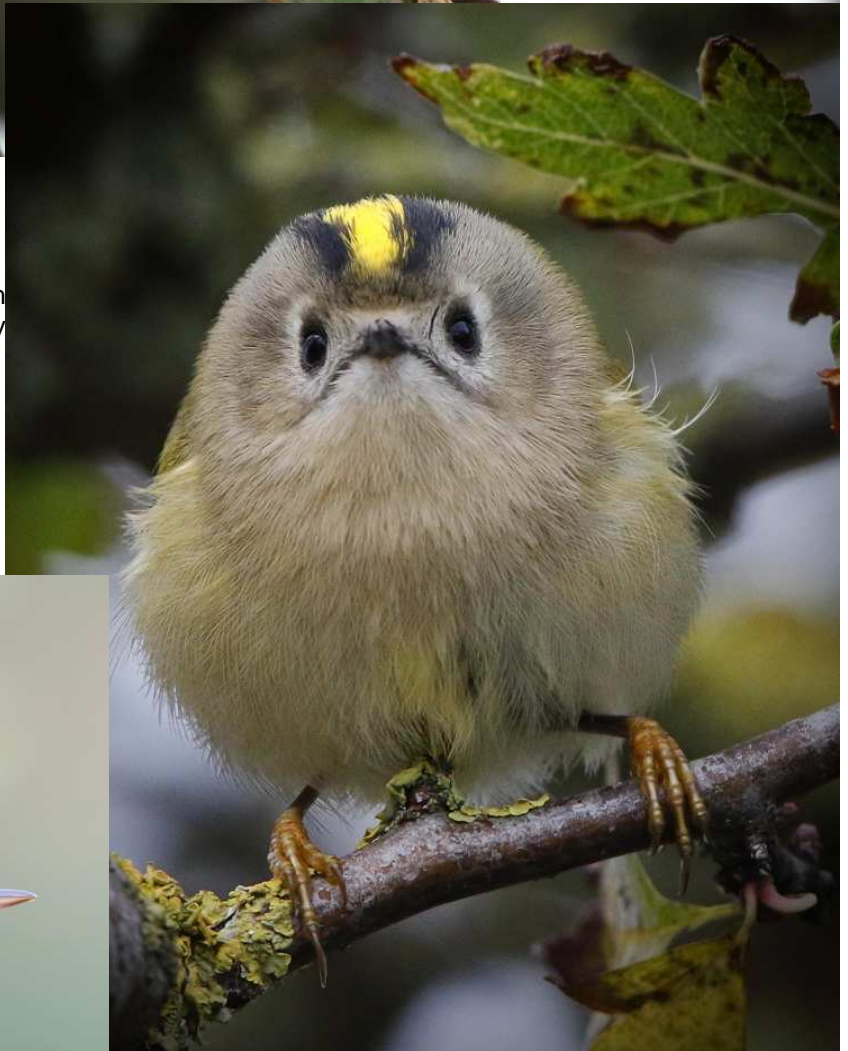
Alan Jack

**Goldcrest** *Regulus regulus*

One to seven were at Holy Island on five dates from 7th-14th; a light influx here during the final few days of the month produced a peak of 25 on 30th (MJC/ADM), while at Hauxley RS numbers peaked at 17 on 29th. Eight trapped and ringed at Bamburgh during the month was a meagre return for this site. Inland 20+ were at Leaplish Waterside Park (Kielder) on 20th. One to three were reported from a further nine localities.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

A total of nine ringed at Hauxley RS during the month included six (+ one other) on 14th. Four were at Holy Island on 11th and three at Jesmond Dene on 21st.

**Small birds**

Above:; a Goldcrest has a good look at Mike Carr on Holy Island on 30th October

and left: a Wren poses for Colin Bradshaw in Tynemouth

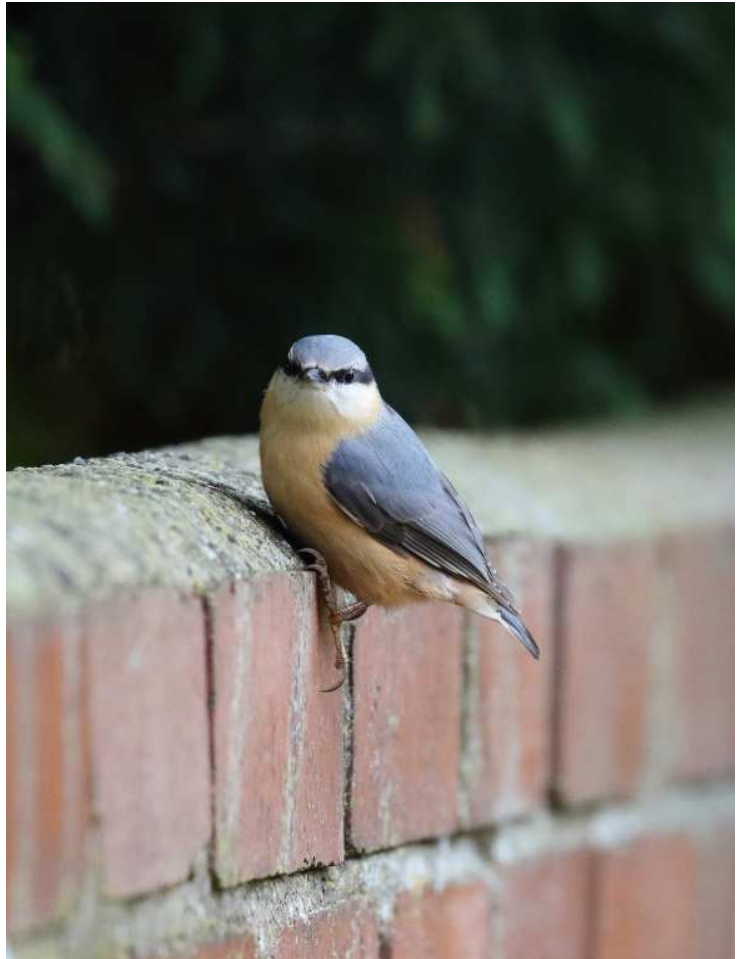
Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

A total of five were noted in Jesmond Dene on 7th (MJCo), while a further five were counted along the River Wansbeck from Morpeth-Bothal Sawmill on 17th (IRD). Counts of three came from Chugdon Wood (Ellington) and Northumberland Park (North Shields) and two were noted at Bolam Lake and Derwent Reservoir. Singles were also reported from Cramlington (Valley Park), Hexham, Holystone, Seaton, Wark (North Tyne) and Woolsington.

A Nuthatch in a Woolsington garden

John Littleton

14th October



Nest box data:

Site	Pairs	Eggs	Young	Fledged	Observer
Tarset	1	5	5	5	JR

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

On Holy Island there was an excellent showing of this scarce bird during the month, beginning with one on 3rd and again on 12th. Numbers rose to a peak of at least four (one in the village and three to four in the Lonnens) on 15th (IK), while three were present on 16th and 21st, two on 28th and one on 30th. Two of three were ringed at Hauxley RS on 18th and single British race birds were ringed at Bamburgh RS on 15th and 17th. Elsewhere, four were noted at Prestwick Carr on 3rd and two were at Craster on 20th, Derwent Reservoir on 15th and East Sleekburn and North Seaton Colliery on 16th. Singles were reported from Castle Island, Craggside and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.



A Treecreeper on Holy island on 12th October by Duncan Watson

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

A pre-roost gathering of 3,000 at Beal on 14th flew off towards Holy Island Lough (ASJ) and a similar number were at Goswick on 21st (TRD). A large flock of 1,000 was feeding in a field near Grindon Lough on 17th (MRS) with 300+ in the same area on 19th. Other sizeable flocks included 450 at Old Hartley, 300 at Howick and Newbiggin, 250 Boulmer, 200 at Allendale, Low Hauxley and Whitley Bay links, 170 between Spittal and Cocklawburn, 160 at Airy Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield) and 150 at Blyth South Beach.

Nest box data;

A total of 118 young fledged from 27 boxes at The Riding (Acomb), Hexham (SCE).

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

Holy Island attracted a notable passage beginning with an early arrival on 3rd. A total of 18 were found across the island on 11th (MJC/ADM/AH/SR/BCh/PMu), with only one present the following day; another influx produced eight on 14th and four on 16th. Elsewhere, eight + were at Budle Point on 14th, with four there on 11th, when three were also at St Mary's Island, two at Tynemouth and singles at Boulmer, Chugdon Wood (Ellington) and 'in-off' at Seaton Sluice. Another was found at Warkworth dunes on 12th and one was at Beal on 14th.

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

A large influx of 550 occurred at Holy Island on 16th following overnight south-easterly winds (MJC/ADM/AH/BCh/CMur/VWa). There were earlier island arrivals of 120 on 7th and 300 on 11th, followed later in the month by 50 on 21st and 126 on 30th. Elsewhere, on 11th there was a noticeable arrival at St Mary's Island involving tens of birds, while 40 were at Beal and 30 came in-off at Seaton Sluice on the same day. Howdon attracted 35 on 27th, 30+ were at Bamburgh on 31st and the highest day-count from Hauxley RS was 23 on 14th; 20 were at Marden Quarry on 18th and ten were feeding together on fallen apples in a Tynemouth garden on 27th.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

The first arrivals were six at Holy Island and one at Bamburgh on 3rd. A huge influx of 2,850 occurred at Holy Island on 16th following overnight south-easterly winds (MJC/ADM/AH/BCh/CMur/VWa). Elsewhere on the same day 126 came in-off at Berwick, 90 did likewise at Seaton Sluice and 41 at Newbiggin, whilst well inland 30 moved SW over Derwent Reservoir. Other notable movements / gatherings during the month involved 200 'in-off' at St Mary's Island on 15th, 175 at Whittingham on 27th, 150 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 25th, 120 at East Ord (Berwick) on 22nd, 70 W at Gunnerton on 21st and 50 W at Howdon on 7th. A flock of 33 was at Cottonshope Farm (Otterburn Ranges) on 21st and one to 20 were reported from a further eight localities.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

As with the previous species the main arrival occurred at Holy Island on 16th following overnight south-easterlies, when a huge total of 9,060 was noted (MJC/ADM/AH/Ch/CMur/VWa). On the same day 450 arrived at Seaton Sluice, 300+ flew in-off (in 25 minutes) at St Mary's Island and 150 were at nearby Marden Quarry, while inland 820 flew SW at Derwent Reservoir and 450 W/SW at Hazelrigg. An earlier influx on 11th involved 2,000 at Holy Island, mostly heading W, many hundreds arriving from E at St Mary's Island, 400+ at Budle Bay, 270 at Seaton Sluice, 195 at Beal and well inland 100 at Derwent Reservoir. Other notable counts included 400 in-off at St Mary's Island on 15th, 250 at Haughton Strother on 25th, 179 at Holy Island on 12th and 120 at Holy Island on 21st. Counts of 30-72 came from Berwick, Craggside, East Sleekburn, Gunnerton, Howick, Newbiggin, West Hartford and Woodhorn, with one to 25 at a further 19 localities.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

A total of 300, mainly moving W were at Holy Island on 11th (MJC/ADM/AH/SR/BCh/PMu), while a further 160 moved through the island during the second major influx on 16th; birds moving quickly on to the mainland was evident as illustrated by 112 on 12th declining to only one by 14th. Elsewhere, 50 came in-off at Seaton Sluice on 11th, when there was also a noticeable arrival from E at St Mary's Island and ten were at Beal. Inland, ten were at Linden Hall on 3rd, at least eight at Wark (North Tyne) on 24th and six at Howdon on 27th. The peak count from Hauxley RS was seven on 14th; five were at Priors Park (Tynemouth) on 17th, four at East Chevington on 14th and three at Cramlington (Valley Park) on 16th.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

A flock of 17 was at Howick on 2nd (JAR), while evidence of immigration was evident on 15th when 14 moved through Low Cocklaw (Berwick) with Fieldfares and four came in-off at Priors Park (Tynemouth); another arrived from E at Newbiggin on 16th. Elsewhere, six were at Haughton Strother on 21st, four at Whittingham on 4th and three at Bamburgh on 6th and Colt Crag Reservoir and Corbridge on 30th.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

A light influx was noted during the huge mid-month arrivals of Continental thrushes. Holy Island was the main recipient with peak counts of 35 on 12th, 25 on 16th and 20-23 on 28th-30th (MJC/ADM/AH/Ch/CMur/VWa); other counts from here included 11 on 3rd, 15 on 6th, 12 on 11th and 19 on 14th. The peak count from Hauxley RS was 20 on 14th, while 11 were at Craster on 20th. Ten were at Prestwick Carr on 15th, three at Beal, Fawdon and Jesmond Dene and two at Rockcliffe.

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Three were at Holy Island on 11th (MJC/ADM/AH/SR/BCh/PMu) and a single there on 14th. Another was at Boulmer on 11th and one at Budle Point on an unspecified date.

Pied Flycatcher nest box data:

Site	Pairs	Eggs	Young	Fledged	Observer
Low Carritheth	6	40	36	36	JR
Dipton Dene	7	--	46	46	SCE

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Two to three were at Holy Island on 11th (MJC/ADM/NFO), when singles were also at Cresswell Pond and Tynemouth. Singles were noted at Boulmer and Holy Island on 12th, while on 14th there were two at Holy Island and one well inland at Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Nest box data:

Site	Pairs	Eggs	Young	Fledged	Observer
Low Carritheth	3	15	6*	6	JR

* Two boxes were deserted

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

Peak counts were five at Buston Links (STH), three at East Chevington, Harwood Forest and Holy Island, two at Bamburgh (Castle dunes) and Budle Point and singles at Boulmer, Craster, Low Hauxley, Low Newton, St Mary's Island, Whittle Dene Reservoirs and Widehope.

Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

There were two at Budle Bay on 4th and two flew in-off at Seaton Sluice on 10th. Singles were reported from Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 1st, Spital (Newbiggin) on 9th and Beacon Point on 16th, while further singles were noted at St Mary's Island on 11th, Beal Point on 12th and 14th, Tynemouth on 14th, Berwick and Holy Island on 16th and East Chevington on 18th. The final birds of the month (year) were two at Boulmer from 20th-22nd.

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

Three were seen at Derwent Reservoir on 15th and at Gunnerton on 20th (IFo/GB). Two were at Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth) on 21st (TD). A single was seen at Berwick Hill on the Pont on 11th and at Hareshaw Linn on 20th.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

200 were noted at St. Coomb's Farm (Holy Island) on 7th with around 150+ there on 14th (MJC/ADM). A further total of 80+ were noted at several sites within Holy Island village on 13th (ASJ). 65+ frequented Cullercoats Bay during the month and 20+ were at garden feeders at Marden Estate (Cullercoats) (ASJ). 60 were at feeders at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) all month (RS). Around 50 were present at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) during the month (Tbr).

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

A flock of 70+ were seen at East Holywell on 5th (ASJ). 60+ were seen at Waren Mill Caravan Park on 5th (CGK/GPK). 40 at Wharton on 2nd and at Brier Dene Farm on 26th and 30th (JD/MJC). 35 counted at West Chevington on 6th, 30 at Whittle Dene on 14th and at Low Cocklaw on 25th. Southward movement was observed during the month, with 29 at Tynemouth on 20th and 26 at St. Mary's Island on 15th and 15 at Spital (Newbiggin) on 9th (DRW/ASJ/GB). 16 birds were attracted to feeders at Priors Park (Tynemouth) on 5th with 25 seen there on 14th. Nearby six were also at garden feeders in Tynemouth and at Marden Estate during the month (CB/ASJ). Elsewhere, 15 seen at Cresswell Pond on 17th, 14 at Prestwick Carr on 3rd, 13 at St. Mary's Wetland on 3rd and 16th. 11 birds at garden feeders at Shillbottle most of the month (MKi). One to 12 noted at a further 13 sites, including ten trapped and ringed at Bamburgh in the month and up to seven on Holy Island.

A Tree Sparrow

Woolsington

John Littleton



Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

14 were trapped and ringed during the month at Bamburgh. Eight plus were seen at St. Mary's Wetland on 14th (MSH). Singles reported from three other sites.

A Dunnock in Prior's Park

Colin Bradshaw

14th October

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Four were seen at three Jesmond Dene sites on (MJCo). Two were at Linden Hall, Newbiggin, two Morpeth locations, Howick and Marden Quarry. Singles were in 11 other sites, some urban including, more unusually, in gardens at Marden Estate and Woolsington (ASJ/SB).

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

20 at Linden Hall on 8th was the only substantial count this month (NFO). Six were at St. Mary's car park on several dates and two were at Alexandra Park (Cramlington) on 6th (ASJ/DM).

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

38 flew S. at Snook (Holy Island) on 16th with emigration continuing, with 30 likewise at St. Mary's on 4th, 27 at Beal Point on 14th and eight at Newbiggin on 9th, plus four heading N. here (MJC/ASJ/GB). 22 also S. at East Chevington on 14th (DM). Inland, 34 were seen at Cottonshope Head with 16 at Toft's Head (Otterburn) on 14th (JR). 17 seen on Holy Island, at two sites on 10th. One to six were at seven further sites this month, including small numbers remaining at St. Mary's all month.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

An impressive 65 were counted across Holy Island on 16th, with 34 on 21st and 20 on 28th (ADM/MJC). 16 were at Boulmer on 19th and 14 at Berwick on 16th (BS/MJC). Six at Beal on 18th increased to nine by 30th (MJC). One to six were at a further nine coastal sites during the month.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Around 80 were feeding in stubble at Murton Craggs on 28th (MHu). About 40 were at Toft House on the Otterburn Ranges on 14th and a similar number at Windyhaugh (Upper Coquetdale) on 21st (JR). 30+ were seen at Waren Mill on 2nd (GPK/CGK). 23 were ringed at Bamburgh during the month. 11 flew S. at Spital (Newbiggin) on 9th (GB). Two to eight were at four other sites.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

Large numbers arrived mid-month at Holy Island, with 38 on 7th building to 94, 200, then 315 the peak count made on the period 11th to 16th, mostly feeding in the Strawberry Field in the village and flocks of 47 and 31 flying S. over Snook perhaps to join the others? (MJC/ADM/ASJ/SR/JBU). Elsewhere, on 11th, arrivals in off the sea included three groups totalling 90 at Seaton Point (Boulmer), 60 at Amble Links, 55 at Seaton Sluice, 35+ at St. Mary's, 33 at Beal and at 15 Tynemouth and Budle Point (CSa/SSWT/ASJ/MSH *et al*). Birds reaching inland included 27 at Toft House (Otterburn Ranges) on 14th, 18 at Colt Crag on 25th and nine at Crooked Oak on 16th (JR/MR/IFo). The influx resulted in one to six being recorded at 26 further sites during the month.

A Brambling

Holy Island

Alan Jack

14th October



Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Three were found on 28th at Wallington Hall and a single at Leaplsh on 20th (SRB/PRM).

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

16, including a flock of 12, were seen at Harwood on 18th (STE). Six at Whittle Dene on 3rd and trapped at Bamburgh (all British race) on 15th. One to five were seen at 11 other sites.

Common Rosefinch

A juvenile was found in bushes at Beal on 14th (MJC).

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

A flock feeding on Rose Hips on several dates peaked at 25 at St. Mary's Wetland on 16th (ASJ). 15+ were here on 1st (MSH). 24 were ringed at Bamburgh during the month. One to five were noted at six further sites.

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*

The largest count was made at Goswick this month, with around 70 seen (TRD). At Holy Island, 30 were at the Lough on 25th and 30 also at Snook on 30th with lower numbers recorded on several other dates (MJC/ADM). One to 11 were at seven other locations.

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

300 were present at Waren Mill Caravan Park on 2nd and 210 were near Belford on 10th (CGK/GPK/ASJ). Around 200 noted at Monks' House Pool on 22nd (DF). 140 seen at West Minsteracres on 3rd (IFo). 120 fed in stubble at Howick on 5th, with 100 at Buston Links on 1st (JAR/STH). 90 observed at Briar Dene Farm on 30th and 80 at Cocklawburn on 19th (MNC/TBr/MMcN). 70 at Crooked Oak on 17th and around 60 were seen at East Chevington burn mouth on 6th. 50+ at Cresswell Pond on 4th (IFo/LJM/MSH). One to 45 birds were seen at a further ten sites.

Common Redpoll *Carduelis flammea*

One was found on Holy Island on 12th, with one there on 21st and 30th. Two were seen here on 29th.

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis caberet*

A large flock of around 450 was present at Cragside (Rothbury) on 7th (TRD/JD). 34 were seen flying S. at Cambois on 14th (STH). 31 also flew S. at Spital (Newbiggin) on 9th (GB). Nine were on Snook (Holy Island) on 11th with two here on 14th. Six flew S at Marden quarry on 14th. 14 were seen at Colt Crag on 25th (MR), and seven at Prestwick Carr on the same day (PCF). One to nine seen at eight other sites during the month.

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

100+ was an excellent count at Thrunton on 5th, including several singing birds. Coastal movement was observed at several sites during the month, with a total of 88 flying SW on 31st at Budle the peak count. A flock of 25 flew S. at Cambois that day also several calling over the observer's house in Cramlington. Eight W also at Budle on 21st. Four flew NW at Bamburgh on 15th and three SW here on 6th (MJC/STH/DM/*et al.*). 35+ frequented Druridge Bay C.P. on 31st. 22, in three small flocks were at Harwood Forest on 18th and 17 at Colt Crag on 30th and 13 at Wark on 22nd (TFa/JFa/STE/MR/PRM). One to nine were seen at 13 other sites.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Around 100 were noted at East Chevington burn mouth on 14th (DM/PJA). 80 were counted at Derwent Reservoir on 8th (IFo). 60+ noted at Cresswell Pond on 4th (MSH). A good sight must have been the minimum of 52 at garden feeders in Cramlington on 13th (STH). 50 were at Buston Links on 3rd (STH). A total of 41 were trapped and ringed at Bamburgh during the month. One to 36 counted at a further 14 locations.

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

About 50 were at Cragside with Redpolls on 7th (TRD/JD). 48 were counted flying S. at Newbiggin in two hours on the morning of 9th (GB). At Cambois, 33 flew S on 7th, with 28 also S on 14th (STH). 25 were at Marden quarry on 14th (KWY). 26 flew S at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 21st, 22 on 7th (RS). 20 flew S at Budle Bay on 10th, with 20 also at Linden Hall on 8th and 20 arriving from E at East Chevington on 14th (MJC/NFO/DM/PJA). One to ten noted at 11 further sites.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

At Berwick 33 were counted at Low Cocklaw on 25th and 22 at West Ord on 28th and 18 at Ord Moor on 17th. Also in the north, 14 seen at Hornccliffe on 28th (TBr/MHu). 13 were at Crooked Oak on 16th, 12 at Howick on 29th, 11 seen at Close House on 25th and flying SW at East Chevington on 4th (IFo). One to seven at a further seven sites, including a bird on Holy Island from 10th to 14th.

Little Bunting *Emberiza pusilla*

A first-winter bird arrived at Beal on 14th (MJC).

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

19 in dunes and feeding on shoreline seeds, were counted at Snook (Holy Island) on 21st (ASJ). 11 were here on 11th. 18 counted at Beal Point on 14th and 15+ at Budle Point on 2nd (MJC/CGK/GPK). 11 were at St. Mary's on 11th with six plus there on 1st (ASJ/MSH). Ten counted across Holy Island on 16th (MJC/ADM). Eight were ringed at Bamburgh during the month. Seven seen at East Chevington burn mouth on 14th (DM/PJA). Six at Brier Dene Farm on 26th and five at Crooked Oak on 16th (MNC/IFo). Singles were seen at Derwent Reservoir on 15th and at Woodhorn and two Cramlington sites during the month.

Lapland Bunting *Calcarius lapponicus*

One was seen and heard at Beal on 4th, 20th and 30th (TRD/JD/MJC). A single was also at Snook (Holy Island) on 7th and 11th and over Holy Island village on 12th and 28th (MJC/ADM).

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Two parties of seven and five flew in off the sea at Seaton Sluice on 26th (SSWT). At the favoured Holy Island, four flew E. at Snook on 7th, three were seen on the island on 16th and two on 11th and 14th. A typical confiding bird, well photographed, was present on Crooked Lonnen from 3rd to 15th. Another single seen in flight over the island's north dunes on 25th. Elsewhere, one flew W at Beal on 11th, one was at Spanish Battery (Tynemouth) on 15th and flying in off the sea here on 27th, with one at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 26th and 29th. (MJC/ADM/ASJ/CB/DRW/CDW *et al.*).



A confiding Snow Bunting

Holy Island

14th October

Jonathan Farooqi

ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN**Escapes**

No sightings

Hybrids

No sightings

Birds of Unknown Origin

No sightings

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

R.Ahmed, A.Allen, A.H.Banks, C.D.Barlow, S.R.Barrett, R.B. & M. Bentley (RB / MB), T.Blake, J.S.Booth, G.Bowman, C.Bradshaw, T.Brewis, J.Bucknall (JBu), M.J.Carr, B.Chambers (BCh), M.N.Coates, M.J.Cook (MJCo), E.Crabtree, A.Curry, T.Daley, T.R. & J.Dean, I.R.Douglas, S.T.Elliott, T. & J.Farooqi (TF / JFa), P.C.Fletcher, D.F.Forshaw, I.Forsyth (IFo), P.Gilbert, A.Hall, C.D.Hampton, P.H.Hanmer (PHa), P.M. & R.M. Harrison (PMHa / RMHa), A.S.Hart, C.Hartley, M.Henry, A.J.Hewitt, M.S.Hodgson, S.T.Holliday, M.Hutcheson (MHu), A.S.Jack, A.Janes, I.Johnson, I.Kerr, M.Kirby (MKi), C.G.Knox, G.P.Knox, D.Lovatt (DLo), P.R.Massey, L.J.McDougall, D.Mckeown, A.D.Mclevy, M.McNeely (MMcN), A.D.Mould, P.Munro, C.Murray (CMu), M.Natrass, A.J.Newson, N.F.Osborne, M.Potts, J.Richardson, M.Richardson, S.Rippon, J.A.Roper, C.Saunders, M.R.Smith, B.Steel, R.Stevens, C.Strawbridge, P.A.Tapsell, A.L.Todd, D.R.Watson, T.Watson, V.Watson (VWa), C.Wright, K.W.York, S.Younger.

Alnwick & District Natural History Society (R Poyer), Bamburgh Ringing Station, North Northumberland Bird Club, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

Apologies for any accidental omissions

BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION

This bulletin was compiled by Graeme Bowman (Geese to Mergansers), Steve Laing (Red Grouse to Cormorant), Trevor Blake (Hawks to Falcons), Tom Brewis (Oystercatcher to Godwit), Clive Hampton (Turnstone to Redshank), Eddie Crabtree (Kittiwake to Puffin), Tim Dean (Escapes, Hybrids and Unknown Origin, List of Contributors, Highlights), Peter Fletcher (Doves to Larks), Mike Richardson (Tits to Stonechat), Alan Jack (Dipper to Buntings).

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 records for the month to ntbc.records@googlemail.com

Please email for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and grid references: Please use of standard location names and 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

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 online resource for anyone interested in birds. There are:

Photo Galleries – Here you can view hundreds of photos of birds from Northumberland, Newcastle and North Tyneside. Members are encouraged to contribute their own photos. Simply send them to galleries@ntbc.org.uk

Sightings – Here you can view reports of birds recently reported in the County. Anyone who would like to contribute and post sightings to this page, please email sightings@ntbc.org.uk Please note this section is moderated, so there may be a short delay before your record appears.

There are also County Checklists, Records Committee updates, Information on important Surveys, useful articles and reports on Bird ID and Overseas Birding Trips....and much more...

Please submit any other new content for the website to the main club email address at ntbcorg@gmail.com

New content such as Birding Trip Reports etc., is always welcome and very much appreciated.

To find out more please visit www.ntbc.org.uk

BIRDS IN NORTHUMBRIA

Brand New!

Andy Mould and his team have produced another splendid BIN.

- Revised county map and extensive selection of photographs and illustrations
- Pacific Diver – First for Northumberland
- Hen Harriers at a historical roost in Northumberland
- The colonisation of Ring-necked Parakeets in Newcastle upon Tyne and Northumberland
- Barn Owls – An update on an out-of-control hobby; the 2017 season
- Tawny Owl and Barn Owl pellet analysis at Haughton Strother GP.

Plus the full classified list of all 272 species recorded in the county, Ringing Report, WeBS data and lots more.

The book will be issued at the 13th December indoor meeting. To ensure you get your free copy for Christmas and avoid postal delays why not pick up your copy. Why not take and deliver a few copies as well.



A Tynemouth Robin by Colin Bradshaw

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2018 No 11

MONTHLY SUMMARY NOVEMBER 2018

5th January 2019



CONTENTS

BIN 2017 published

Ornithological reports – a new book published

Borders Bird Report published

CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Bewick's Swan	Two adults were present for most of month at Warkworth or East Chevington.
American Wigeon	The returning drake to Grindon Lough was found again on 9th and 12th.
Black Scoter	Returning drake at Cocklawburn / Cheswick was seen all month.
Smew	A redhead was off Newbiggin on 18th and at East Chevington and Killingworth lake.
Great Northern Diver	Exceptional views of first-winter at Druridge Bay CP from 13th to 16th.
White-billed Diver	Another sighting in exceptional year with one at Ross Back Sands on 10th.
Red-necked Grebe	Many sightings with the close bird at Amble Marina seen through to 5th.
Great White Egret	Late sightings at Berwick on 5th and at East Chevington on 23rd.
Marsh Harrier	Late bird at Bamburgh on 17th.
Grey Phalarope	One at Howdon wetland from 14th to 17th.
Little Auk	Singles at Alnmouth and Bamburgh late in month.
Black Guillemot	One offshore at Cheswick from 10th to 18th.
Hooded Crow	One at Linton on 16th.
Bearded Tit	Single at Holy Island on 4th.
Shorelark	Four were regularly seen at Buston Links from 17th.
Siberian Chiffchaff	Wintering bird at Tynemouth on 4th and 5th.
Firecrest	Wintering bird again at Northumberland Park, North Shields from 13th.
Redstart	Late bird at Buston Links on 19th.
Wheatear	Late bird at Longhoughton Steel on 5th.
Water Pipit	Several sightings at various sites.
Hawfinch	Single at Hexham on 6th and at Wallington on 25th.

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 are;

10th January

Tom Cadwallender will tell us all about **The Birds of Sri Lanka** in his impeccable style



A Bewick's Swan at Warkworth Weir on 7th November by Chris Barlow

FIELD TRIPS

Contact Steve Anderson seaswan@btinternet.com

CLASSIFIED LIST**Brent Goose** *Branta bernicla*

Records of pale-bellied *hrota* race birds involved 2,400 at Fenham Flats on 11th (per NNBC) and one at Warkworth on 21st (AJ).

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Peak counts were 400 at Widdrington on 20th (AJR), 332 at Grindon Lough on 9th (PRM), 332 at Warkworth on 17th (MKi), 262 at Capheaton Lake on 16th (BS), 204 at West Minsteracres (IFo) and 150-160 at Big Waters (GB) and Widdrington Moor Lake (IFo). Counts of 50-80 came from Alnmouth, Colt Crag and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, East Chevington and High Hauxley, while ten to 38 were at Killingworth and QEII CP Lakes, Newcastle Leazes Park and Plenmeller Common.



A Canada Goose on Killingworth Lake by Jack Bucknall on 24th November

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

1,400 were at Harper's Heugh near Budle Bay on 24th and 1,500 on 30th (DF), and at nearby Ross-Elwick, about 850 were noted on 5th and about 1,300 on 10th (DF), while 65-90 were at Goswick on 5th and 13th (DF). Six were at Bothal Pond on 6th (IRD) and singles at East Chevington, QEII CP Lake and Tynemouth.

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

30 flew S at Cramlington on 11th (DM), 700 were at Derwent Reservoir on 15th (IFo), 400 at Big Waters on 4th (GB), 350 at Caistron on 8th (JD), 300 at Harper's Heugh (near Budle Bay) on 24th (DF), 100-131 at Warkworth weir (CDB) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs (MR), and 76 at Linton Ponds. Two were at Castle Island and Grindon Lough.

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

A total of 1,320 flew NW and 980 SE at Low Cocklaw during the month (TBr) when 1,197 flew S at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). Southerly movement also involved 250-500 at East Chevington and Ellington on 13th, 350-590 at Beal, East Ord and Ellington on 15th, and 300 at Berwick on 16th, and 500-600 at Ellington and Sandy Bay on 24th. Groups of 100-160 flew S at East Ord, Killingworth Lake, Monkseaton and Tynemouth on various dates.

4,500 were at Cresswell Pond on 29th (TB), 2,000 were at Doddington on 4th (per NNBC), 2,000 at Holywell Dene on 12th (MNC), 1,000 at Widdrington on 20th (AJR), 700 at Earsdon on 24th (GPK), 200-310 at Backworth, Cocklawburn, Ellington and Smeafield, and 100-171 at Cheswick, East Chevington and New Moor (Ashington). Smaller groups of 20-45 were at Beal Point, Doddington, Glororum, Harper's Heugh and Linton Ponds. One was again with Canada Geese at Killingworth Lake all month.



A Pink-footed Goose on Killingworth Lake by Jack Bucknall on 24th November

White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*

Eurasian *albifrons* race birds involved 13 (three adults) at Alnmouth on 18th (PRM), and five at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 23rd (SR). Records of Greenland *flavirostris* race birds involved singles at Druridge (ASJ) and Hemscot Hill (TF/JFa) on 4th, and Widdrington Moor Lake on 15th (NFO).

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

74 were on the River Tyne at Howdon on 25th (CB), 59 at QEII CP Lake on 11th (CDH), 58 at Killingworth Lake on 11th (LJM), 52 at Cheswick on 27th (MHu), and ten to 24 at Beal Point, Big Waters, Bothal Pond and Whiteadder Point, Berwick.



A Mute Swan at Warkworth Weir on 7th November by Chris Barlow

Bewick's Swan *Cygnus columbianus*

Four were at Branton GP on 4th (IBDa/KDa). Two adults were at Warkworth weir on several dates between 2nd-24th (CDB/IRD/TF/JFa *et al.*). Probably the same two individuals were at East Chevington on 4th (ASJ), 13th (TB) and 18th (TF/JFa/PRM).



The popular and photogenic Bewick's Swans at Warkworth weir on 4th November by Jonathan Farooqi

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

A total of 35 (22 and 13) flew S at Ellington on 25th (TB), 14 flew S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT) and 12 S at Newbiggin on 16th (BS/SJL). Peak counts (and possibly involving some overlap) were 103 at East Chevington on 18th (TF/JFa) and 93 at Warkworth weir on 17th (CDB). Up to 21 juveniles were at the latter site (MKi). 'Herds' of 26 were at Cresswell Pond on 29th (TB) and Shoreswood on 18th (JR), and ten to 13 at Beanley, Bothal Pond and Hartburn Reservoir. Five to eight were also at Budle Bay, Buston Links, Greenlee Lough, Longhoughton Quarry and Shield on the Wall, and one to four at Big Waters, Caistron, Capheaton Lake, Grindon Lough, Holywell Pond and Otterburn. One was found dead on the shore below the 'Vicar's garden', Holy Island on 18th (MJC/ADM).



Chris Barlow completes a hat trick of Swans flying at Warkworth weir
This is a Whooper on 7th November

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

A total of six flew N and three S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), and 172 were at Budle Bay on 13th (DF).

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

A pair was at Colt Crag Reservoir on 30th (MR). A drake at Airy Holm Reservoir on 15th was a 'first' for the site (IFo). One was at Branton GP on 4th (IBDa/KDa).

Shoveler *Spatula clypeata*

Five flew N and three S at Seaton Sluice between 6th-19th (SSWT), seven moved S off Holy Island on 29th (ADM), and three N at Stag Rocks on 17th (PRM). Budle Bay held a healthy 42 on 10th and 16th (DF), while 19 were at Gosforth Park NR on 13th (AJR), 13 at Holy Island Lough on 19th (ADM), 12 at Big Waters on 11th (GB), and six to seven at Arcot and Linton Ponds. Threes were at East Chevington and Monks' House Pool, and one to two at Colt Crag Reservoir, Killingworth Lake, Longhoughton Quarry and Tynemouth.

Gadwall *Mareca strepera*

Peak counts were 48 at Big Waters on 11th (GB), 44 at Caistron on 8th (JD), 30 at Linton Ponds on 11th (CDH), about 25 at East Chevington on 18th (PRM), and 11-16 at Arcot Pond, and Capheaton and Killingworth Lakes. Three to five were at Holy Island Lough and Howdon, and one to two at Colt Crag and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, and Ladyburn Lake. More unusual were ten at Crag-side (Nelly's Moss Lake) on 21st (possibly a 'first' for the site; TRD/JD), a pair on a pond at Linden Hall golf course (NFO), and one at Cocklawburn Pond (MHu).

A Gadwall

Killingworth Pond

2nd November

Alan Jack

**Wigeon** *Mareca penelope*

The monthly at Seaton Sluice was 482 and 11 S, including 203 N on 17th and 217 N on 19th (SSWT), and 40 flew N at Stag Rocks on 17th (PRM). Peak site counts involved 420 at Cresswell Pond on 20th (AJR), 349 at Capheaton Lake on 16th (BS), 318 at Derwent Reservoir on 15th (IFo), 230 at the Coquet Estuary (ANHS), 230 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs (SR), and 103-191 at Alnmouth, Colt Crag Reservoir, Grindon Lough, Holy Island and Warkworth weir. Groups of 16-44 were also at Bothal Pond*, Boulmer, Cambois and Shield on the Wall. More unusual were up to six at Linden Hall golf course ponds (NFO) and three at Crag-side (TRD/JD).

* small band now accustomed to fishing activities (TD).

American Wigeon *Mareca americana*

A drake found at Grindon Lough on 9th (PRM) was noted there again on 12th (BS).

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Eight flew N and one S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). The largest concentrations were 266 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 11th (MR), 188 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 5th (MR), 180 at Merryshields CP (Stocksfield) on 18th (DLe), 143 at Derwent Reservoir on 21st (IFo), 116-136 at Budle Bay, Grindon Lough and the Tweed Estuary, and 50-99 at Bothal Pond, Newcastle Leazes Park, QEII CP Lake and Warkworth weir. Counts of 20-47 were at Airy Holm Reservoir, Castle Island, Chirton Dene Park, Killingworth and Ladyburn Lakes, Lynemouth, Monks' House Pool, Newcastle Exhibition Park, Northumberland Park (North Shields) and Whiteadder Point (Berwick).

Pintail *Anas acuta*

Five were at Budle Bay on 9th (DF), five at Colt Crag Reservoir on 20th (MR), and up to three at East Chevington between 2nd-23rd (IRD/NFO et al.). Singles were also at Cresswell Pond, Holy Island Lough and Tynemouth.

Teal *Anas crecca*

At Seaton Sluice, 176 flew N and 22 S, including 92 N on 17th and 73 N on 19th (SSWT), and 24 flew N at Stag Rocks on 17th (PRM). An influx at Derwent Reservoir saw numbers rise from 244 on 23rd to 511 by 27th (IFo), 405 were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 30th (SR), 318 at Budle Bay on 16th (SR), 306 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 12th (MR), 210-290 at East Chevington, Holywell Pond and Howdon, and 120-180 at Beal, Grindon Lough and Holy Island 'rocket fields'. Counts of 51-93 came from Alnmouth, Arcot and Bothal Ponds, Big Waters, Capheaton Lake, Castle Island and Spindleston, while 15-46 were at Berwick, Cheswick Sands, Greenlee Lough, Monks' House Pool, Plenmeller Common and Sleek Burn and West Ord.

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

29 were at Greenlee Lough on 15th (MRS), 12 at Killingworth Lake on 30th (MSH), seven at Big Waters on 11th (GB), seven at Swallow Pond on 27th (GPK) and three at Widdrington Moor Lake. One to two were also at East Chevington and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. More unusual was a duck on the sea at Cambois sewer outfall on 17th (STH).

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Six flew N at Seaton Sluice on 19th (SSWT). Greenlee Lough held 154 on 15th (MRS). Other peak counts were 77 at Killingworth Lake on 26th (AIB), 50+ at East Chevington on 18th (PRM), 43 at Capheaton Lake on 16th (BS), 22-26 at QEII CP Lake and Swallow Pond, and ten to 17 at Bothal and Linton Ponds, Castle Island and Ladyburn Lake. Five to eight were also at Derwent Reservoir, Howdon, Newcastle Exhibition Park and Northumberland Park (North Shields).

Scaup *Aythya marila*

Two were at Cresswell Pond between 1st-17th (MSH/ADM et al.), two were off St Cuthbert's Island, Holy Island on 18th (MJC/ADM), and singles were at Castle Island on 11th (DM/PJA) and East Chevington north pool on 24th (ADM).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

A total of 326 flew N and 122 S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). Peak counts were 503 at Holy Island (including 373 offshore from the castle) on 18th (MJC/ADM), 350 off Ross Back Sands on 10th (MJC), and 35-52 at the Blyth Estuary, North Blyth, Seaton Sluice and Stag Rocks. Counts of 15-18 came from Chevington burn mouth, Meadow Haven (Berwick) and the Tweed Estuary, and seven were at Warkworth weir.

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

At Seaton Sluice, 18 flew N and three S during the month, and one was offshore on 17th (SSWT). One flew N at Hadston Carrs on 20th (MH/AA) and one S at St Mary's on 21st (JBu). Two were off Spital Point, Newbiggin on 16th (SJL), and singles at Holy Island on 18th and 25th (MJC/ADM) and Tynemouth (CB).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

The monthly Seaton Sluice total was 1,296 N and 366 S (SSWT) and 30 flew N at Stag Rocks on 17th (DF). Offshore, 160 were at Seaton Sluice on 2nd (SSWT), 159 at Spital Point, Newbiggin on 17th (GB/LAR), 150 at North Blyth on 17th and 30th (STH), 140 at Holy Island on 25th (ADM), and 45-80 at Cambois, Ross Back Sands and Tynemouth. Ten to 20 were also at Birling Carrs, off East Chevington and Whitley Bay, and two to six at Cheswick, Cocklawburn, Meadow Haven (Berwick) and Stag Rocks. An interesting inland record concerned a drake at the west end of Grindon Lough on 29th (PRM).

Black Scoter *Melanitta americana*

A drake was at Cheswick Sands on 5th (ADM) and 10th-11th (TF/JFa/CH) and at nearby Cocklawburn on 7th (TBr/MMcN) and 24th (MSH).



The Cheswick Sands Black Scoter
Jonathan Farooqi
104th November

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

Five flew N and three S at Seaton Sluice during the month, and one was offshore there on 2nd (SSWT), 51 were off Ross Back Sands on 10th (MJC) and 42 (including 36 off St Cuthbert's Island) at Holy Island on 18th (MJC/ADM). Singles were at Buston Links, Cheswick Sands, East Chevington, Stag Rocks, the Tweed Estuary and Tynemouth.

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

A poor total of 21 flew N and 14 S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). Peak counts involved 52 at the Tweed Estuary on 6th (TBr/MMcN), 30 at Bolam Lake on 25th (PG), 29 at East Chevington on 18th (PRM), 21-26 at Capheaton Lake, Castle Island, Grindon Lough and New Water Haugh (River Tweed), and ten to 16 at Cambois, Cresswell Pond, Holy Island and Killingworth Lake. Six to eight were at Beal, Castron, and Colt Crag and Derwent Reservoirs, and one to four at Ashington (River Wansbeck), Cragside, Greenlee Lough, Ladyburn and QEII CP Lakes, Stag Rocks, Tynemouth, Warkworth weir and West Ord.

Smew *Mergellus albellus*

On 18th, a 'redhead', with three Goldeneyes, was seen leaving a feeding flock of Common Scoters and flying N at Newbiggin Beacon Point on 18th (ADMc). What was quite possibly the same individual was found a short while later at East Chevington north pool (IRD/TF/JFa/PRM). A 'redhead' was also at Killingworth Lake on 21st (TB/JBu/GPK).



Two ducks from Killingworth Lake
Above a redhead Smew with a Goldeneye on 24th November by Jack Bucknall
and below a drake Goosander by Alan Jack on 26th November



Goosander *Mergus merganser*

A total of 14 flew N and three S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), 27 were at Branton GP on 25th (MJC), ten at Whiteadder Point, Berwick on 11th (TBr), six at Newcastle Exhibition Park on 23rd (GB), and three to four at Airy Holm Reservoir, Greenlee Lough, Killingworth Lake and Stag Rocks. One to two were also at Alwinton, Buston Links, Castle Island, Cheswick Sands, Cresswell, Derwent Reservoir, Howick (one on bog garden pond), Jesmond Dene, Netherton, Newcastle Leazes Park, Redesmouth, Shaftoe Crags (over), Thropton, Warkworth weir and Widdrington Moor Lake.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Only one flew N at Seaton Sluice in a poor month for coastal movement (SSWT). 31 were at Holy Island on 4th (MJC), 18 off Ross Back Sands on 10th (MJC), and five to eight at Beal, the Blyth Estuary, Boulmer, Cambois sewer outfall and East Chevington north pool. Three to four were also at Cresswell Pond, Stag Rocks and the Wansbeck Estuary, and one to two at Berwick Little Beach, Cheswick Sands, the Coquet Estuary-Warkworth weir and Widdrington Moor Lake.

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

A big count of 38 was made at Chibburn Dunes/Druridge Coal road on 11th (DM). 16 were consuming grit on a road at Plenmeller on 9th (MH/AA), a covey of ten were at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) throughout the month (RS), five were at Berwick Hill on 15th, four were at Addycombe Moor (Rothbury) and a single was near Sundaysight (Otterburn).

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

A visit to Otterburn MOD range on 4th produced sightings of 11 at Toft House Farm and five at Cottonshope Head (JR), the only other report being a single at Big Waters NWT on 2nd.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Totals of 18 came from both Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 2nd (MR) and Boulmer on 10th (BS). 14 were at Spital (Newbiggin) on 17th (GB/LAR), 12 were at Ellington on 21st and 11 were at Beal 16th. One to six were at Beaconhill (Cramlington), East Chevington and Murton Craggs.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

14 were heard during a visit to Hulne Park (Alnwick) on 5th (LJM/DM), two were Arcot Lane and Newbiggin Water Treatment area and singles were at Castle Island, Linton Ponds, QE11 CP Lake and Woodhorn.

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

Passage was well underway this month with 60 hours of watching producing a monthly total of 384 (89N, 295S) at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). 29S and two N were recorded past Tynemouth in just under two hours during the morning of 24th (DRW) and one to three were observed past several other coastal points. Non-passage counts included 21 at Ross Back Sands on 10th (MJC), 16 at Holy Island on 4th, 13 at Cheswick Sands, 12 at Cocklawburn and one to eight at Alnmouth Bay, Birling Carrs, Buston Links, Cambois sewer outfall, Chibburn Mouth (Druridge Bay), Cullernose Point, East Chevington, Meadow Haven, Newton Point, North Blyth, Rockcliffe, Spital Bay (Newbiggin), Spittal Bay (Berwick), Stag Rocks and Tynemouth.

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*

Three (one N, two S) was the monthly total past Seaton Sluice (SSWT), two were at Cheswick Sands on 11th (CH) and singles were at Alnmouth Bay, Newton Point and Stag Rocks.

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

Numbers were reported as low at Seaton Sluice with only two N and one S being the monthly passage total (SSWT) however an observer at Berwick was more fortunate with three singles S during a one hour seawatch at Spittal Bay on 20th (MHu). Two were at Stag Rocks on 17th and a well-watched juvenile, possible with a small oil stain on its underparts, was present at Ladyburn Lake (Druridge Bay CP) from 13th to 16th. One was offshore at Holy Island Castle on 18th and 19th and, sadly, a single present at QE11 CP Lake from 24th-26th showed a trailing fishing line in flight and was subsequently reported to have died.



The Druridge Bay CP Great Northern Diver stretches. Duncan Watson. 23rd November

White-billed Diver *Gavia adamsii*

An adult flew S past Ross Back Sands on 10th (MJC).

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

The only passage recorded was three N in an hour past Berwick Pier on 21st (MHu). 20 appeared at the regular breeding site of Coves Haven (Holy Island) on 25th (IK) and one was at Cocklawburn on 13th.

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

The only sightings came from Seaton Sluice with singles N on 19th and 25th (SSWT).

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Castle Island peaked at an impressive 28 on 11th (DM) and a total of 17 at Union Bridge (R Tweed) on 2nd was the observer's yearly maximum for this location (CH). Double-figure counts were also made at Hauxley NWT, with 12 there on 24th (GB/LAR), and the Wansbeck estuary with ten behind the weir on 12th (PG). One to eight were at Big Waters NWT, Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Boulmer (on the sea), Caistron, Colt Crag Reservoir, Coquet estuary, Cresswell Pond NWT, Druridge Bay CP, East Chevington, Killingworth Lake, Lesbury, Monk's House Pool, Swallow Pond and Warkworth Weir.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

A single, likely the bird from last month, was well-reported being present from 1st-6th on the River Coquet at Warkworth Weir-Amble (STH/TF/JFa/CDB *et al.*). It or other singles were later seen at Cresswell Pond on 21st (AJ) and then a first winter bird showing tracings of juvenile markings provided "tremendous" views in a ditch near the parking area at Buston Links (Alnmouth) on 24th (GB/TF/JFa/CDB/NNBC).



The Alnmouth Red-necked Grebe catches a flattie for lunch. Graeme Bowman on 24th November

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Five at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 2nd and 11th was the largest concentration reported (SR/MR). The only other sightings were two at Buston Links (Alnmouth) on 1st and a single present at Killingworth Lake all month.

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

Seven were at Ross Back Sands on 10th (MJC), two at St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) on 12th were the observer's first of the winter at this favoured haunt (IK) and singles were at Seaton Sluice and Stag Rocks.

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

One was at Gosforth Park on 3rd (TF) and a single was seen at East Chevington North Pool on 15th (ADMc).

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

A total of 14 were at North Blyth Staithes on 17th (STH), ten were at Howdon on 5th (CB) and Seaton Sluice Watch Tower recorded random coastal movements of four N and five S throughout the month (SSWT). Eight were roosting in an arable field with waders at Boulmer on 24th (AN/LB) and one to seven were at Benton, Castle Island, Derwent Reservoir, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Greenlee Lough, Howick, Linton Ponds, Monk's House Pool, Northumberlandia (Cramlington), QE11 CP Lake, Stag Rocks, Wansbeck Business Park, Wansbeck estuary, and Whittle Dene Reservoirs

Great White Egret *Ardea alba*

An immature bird was at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 5th (TBr). Possibly the same bird was spotted flying over Chevington North Pool on 23rd - two days short of the latest ever county record at Branton GP in 2010 (TRD/JD).

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Lindisfarne NNR was a favoured location with six at Beal on 16th being the highest count (MJC) following four at Fenham-le-Moor on 6th (MH/AA). One to three were at Backworth, the Blyth estuary, Boghouses (Cramlington), Budle Bay, Caistron, Castle Island, Gosforth Park, Lesbury, North Seaton, Prestwick Carr, Wansbeck estuary, Warkworth Gut and Warkworth Weir.

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

Only low numbers recorded with a monthly total of 210 (150N, 60S) past Seaton Sluice (SSWT) and 18S at Stag Rocks being the only numbers of note. One to eight were reported from a few other localities.

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Seaton Sluice reported a monthly total of 90 (five N, 85S) with an obvious movement of 61S on 24th (SSWT). 24 were also observed flying S past Tynemouth between 0800-0950 on 24th (DRW). A minimum of 40 birds were at Stag Rocks on 17th (PRM), at least 20 were at Cocklawburn Beach on 24th and two were at Calot Shad (Tweed estuary) on 28th.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

21 were at Cocklawburn on 7th (MHu) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs peaked at 20 on 20th (TBr/MMcN). One to ten were at several other usual localities including an individual of the continental *sinensis* subspecies at Cresswell Pond NWT

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Two birds were at Arcot Pond on 11th (DM) and two were seen at Holy Island on 16th (MJC). Single birds were recorded at 20 sites including a bird being mobbed and chased by a juvenile Merlin *Falco columbarius* at the Straight Lonnen (Holy Island) on 25th (IK).



A Sparrowhawk in Tynemouth
Colin Bradshaw on 18th November

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

On 2nd an adult bird soared in the sunshine for two minutes at Harwood Forest (MH) and a bird was seen near Kirkwhelpington on 27th (MH).

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

A late sighting on 17th involving a male which flew W overhead at 08:15h at Glororum (Bamburgh) (PRM).

Red Kite *Milvus Milvus*

Two birds were Derwent Reservoir on 16th (IFo) and a bird was noted quartering a pasture field at Riding Mill on 4th (DLe) and others were at Carterway Heads on 19th (IFo) and at Ford on 30th (NNBC).

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Four birds were at Chatton on 5th (DM/LJM) and three were at Whiteadder Point (Berwick) on 11th (TBr). Two were noted at Gosforth Park NR and Ellington on 2nd (AJ/TB), West Hartford on 15th (TB) and at Northumberlandia (Cramlington) on 19th (LJM). Single birds were seen at 20 sites including bird hunting along the shore at Spittal Cliffs (Berwick) on 2nd (MHu).

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Six birds were at East Chevington North Pool on 18th (DM) and three were at The Lough (Holy Island) on 18th (MJC/ADM). Two birds were heard or seen at Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, and Holy Island and at Swallow Pond (Wallsend) and singles at Arcot Pond, Backworth, Big Waters NWT, Boulmer, Cambois, East Chevington, Lynemouth, Prestwick Carr and Woodhorn Flash.

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

24 birds were at Castle Island on 11th (DM), 20 were at QEII CP on 26th (LJM), 17 were at Wallington Hall on 24th (MH) and 15 were noted at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 14th and 11 were at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 29th (DM). Druridge Bay CP had eight birds present on 5th (DM) and five were at The Wansbeck Business Park (Ashington) on 11th (DM). Two were at Warkworth weir on 18th (PRM) and a single was seen in the Wansbeck Estuary on 11th (DM).

Coot *Fulica atra*

The highest count this month came again from Killingworth Lake with 105 on 11th (LJM), dropping down to 90 on 26th (AIB per GB). 38 were at Linton Ponds on 11 and 34 at Big Waters NWT also on 11th (GB). Grindon Lough peaked at 28+ birds on 29th (PRM/MRS). 15 were at QEII CP 11th (CDH), 12 were at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 29th (DM) and ten at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 14th (DM). One to five were at Bothal Pond, Cocklawburn Pond and at Druridge Bay CP.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

A count of 188 was made on Holy Island on 4th (MJC) and 98-109 were seen at Alnmouth, Buston Links between 23rd and 26th (MH, MKi). A roost of 88 was noted near Berwick Coastguard Station on 19th (MHu), 86 were at Budle Bay on 13th (DF) and 75 were in the Blyth estuary on 6th (LJM). A count of 50 or more was made at Bamburgh, Stag Rocks on 17th (PRM) and counts of 10-42 were made at Alnmouth, Berwick (West Ord) and Rockcliffe on various dates.



An Oystercatcher at Killingworth Lake by Jack Bucknall

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

By far the largest count made so far this year came from East Chevington on 23rd when ca. 2000 birds were present on the islands in the North Pool (TRD/JD). Another impressive count of 1730 was made at Budle Bay on 26th (DF). In an arable field at Boulmer a count of 730 was made on 24th (AB/LB), a monthly total of 555 S was made at Seaton Sluice (SSWT) and, inland, 550 were at Derwent Reservoir on 24th (IFo). On 13th, 500 were at Widdrington Moor Lake (TB), 380-420 were at Druridge on 20th (AJR), 360 were at Holywell Pond on 10th (ASJ), 350 were in the Tweed estuary on 6th (TBr/MMcN) and the same number was seen at Cresswell Pond on 26th (IRD). A count of 260 came from Caistron on 8th (JD), 230-240 were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs between 11th and 20th (SR, MR), 205 were at Monks' House Pool on 5th (DF) and 200 were at Grindon Lough on 15th (MRS). Smaller counts came from Alnmouth, Arcot Pond, Big Waters NWT, Blyth estuary, Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Cheswick Sands, Cocklawburn, Coquet estuary, Howdon, Plenmeller Common, West Hartford and Widdrington Lane.

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

An estimated 2400-2600 birds were seen at East Chevington on different dates (NFO, EC/JSB, JD/TRD). This is possibly a record count for this site. An estimate of 2000 was made at Budle Bay on 26th (DF), 1200 were at Newton-by-the-Sea on 13th (JAR), 750 were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 13th (TB) and 500 were at Druridge Pools on 2nd (IRD). Between 1st and 11th counts of 400 came from Alnmouth (Buston Links), Cocklawburn and Newbiggin (Beacon Point), STH, DF. Counts of 100-380+ came from Backworth, Netherton, Newcastle Town Moor and Widdrington Lane, while smaller counts came from 1 km north of Amble, Colt Crag Reservoir, Grindon Lough, Otterburn (Tarret Burn-Padon Hill), Plenmeller Common, West Hartford, Whittle Dene Reservoirs and Widdrington village.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

A minimum of 90 were at Fenham-le-Moor on 13th (DF). On 24th 57 were at Boulmer, Seaton Point (AB/LB), 55 were seen flying S at Ross Back Sands on 10th (MJC) and 39 were at Alnmouth, Buston Links on 23rd (MKi). Budle Bay reported a count of 30 on 9th (DF), while counts of one or two came from Newbiggin (Beacon Point), Berwick Coast Watch and Beal Point.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Reports were limited to four sites. The largest count of 57 was from a high tide roost at North Blyth on 30th (STH) with 41 in the Blyth estuary on 6th (LJM), 28 at Alnmouth, Buston Links on 20th (MH/AA) and 15 on the beach at East Chevington (Chibburn Mouth) on 9th (EC/JSB).

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

On 24th there were 215 at Boulmer (AB/LB) and at Druridge there were 130-170 on 20th (AJR). Counts of 72 came from Alnmouth (PRM), Caistron (JD) and High Hauxley (MSH) on 18th, 8th and 27th, respectively. A count of 60 was made near Amble on 17th (MKi) with the same number noted at Lesbury on 25th (MKi). 55 birds were seen foraging on sheep grazed pasture and stubble fields south of Hipsburn on 20th (MKi). It seems probable, given their proximity, that there might have been duplicate counts in the reports from Alnmouth, Lesbury and Hipsburn. Cocklawburn had a count of 52 on 15th (MHu), 30 were seen at Cresswell, Drift Café on 21st (TB) and 26 were reported from Berwick Coast Watch on 19th (MHu). Smaller counts came from Berwick (Whiteadder Pt), Big Waters NWT, Monk's House Pool, Warkworth (Birling) and Woodhorn Flashes.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Only three reports were submitted. Ten birds made up a high tide roost on the island at Hauxley NWT on 24th (GB), eight birds were also roosting near Berwick Coast Watch on 19th (MHu) and a single bird was reported from Beal Point on 13th.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

A large number of records came from the Coquet in area around the weir downstream from Warkworth – almost certainly due to birders being attracted by the Red-necked Grebe that resided through much of the month. The highest count was of 53 on 5th (LJM). Budle Bay held 32 birds on 13th (DF), 29 were at Monks' House Pool on 5th (DF) and a single was reported from Holy Island on 4th.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Significant gatherings were confined to the north with the highest report being 97 at Holy Island on 4th (MJC). At Berwick Little Beach, 32 were present on 18th (MHu), 30 were at Stag Rocks the previous day (PRM) and 24 were at Cheswick Sands also on 17th (PRM). One-five were at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) and Cocklawburn.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

Scare this month, with the only reports being five at Cresswell Pond on 20th (AJR), four at East Chevington on 18th (TF/JFa) and two at Buston Links (Alnmouth) on 23rd (MKi).

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

Birds continued to be reported from East Chevington until 9th with a maximum of nine on 4th (TF/JFa/IRD *et al.*) Singles were seen at Widdrington Lane on 10th (MSH) and Bothal Pond on 15th (TB).



Turnstones at North Shields Fish Quay by Jack Bucknall

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

The regular wintering flock at Druridge Bay appeared this month centred on the East Chevington/Chiburn Mouth area, with birds recorded from 18th with the maximum reported being 350 on 23rd (TRD/JD/MH *et al.*). St Mary's Island attracted 144 on 23rd (ASJ) with 49 seen at Holy Island on 4th (MJC), 40 at Newbiggin on 17th (GB), 39 at Ross Back Sands on 10th (MJC), 20-30 at Cocklawburn from 11th-13th (CH/TRD/JD) and 11 at Buston Links (Alnmouth on 18th (PRM).

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

As last month, the highest numbers were reported from Boulmer and Lindisfarne NNR. Counts from Budle Bay were received from 9th-16th with the highest count being 320 on 9th (DF). At Boulmer, 243 were recorded on 29th (BS), 180 were at East Chevington beach on 23rd (TRD/JD), 105 at the River Blyth estuary on 6th (LJM) and ca.100 at Buston links on 23rd (MKi). The River Coquet estuary held 97 on 17th (MKi). The Druridge Bay wetlands attracted birds all month with 15 at East Chevington on 1st increasing to 44 on 13th and decreasing to a single by 18th (NFO/MSH/PRM). The maximum at Cresswell Pond was 37 on 20th (AJR) and 15 were at Druridge Pools on 1st (MSH). One-four were at Cocklawburn, Colt Crag Reservoir, Howdon and St Mary's wetland.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

At Seaton Sluice the monthly total was 11 S with five being seen on the rocks on 1st (SSWT). More reports were received this month with the highest numbers coming from the stronghold of Stag Rocks. Birds were reported all month with the counts varying between 163 on 6th (MH/AA) and 35 on 27th (RB/MB) with 51-100 on other dates (EC/JSB/BRS/PRM). Lesser numbers were present on rocky stretches along the coast with 24 at Berwick North Shore on 20 (BWG), 21 at Boulmer on 26th (BS), 18 at Holy Island on 4th (MJC), 12 at Birling Carrs on 12th (ANHS) and ten at Newbiggin on 17th and 20th (GB/AJR). One-six were at Berwick coastwatch, Buston Links, Cheswick Sands, Cocklawburn, Longhoughton Steel, North Blyth and Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay).

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Immigration continued this month with birds noted in various sites on Holy Island with a maximum of six on 2nd (IK). Birds were seen in the village, Lough, Straight Lonnen, north shore and east shore where two sat together under a boulder clay cliff on 21st (ADM/MJC). Two were seen at Beal on 16th (MJC) and singles arrived 'in off' at Seaton Sluice on 17th and 18th (SSWT). Singles were seen at Botany, Colt Crag Reservoir, Corbridge Common, Fontburn Reservoir, Howdon, Linden Hall, Mickley Square, Newbiggin, Northumberland Park (North Shields), Tynemouth and Whitley Bay. One found stunned in the gardens of the Royal Grammar School (Newcastle) recuperated in a box for a short while before being successfully released into Exhibition Park.

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyrtus minimus*

Two were seen at Big Waters on 11th (GB) and singles were at East Chevington north pool on 2nd (EC/JSB) and 13th (ADMc). Singles were also seen at Beal on 10th (ASJ), Branton GP on 30th (IBDa/KDa), St Mary's wetland on 6th (MSH) and 17th (CB).

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

20 were reported from East Chevington north pool on 2nd and 18th (EC/JSB/PRM), 15 were at St Mary's wetland on 6th (MSH) and 14 on 17th (CB), 13 at Big Waters on 11th (GB), 12 at Backworth on 4th (CGK) and ten at Holy Island Lough on 21st (ADM). One to eight were seen at Arcot Pond, Beal Point, Bothal Pond, Castron, Cresswell Pond, Howdon, Lynemouth, Monk's House Pool and Plenmeller Common.

Grey Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius*

A single bird was present at Howdon from 14th-17th (CB).

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Reports from Whittle Dene Reservoirs involved one or two on dates from 2nd-22nd (MR/SR). One was at a regular haunt on the River Coquet between Rothbury and Thropton on 9th (JD) and another was at Netherton on 12th ((TRD/JD). One at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) was only the second in 14 years for the observer seen on 9th, 13th and 17th including flying over the observer's garden (NFO).

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

The highest concentrations were reported from Howdon with 256 on 10th (CB). Holy Island held 184 on 4th (MJC), 139 were at the River Blyth estuary on 6th (LJM), 120 at Cresswell Pond on 9th (EC/JSB/MKi) and 105 were reported from the WEBS count at the River Coquet estuary on 12th (ANHS). Other gatherings were 79 at the River Tweed estuary on 6th, 72 at Berwick Little Beach on 18th, 50 at Alnmouth on 18th and 40 at Druridge Pools on 1st. One-30 were reported from, 1km north of Amble, Bothal Pond, Buston Links (Alnmouth), Castle Island, Colt Crag Reservoir, Monk's House Pool, River Wansbeck estuary, Rockcliffe and Warkworth weir.



A Redshank at Amble by Chris Barlow on 4th November

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

Birds remaining from the autumn influx included a juvenile at Monk's House Pool on 5th (DF) and singles at South Low (Lindisfarne NNR) on 17th (ASJ) and Budle Bay on 27th (RB/MB).

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

The only reports came from Beal where many have been reported this autumn, with a single seen on 5th and 11th (DF/CH).

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

A significant movement N was apparent on 20th with recorded rates of 1,500/hour at Hadston Carrs, including flocks with up to 50% juveniles (MH/AA), 350/hour at Seaton Sluice (SSWT) and 900/h at Newbiggin (AJR); however, further north at Spital Bay, Berwick a seawatch on 20th included only five passing in one hour (MHu). Apart from 'low numbers' seen on other dates at Seaton Sluice no other sightings were recorded.

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

The largest counts were 322, all but one being adults, at Howdon (CB), 271 in the River Blyth estuary (LJM), 188 at Exhibition Park and 122 at Castle Island (DM). Elsewhere, gatherings of 70-100 were at six other localities, Alnmouth, Berwick, Bothal Pond, Jesmond Dene, QEII CP Lake and the River Tweed estuary.

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

At Seaton Sluice, a total of 95 was recorded, the majority moving S including 40+ feeding offshore and drifting S on 9th and 10th (SSWT). On 15th and 18th up to 20 fed offshore at East Chevington (ADMc/TF/JFa) and one to five were seen elsewhere on dates 6th-20th at Bamburgh, Cambois, Hadston Carrs, the Long Nanny and Whitley Bay.

Mediterranean Gull *Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus*

Numbers declined slightly from last month with counts of 20 and 17 in the Newbiggin area at mid-month (RS/STH). One to three, the majority adults, were also recorded on dates throughout at Budle Bay, Ellington, Lynemouth, Seaton Sluice, Swallow Pond, Tynemouth and Woodhorn South flash.



Two November Gulls by
Tim Dean

Top a Mediterranean at
Newbiggin on 15th
and right a
Common at Druridge
Bay CP on 5th

**Common Gull** *Larus canus*

300 were seen at Fontburn Reservoir (BS), 270 in Budle Bay (DF) and 120 at Berwick, West Ord (MHu). Elsewhere, 60+ were at Amble (MKi) and in the River Tweed estuary (TBr/MMcN) with single-figure counts at four other localities.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

Large numbers of mainly adult birds were recorded moving S daily in mid-month at Seaton Sluice, with a maximum count of 360 S on 22nd (SSWT). At Holywell Pond, 84 were in a nearby field on 20th (LJM), the gull roost at Budle Bay held 60 on 10th (DF) and two counts of 32 and 36 came from the River Tweed estuary (MHu). One to 20 were recorded at Castle Island, Grindon Lough, Killingworth Lake, the QEII CP Lake and Warkworth weir.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

On 6th, 542 were present in the River Tweed estuary (TBr/MMcN) with smaller counts of 65 at Castle Island (DM) and 20-40 at Airy Holm Reservoir (nr. Shotleyfield) and Derwent Reservoir (IFo), Newbiggin, the QEII CP Lake (CDH), Killingworth Lake (GB) and Warkworth weir (CDB). Three to six were at six other sites.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

Apart from ten at Colt Crag Reservoir on 5th (MR) only singles were noted at three other sites, Airy Holm Reservoir, Grindon Lough and Swallow Pond.

Sandwich Tern *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

Five late-staying birds were at Ross Back Sands on 10th (MJC) and a single was seen on Holy Island on 4th (MJC)

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

A very late bird flew S at Newbiggin on 15th (HP).

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

Three records comprised singles at Buston Links on 1st (STH), at Holy Island on 4th (MJC) and at Ross Back Sands on 10th (MJC)

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

Three moved past Seaton Sluice, two N on 20th, one S on 17th (SSWT) and a single was seen at Cheswick Sands on 11th (CH).

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

The only record was of two moving N at Seaton Sluice on 11th (SSWT)

Little Auk *Alle alle*

Singles were recorded at Newton Point on 2nd (NNBC), one exhausted bird reportedly taken into care at Alnmouth on 29th (MKi) and a single close inshore at Stag Rocks on 30th (EC/JSB),

Common Guillemot *Uria aalge*/**Razorbill** *Alca torda*

Low numbers at Seaton Sluice throughout with a maximum day count of 50 N, ten S in three hours on 19th (SSWT).

Common Guillemot *Uria aalge*

At Newbiggin, 55 flew N in 20 minutes on 20th (AJR) and, during one-hour seawatches at Berwick, 52 flew S on 21st and 22 S on 20th (MHu); other counts were 17 at Ross Back Sands on 10th (MJC), eight at Howick on 2nd (MKi) and one to three at four other localities.

Razorbill *Alca torda*

Counts of one to four came from Cambois, Cocklawburn Beach, Howick, Ross Back Sands, St Mary's Island and Stag Rocks on dates throughout.

Black Guillemot *Cephus grylle*

A winter-plumaged individual was recorded on four dates from 5th-18th at Cheswick Sands (ADMc/TF/JFa/TRD/JD/PRM).

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

At least two were at Newbiggin on 20th and a single offshore at East Chevington on 18th.

Rock Dove *Columba livia*

A high count of 73 at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 29th, seven at Stakeford Railway Bridge on 11th, six at Cramlington and North Seaton (DM) and present at Jesmond Dene.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

On 10th 52 were at Howdon with 18 there on 16th (CB), 45 at Crooked Oak (Carterway Heads) on 15th (IFo), 17 at Widdrington Lane on 10th (MSH) and one to three at four other locations.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

Around 2000 were on fields between Alnmouth and Warkworth on 23rd (TRD/JD), 520 at Whiteadder Point (Berwick) on 11th (TBr), 420 at Bullion Hills (West Mickley) on 18th (DLe), 300 at the Butts (Amble) on 13th (MH/AA), 250 leaving roost at Arcot Pond on 5th (LJM) and 200 at Bamburgh on 24th (BRS). Two to 81 were at six other locations.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

At Berwick Hill on 1st 31 perched on wires (AHB) with 11 there on 29th, 23 were roosting in a tree next to the visitor centre at Druridge Bay CP on 5th (DM/LJM), 19 the peak count at Newbiggin (RS), 18 at East Fenton and Low Cocklaw during the month (NNBC/TBr). 15+ were at Spital Bay (Newbiggin) on 8th with 14 there on 17th (PG/GB/LAR) and 12 at West Sleekburn on 11th, ten were at Fenham-le-Moor on 6th and North Seaton on 24th with two to four at two other locations.

Owl sp One (not Barn) was at West Chevington on 1st

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

All reports singles at Longhoughton on 1st, Littlehoughton on 5th, Haughton Strother GP on 12th, Howick on 14th, Holy Island on 25th, Simonburn on 26th and 28th and Shield on the Wall on 28th (JAR/ADM/PRM).

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Calling birds were at Howick on 6th, Hartburn on 18th and Earsdon on 30th with one roosting in the observer's garden at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 16th (JAR/PRM/CGK/TD).

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

One calling at Longdyke (near Shilbottle) on 14th (MKi) was the only report.

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

A road casualty freshly killed at Beal on 17th (ASJ) was the only report.

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Up to four regularly at Holy Island during the month (IK *et al*), two at Widdrington Moor Lake on 13th (MH/AA) and Beal on 16th (MJC). Singles were at the above named and at Bellasis Bridge (Blagdon) on 5th, Cocklawburn on 7th and Woodhorn South Flash on 11th.

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Three were found on webs at Castle Island on 11th (DM/PJA), two at Jesmond Dene on 4th (MJCo) and R.Tyne at Prudhoe on 10th (DLe). Singles were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 15th, Seaton Sluice on 16th, Branton GP on 25th and Boulmer on 26th.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Two were at Spindlestones on 24th (MSH) with singles at Rothley Crossroads on 4th, Armstrong Park on 5th, Cramlington on 6th, Ashington on 18th, North Seaton on 24th, Berwick and Leazes Park on 29th and Newbiggin on 30th. Drumming was heard at Armstrong Park / Jesmond Dene on 11th and 14th.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Two were heard at Letah Wood (Hexham) on 13th (AJH).

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Holy Island had up to five birds present throughout the month (MJC/ADM). Two birds were noted at Newbiggin GC (GB/LAR), Prestwick Carr (MH), West Chevington (ANHS) West Hartford (TB) and Widdrington Moor Lake TB). Single birds were at 26 sites.

A Kestrel hovers over
Tynemouth

9th November

Duncan Watson



Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Two birds flew offshore at Tynemouth at 08:50hrs on 18th (DRW). Single birds were seen at Beal, Budle Bay, Colt Crag Reservoir, Holy Island, and Holywell Pond and at Monk's House Pool

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Two adults were at Boulmer on 10th (BS) and a juv male and a juvenile female were play fighting/grappling over the Excavations (Holy Island) on 25th (ADM) and two x 1st year birds were at Grindon Lough on 29th (PRM). Singles were at Alnmouth, Amble, Beal, Berwick Little Beach, Derwent Reservoir, East Chevington, Harnham, Holy Island, Ross, Seaton Sluice, Stag Rocks (Bamburgh), St Mary's Island, Swallow Pond (Wallsend), Whittle Dene Reservoirs and at Widdrington Moor Lake

Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

Five flew E at 08.15h at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 23rd and E over RGS (Newcastle) on 8th (GB). Three flew over ASDA (Regent Centre, Newcastle) on 1st (CDB) and a first record in the Berwick area of one at Ord House CP on 29th (MHu).

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Six were at Hepburn Woods on 25th (MJC) with two at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 2nd, Widdrington Moor on 10th and Arcot Pond on 11th. Singles were at 14 widespread localities.

Magpie *Pica pica*

On 21st 25 went to roost at Whitelea Chase (Beaconhill, Cramlington) and on 17th 21 came to roost at Northumberlandia (STH/DM). 22 were at Howdon on 14th (CB) ten at Furnace Bridge (Bedlington) on 28th (JR) with one to eight at six other locations.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

A pre roost flock of around 500 at Stamfordham on 13th (EC), 80 at Prestwick Carr on 3rd (PCF), 45 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 12th with one individual showing characteristics of Eastern race *C.m.soemmeringii* with very pale silver-grey nape and pale collar broadening into large white neck patches (MR). 37 were at Furnace Bridge (Bedlington) on 28th and two at Jesmond Dene on 18th.



A Rothbury Jackdaw by Janet Dean on 8th November

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

There was just one report of 22 at Derwent Reservoir on 21st (IFo).

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

40 were in the boatyard area of R Blyth Estuary on 6th (LJM), eight and nine north at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), up to seven at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) (RS), with two to four at Holy Island, Jesmond Dene and Whitley Bay.

Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix*

One was near Linton Village on 16th (EC/JSB).

Raven *Corvus corax*

Six with max. three together found between Tarret Burn – Padon Hill (Otterburn) on 27th (MH), two at Alwinton on 13th and Colt Crag Reservoir on 26th (IRD/MR) with one at Branton GP on 4th (IBDa/KDa).

Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus*

Eleven was the peak at Ashington on 29th with ten there on 28th (TB), five at Wallington Hall on 24th (MH), two at Northburn Cramlington on 19th and North Seaton on 24th (LJM/GB). Singles were at Hagg Farm (Ellington) on 16th and East Ord (Berwick) on 29th (TB/MHu).



A Waxing eats an Ashington berry by Neil Osborne on 28th November

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

A large count of 32 at Hepburn Woods on 25th (MJC), 12 at Wallington Hall on 24th (MH), ten at Colt Crag Reservoir on 5th (MR) with one to five at eight locations including Holy Island from 4th to 11th where regarded as scarce.

A Coal Tit

a Woosingtongarden

John Littleton

2nd November

**Marsh Tit** *Poecile palustris*

Singles were seen regularly all month at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) with two on 30th (NFO). One was at Longhoughton Quarry on 11th, East Linden on 18th, West Road (Longhorsley) on 23rd and Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 25th.

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

Three were on feeders at Big Waters on 4th and 17th, at Prestwick Carr on 5th and 28th and at East Linden on 18th. Two were at Big Waters, Prestwick Carr and at Riverside CP on 10th and Eshott on 16th. Singles were regularly at Beaconhill (Cramlington) and Linden Hall (Longhorsley) and at Druridge Bay CP, Longhirst, Mickley Square (where two ringed), North Shields, Tranwell Farm and Whitley Bay.

A Willow Tit on a Prestwick Carr feeder
John Richards on 28th November

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

On 28th 17 were at Furnace Bridge (Bedlington) (JR), ten in garden at Longbenton on 13th (ADM) and Brierdene (Whitley Bay) on 18th (IJ) with one to six at three locations.

Great Tit *Parus major*

Six were at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) on 10th and Furnace Bridge (Bedlington) on 28th (IJ/JR) with two at Jesmond Dene and Whitley Bay.

Bearded Tit *Panarus biarmicus*

A calling bird at the Lough (Holy Island) on 4th (MJC).

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

High counts on Holy Island of 28 on 11th, 25 on 16th and 18 on 4th (MJC) with 16 feeding on shore at Fenham-le-Moor on 6th and 16 the maximum count at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) during the month (MH/AA/TBr). 11 were at Boulmer on 10th with two to six at seven other locations.

Shore Lark *Eremophila alpestris*

Four (three males) frequented the Birling / Buston Links area (A



A Sore Lark from Buston Links. By Neil Osborne on 24th November

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

The largest gatherings were 14 at Southfield Green and ten at Barns Park (both Cramlington) on 8th and 10th respectively (DM). Counts of five to nine came from Brierdene (Whitley Bay), Ellington, Jesmond Dene, Leazes Park, North Seaton, Valley Park (Cramlington), West Ord and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Two to three were at Holy Island from 10th-11th and singles here on 4th, 10th, 16th-17th, 22nd and 25th (MJC/ASJ et.al.). Elsewhere further singles were reported from Howden on 5th, Cresswell on 17th, Brierdene (Whitley Bay) on 18th, Branton GP on 25th, Chevington (coal road) on 26th and Furnace Bridge (Bedlington) on 28th.



A Chiffchaff at Holy Island on 10th November by Alan Jack

A **Siberian race** *P.c.tristis* bird was seen and heard at Tynemouth from 4th-10th (DRW/CB).



The Siberian Chiffchaff at Tynemouth on 4th November by Duncan Watson

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*

A late individual was at Holy Island from 10th-16th (ASJ/MJC).

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Single males were noted at Tynemouth on 5th and 9th (CB/DRW) and Howden on 18th (CB).

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapilla*

One was at Northumberland Park (North Shields) from 13th into December (ASJ/CB/MNC/DRW).

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

A light 'fall' produced a count of 22 at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) on 18th (IJ). Peak counts from Holy Island were 11 on 7th and 12 on 11th (ADM/MJC) with three to six on a further four dates. Elsewhere one to three were reported from Alexandra Park and Valley Park both (Cramlington), Bamburgh, Druridge Bay CP, Howdon, Leazes Park, Newbiggin, North Seaton, Northumberland Park (North Shields) and Rothley.

A Goldcrest

North Shields

21st November

Mike Carr



Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes* There were four at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) on 18th and at Furnace Bridge (Bedlington) on 28th, while two were noted at Jesmond Dene and one at Rothley.

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Up to seven were noted at Wallington Hall (MH), five in Jesmond Dene and four at Gosforth Park and at Northumberland Park (North Shields). Three were on feeders in Holywell Dene and three at Furnace Bridge (Bedlington), while counts of one to two came from Armstrong Park, Blyth (Ridley Park), Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Cramlington (Northumberlandia), Derwent Reservoir, Gosforth, Ellington, Mickley Square, Spindleston and Valley Park (Cramlington).



A Nuthatch by John Richards on 13th November at Gosforth Park

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Well reported this month with counts of nine at Hepburn Woods on 25th and eight at Wallington on 3rd (MJC). Twos were reported from Brierdene (Whitley Bay), Chugdon Wood (Ellington) and Mickley Square with singles also noted Cresswell, Derwent Reservoir, Jesmond Dene, Newbiggin, Prestwick Carr, Ross Village and Rothbury. More unusual was a single at Holy Island from 4th-16th and another at Priors Park (Tynemouth) from 4th-23rd.

Rose-coloured Starling *Pastor roseus*

A juvenile was feeding in a North Seaton garden on 24th (DM/PJA/JM).



The juvenile Rose-coloured Starling at North Seaton on 23rd November. Neil Osborne

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

Roost counts included 9,000+ at East Chevington on 18th (PRM), 3,500 at Gosforth Park NR on 2nd and a low count of 1,500 at Holy Island Lough on 9th. A flock of 500 flew E at Linden Hall on 23rd, while feeding flocks included 350 at Newsham on 19th, 200 at Elsdon on 4th, 118 at Howick on 2nd and 100 at North Seaton on 24th and Silloans Farm (Redesdale) on 4th. Elsewhere up to 50 were at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin), 11 at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) and six at Jesmond Dene.

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Birds continued to arrive at Holy Island during the first half of the month, with counts including 109 on 4th, 52 on 9th, 67 on 11th and a peak of 254 on 17th (MJC/ADM). During the same period there was a maximum count of 53 from Low Cocklaw, 53 were also at Howden on 10th and 20-25 at Bamburgh and Ross on 11th and 16th respectively. A roost of 40 was noted at Cramlington (Beaconhill) on 21st, while 19 were at Furnace Bridge (Bedlington) on 28th and 15-16 at Dilston (Corbridge) on 14th and Shildon-Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 22nd. Elsewhere, ten were reported from Brierdene (Whitley Bay) on 18th, eight at Cambois on 27th and one to two at a further three localities.



A Blackbird checks out
the berry crop of North
Shields

Alan Jack on 21st
November

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

A minimum of 300 were at Prestwick Carr from 3rd-5th (AJ/MH) and 200 were at Aydon (Corbridge) on 2nd. Counts of 100-130 were received from Beanley Moor, Corbridge, Derwent Reservoir, Low Cocklaw and Ord (Berwick). Small numbers continued to arrive at Holy Island including 73 on 4th and 65-92 from 16th-17th, while 80 were reported from Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 20th and 70 at both Castle Heaton on 18th and Crooked Oak on 15th. Elsewhere, 40-60 were at Airy Holm Reservoir, Guyzance, Linden Hall and West Hartford and 20-32 at Belsay, Longhorsley and Middle Ord. One to 14 were at a further six localities.

Small numbers of thrushes in-off the sea during the first half of the month were mainly Fieldfares, with the final sighting of 33 on 16th.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

Some 700 went to roost at Cramlington (Beaconhill) on 21st (STH) and 114 likewise at Northumberlandia on 17th. Good numbers continued to arrive at Holy Island with counts of 139 on 4th, 92 on 16th, a peak of 523 on 17th and up to 67 on a further eight dates to 22nd. At Prestwick Carr, 50 on 3rd increased to 150 on 5th and up to 150 were counted at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) during the month. A count of 70 came from Beal on 16th, 54 were at Howden on 14th, 50 at Linden Hall on 9th, 40 at Ord (Berwick) on 25th and up to 20 at a further 13 localities.



A Redwing
Beal
13th November
Janet Dean

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Four were noted at Furnace Bridge (Bedlington) on 28th (JR), two were at Howden on 17th and 25th and singles at Big Waters, Jesmond Dene and Tynemouth.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

The largest gathering was ten at Ross Village on 12th (DF). Seven were attracted to Rowan berries in a Corbridge garden on 21st, while six were at Cocklawburn on 27th, four at Ashington on 9th and threes at Ellington on 2nd and Stewart Shields (Otterburn MoD) on 4th. One to two at a further seven localities included a singing bird at Linden Hall on 17th and one at Holy Island, where this is a scarce species, on 11th.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

At Holy Island there were counts of 20 on 4th, six on 7th and nine on 19th (ADM/MJC). Elsewhere, six were at Furnace Bridge (Bedlington) on 28th, four to five at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) on 10th and 18th and three at Jesmond Dene.

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

A very late first-winter male was found at Buston Links on 19th (STH).



A late find by Steve Holliday. A Redstart at Buston Links 19th November

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

Maximum counts were three near Craggside and at Druridge Pools and Warkworth Gut and two at Buston Links, Cresswell Pond, Harwood Gibbet, Holy Island and St Mary's Wetland. Singles were also reported from East Chevington, Newbiggin GC, Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) and Woodhorn.

A Stonechat

St Mary's

Alan Jack

1st November

**Wheatear** *Oenanthe oenanthe*

A late bird was at Longhoughton Steel on 5th (PMHa/RMHa).

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

Three including one in song, were at the Usway Burn near Alwinton on 13th (IRD). Two were at Holywell Dene on 20th (LJM). Single birds seen during the month at Wallington, Netherton, Derwent Reservoir, Jesmond Dene and Corbridge.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

An impressive count made from a bicycle ride around urban sites in Cramlington town on 5th, produced 21 groups totalling a minimum of 420 birds (SJL). 320 plus were also counted around Holy Island village on 10th (ASJ). 60 were present all month at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) (RS). 50 were noted at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 15th (TBr). 50 also at Cullercoats Bay during the month (ASJ). 34 were at a roost at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 17th (DM). 30 at feeders at Beaconhill (Cramlington) on 14th (STH). 16 plus also at garden feeders at Chapel House Estate and Marden Estate during the month (MH/ASJ).

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

Well reported with 30 noted at Chibbern dunes on 11th, Warkworth G.C. on 19th and at Crow Hall Farm (Holywell Dene) on 20th (DM/LJM/STH/ASJ). Garden feeders attracted groups of 25 at North Seaton on 24th and Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 16th and up to 19 at Shilbottle all month (ASJ/TD/MKi). 25 were at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) 24 counted in a mixed finch flock at Chevington burn mouth on 24th and 20 at Druridge Bay C.P. that day (ASJ). 23 at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 15th and 20 to 22 at Prior's Park (Tynemouth) on 16th and 20th (TBr/ASJ/DRW). 12 seen in a mixed finch flock at Chevington burn mouth on 24th (ASJ). 11 at the observer's garden in Corbridge on 21st (MR). Eight at garden feeders at Marden Estate on several dates. An unusual occurrence (ASJ). One to eight were seen at a further 14 locations this month.

Two photographs from Woolsington on 6th November by John Littleton

Right a Tree Sparrow after a blow wave, and below a Dunnock on the look out



Dunnock *Prunella modularis* Eight were counted in Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 15th, with two in a Marden Estate garden during the month (ASJ). Two were also at a Chapel House (Newcastle) garden during the month, with on occasion three birds noted (MH). A single in Jesmond Dene on 18th was the only other report.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Three sites in Jesmond Dene held single birds on 18th (MJCo). Two were seen at the weir in Warkworth on 3rd (STH). Singles seen at a further eight sites, including one uncommonly at Holy Island, at the harbour then the Lough minutes later on 17th (ASJ/MJC).

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

Eleven were seen at Ellington on 4th (TB). Nine were on the beach at St. Mary's Island on 30th (ASJ). Seven were at Prestwick Carr on 5th and three at Newcastle Town moor on 12th (MH/GB).



A Pied Wagtail reflects
15th November
Alan Jack
Blyth

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Numbers of wintering birds included a large count of 45 made on Holy Island on 4th (MJC). 15 were at Old Hartley on 18th and seven at nearby St. Mary's on 5th (MSH/ASJ). Ten were observed at Newbiggin and inland at Harwood Gibbet on 2nd (ASJ/MH). Six were at East Chevington on 4th and at Buston Links on 24th (ASJ/GB). Two at Big Waters on 4th and singles at Linden Hall on two dates, Southfield Green (Cramlington) on three dates, with two there on 5th and up to three remaining at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) all month.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Once again Holy Island held the largest numbers with an impressive 105 counted across the island on 4th, with 63 present on 17th. 17 to 45 counted between 18th and the end of the month (MJC/ADM). Elsewhere, eight were noted at St. Mary's in the final week (ASJ). Five were at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 11th (STH). Four were at Tynemouth cliffs and pier on 10th and three at both Stag Rocks and Cheswick on 17th (ASJ/PRM). One to three were seen at a further eight coastal sites.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus littoralis*

Several records of "Scandinavian" sub-species this month from Holy Island with one on 4th and 11th, increasing to five on 16th, then two on 19th and 21st (MJC/ADM).

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

A flock of 70 was noted feeding in a ploughed field at Newsham on 19th (SJL). 60 were attracted to a game crop at Quarry House Moor on 6th (MH/AA). 40 plus were at East Chevington burn mouth in a mixed finch/sparrow flock feeding in the dunes on 4th and 28th (ASJ). Five on garden feeders at Marden on several dates (ASJ). One to three were at three other sites.

Brambling *Fingilla montifringilla*

Numbers were much reduced this month, with 16 on Holy Island on 11th the peak count and 15 at Fontburn on (MJC/DRW). Seven were seen at Newcastle Town Moor on 16th and six seen in Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 25th (GB/CB). One to three seen at another six sites.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes Coccothraustes*

Only two singles were seen with birds at Wallington on 25th and in a lucky observer's garden at Hexham on 6th (PRM/AJH).

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Three flocks totalling 29 birds were counted at Hepburn Woods on 25th (MJC). 11 were noted at Linden Hall on 9th (NFO). Seven were found at Cambois on 27th (STH). Three pairs were in a Morpeth garden on 7th (TD). One to three were also at a further 24 sites during the month.

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

40 in a pre-roost gathering at Linden Hall on 4th was the month's peak count (NFO). 15 plus noted at Bamburgh on 11th (BRS). 12 were at St. Mary's on several dates and six at N. Seaton on 24th (ASJ/DM). One to three were at six other sites.

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*

A flock present all month at Druridge Bay was variously counted between 25 and 80 and ranged from Chibbern burn mouth to Chevington burn mouth (ASJ/DM/IRD/PRM/RB/MB/TB/NFO). 65 fed on salt marsh at Beal on 17th (ASJ). 50 were at Holy Island on 16th (MJC). 40 were present at Long Nanny on 11th (NNBC). 18 were seen at Birling on 17th (CDB). A group of 10 flew S.W. at Gloucester Lodge (Blyth) on 1st (ASJ). Five were at Ross Back Sands on 5th (MJC).

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

70 at Holy Island Straight Lonnen was the peak count for this month (ASJ). 64 were at Murton Craggs on 15th (MHu). 60 plus were at Stag Rocks on 17th, Whemley (Longhorsely) on 9th and at Crow Hall Farm (Holywell Dene) on 12th (ASJ/PRM/AB/LB/MNC). 40 in bushes at Chevington burn mouth on 24th and 39 at Ross Back sands on 10th. 35 were at Airy Holm Reservoir on 18th (ASJ/MJC/IFo). 30 were noted at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 8th (RS). One to 30 were seen at a further six locations.

Common Redpoll *Carduelis flammea*

Five were seen at Fontburn on 30th (DRW).

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis caberet*

A flock of around 200 was at Fontburn on 30th (DRW). On the same date, around 100 were watched at Linden Hall, an increase on the 25 to 35 seen there on 16th (NFO). One to 15 were seen at a further seven sites.

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

The stronghold of Thrunton Woods held 75 on 1st (IBDa/KDa). Coastal movement was noted at several sites on 4th with 26, followed by 18 flying S. at East Chevington and 16 S. at Druridge Bay C.P. briefly alighting in conifers (TFa/JFa/ASJ). Two also flew S. at Holy Island and singles at Beaconhill (Cramlington) and Tynemouth on 4th. Earlier, on 2nd, four flew S. at Alexandra Park (Cramlington). Inland, seven were noted at Harwood, including a singing male on 2nd (ASJ). Six at Simonburn and five at Craggs on 21st, and four at Hepburn Woods and Wallington on 25th.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

A feeding flock of 60 were along the old coal road at Druridge Bay on 4th and 11th (ASJ/DM/PJA). 40 on feeders at Spindleston on 28 was impressive (FSO). 37 were seen at Arcot Pond on 11th (LJM). 35 flew over a Chapel House garden on 28th (MH). 25 to 30 at North Seaton on 20th and 24th (PG/DM/PJA). 22 attracted to garden feeders during November at Marden Estate and East Ord (ASJ/MHu). One to 20 were observed at a further 11 sites during the month.

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

Four reports only this month, with ten noted at Hauxley on 5th (RB/MB). Three were at Linden Hall on 23rd and singles S. at Castle Island on 11th and W at Cramlington on 27th.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

A flock of around 50 at Doddington on 18th and 42 in bushes at Elwick on 10th were the month's peak counts (JR/ASJ). 20 to 30 were seen in a crop field at Crow Hall Farm (Holywell Dene) on several dates (MNC/ASJ). 25 were at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) all month (TBr). Two to six were seen at a further seven sites.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

20 were feeding in a game crop at Quarry House Moor on 6th (MH/AA). Ten to 18 were at Crow Hall Farm (Holywell Dene) all month (MNC/ASJ). Eight noted at Cocklawburn on 15th. Six seen at St. Mary's on 10th (MHu/ASJ). One to four were at seven other sites.



A reed Bunting
Prestwick Carr
John Richardson 28th November

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

In Druridge Bay, East Chevington burn mouth attracted one on 6th, increasing to five seen on 9th and 11th and a single again on 24th (RB/MB/EC/JSB/DM/PJA). At nearby Chibbern burn mouth, there were four on 7th and three on 12th, possibly from this group (IRD/ANHS). Four were found at Sandham Bay (Holy Island) on 22nd, with a single male also at Emmanuel Head on 19th (ADM). A female at Whitley Bay promenade on 18th was joined by two others, (one male) and moved a little further N. to St. Mary's where they remained feeding on grass seeds on the promenade bank to the month's end (ASJ/IJ). A female at Buston Links on 20th increased to three found on 24th (MH/AA/MKi/GB). Singles also noted during the month at Holy Island, Newbiggin, Ross Back Sands, Boulmer, Tynemouth and Warkworth .

ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN**Escapes**

No sightings

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

Single hybrids were seen at Big Waters on 2nd (GB)& at Grindon Lough on 9th (PRM).

Tufted Duck x Pochard *Aythya fuligula x Aythya ferina*

Increasingly regular with two at Swallow Pond all month (CGK).

Scaup x Pochard *Aythya marila x Aythya ferina*

One at Gosforth on 13th was tentatively identified to this hybrid pairing (AJR).

Gyrfalcon x Saker *Falco Rusticolus x Falco Cherrug*

The hybrid falcon from last year was still to be seen with a sighting from Warkworth weir on 17th (CDB). An impressive bird.

Birds of Unknown Origin

No sightings

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

A.Allen, A.H.Banks, C.D.Barlow, R.B. & M. Bentley (RB / MB), D.H.W.Blair, T.Blake, J.S.Booth, G.Bowman, C.Bradshaw, T.Brewis (TBr), A. & L.Brunst, J.Bucknall (JBu), M.J.Carr, M.N.Coates, M.J.Cook (MJCo), E.Crabtree, T.Daley, I.B. K.Davison (IBDa / Kda), T.R. & J.Dean, I.R.Douglas, T. & J.Farooqi (TF / JFa), P.C.Fletcher, D.F.Forshaw, I.Forsyth (IFo), P.Gilbert, C.D.Hampton, P.H.Hanmer (PHa), P.M. & R.M. Harrison (PMHa / RMHa), C.Hartley, M.Henry, A.J.Hewitt, M.S.Hodgson, S.T.Holliday, M.Hutcheson (MHu), A.S.Jack, A.Janes, I.Johnson, I.Kerr, M.Kirby (MKi), C.G.Knox, G.P.Knox, S.J.Laing, D.Leat (DLe), J.P.Lumby, P.R.Massey, L.J.McDougall, D.Mckeown, A.D.Mclevy, M.McNeely (MMcN), A.D.Mould, N.F.Osborne, S.P.Parnaby, H.Peters, A.J.Richards, J.Richardson, M.Richardson, S.Rippon, J.A.Roper, M.R.Smith, F.Southern (FSo), B.Steel, R.Stevens, D.R.Watson.

Bamburgh Ringing Station, Berwick Wildlife Group, North Northumberland Bird Club, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

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

This bulletin was compiled by Graeme Bowman (Geese to Mergansers), Steve Laing (Red Grouse to Cormorant), Trevor Blake (Hawks to Falcons), Tom Brewis (Oystercatcher to Godwit), Clive Hampton (Turnstone to Redshank), Eddie Crabtree (Kittiwake to Puffin), Tim Dean (Escapes, Hybrids and Unknown Origin, List of Contributors, Highlights), Peter Fletcher (Doves to Larks), Mike Richardson (Tits to Stonechat), Alan Jack (Dipper to Buntings).

Thanks to David Sanders of NNBC for providing data.

Proof reading was by Mike Smith.

Mail distribution by Paul Stewart.

Tom Brewis is Data Manager

Edited by Steve Barrett NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com

RECORD SUBMISSION

Please email records for the month to ntbc.records@googlemail.com

Please email for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and grid references: Please use of standard location names and 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

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 online resource for anyone interested in birds. There are:

Photo Galleries – Here you can view hundreds of photos of birds from Northumberland, Newcastle and North Tyneside. Members are encouraged to contribute their own photos. Simply send them to galleries@ntbc.org.uk

Sightings – Here you can view reports of birds recently reported in the County. Anyone who would like to contribute and post sightings to this page, please email sightings@ntbc.org.uk Please note this section is moderated, so there may be a short delay before your record appears.

There are also County Checklists, Records Committee updates, Information on important Surveys, useful articles and reports on Bird ID and Overseas Birding Trips....and much more...

Please submit any other new content for the website to the main club email address at ntbcorg@gmail.com

New content such as Birding Trip Reports etc., is always welcome and very much appreciated.

To find out more please visit www.ntbc.org.uk

BIRDS IN NORTHUMBRIA 2017

BIN 2017 was distributed at the indoor meeting on 13th December. If you receive yours by post it should arrive before Christmas.

Many thanks to Andy Mould and his team. Another production to be proud of.

ORNTHOLOGICAL REPORTS

Northumberland and Durham 1935 to 1950

Further to my earlier note, there was a significant interest in the above 'one-off' publication with pre-orders taken for around 60 copies, which have all now been distributed. At the same time, I also produced around 10 spare copies which are still available should anyone wish a belated Christmas present.

The cost of each is £11 including postage or £7 without postage.

Steve Holliday, 07786 213699 or steveholliday@hotmail.co.uk

BORDERS BIRD REPORT

the Borders Bird Report 2017 is now available; an excellent complement to BiN. It is now available for £8 plus £2 P&P.

Copies are available from:

Malcolm Ross
24 Netherbank
Galashiels
TD1 3DH

Please make cheques made payable to SOC Borders Branch.

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2018 No 12

MONTHLY SUMMARY DECEMBER 2018

3rd February 2019



CONTENTS

Appeals for writer, papers and photographs for BIN 2018
Winter Bird Result – full results of another close run thing.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual membership costs £10 for a junior, £30 for an individual, and £32 for a family. **Subs are due on 1st October each year. Membership forms can be downloaded from the club website.**

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. Our bank details are on the membership form.

For membership enquiries please contact ntbc@jobentley.plus.com or ntbcorg@gmail.com

Jo Bentley

CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Tundra Bean Goose	Seven were seen at Cocklawburn on 28th.
Taiga Bean Goose	Four found at Newham Hall on 29th proved popular as few seen in recent years.
Bewick's Swan	Two at East Chevington on 13th were different individuals from those in November.
Mandarin	Female at Leazes Park, Newcastle from 21st shows species can wander.
Black Scoter	The drake was noted again having moved to Bamburgh on 16th.
Smew	A redhead remained at Widdrington Moor Lake from 10th.
Red-throated Diver	Huge count of 215 in Alnmouth Bay on 28th.
White-billed Diver	Bamburgh on 2nd, Druridge on 8th and Cheswick on 16th. An amazing year.
Red-necked Grebe	Three at Ross on 23rd with single at Boulmer.
Black-necked Grebe	One at Cresswell Pond on 8th.
Bittern	Two at Gosforth Park on 31st.
Crane	One over Beanley Moor on 3rd.
Whimbrel	Unusual late record of one at Newbiggin on 2nd.
Purple Sandpiper	High count of 185 at Bamburgh on 3rd.
Jack Snipe	Three at Big Waters on 9th and single at Bewick Moor on 22nd.
Bonaparte's Gull	Adult at Bamburgh from 1st to 3rd.
Glaucous Gull	First-winter birds at Blyth Harbour on 28th and at Boulmer on 31st.
Iceland Gull	Second-winter at Big Waters from 17th to 20th.
Great Skua	Late record of one off Holy Island on 4th.
Red-backed Shrike	First winter record for county with a first-winter at Newbiggin on 2nd.
Great Grey Shrike	Wintering bird at Prestwick Carr seen on 26th.
Waxwing	Small influx during month.
Bearded Tit	Two at East Chevington on 16th.
Shorelark	Four were regularly seen at Buston Links from 16th.
Cetti's Warbler	Again calling at East Chevington on 24th.
Rose-coloured Starling	A first-winter was in gardens at North Seaton on 8th.
Richard's Pipit	An excellent find with one at Ross on 10th.
Water Pipit	Continued influx at various sites.
Snow Bunting	29 at Ross on 10th with several elsewhere including a popular three at St Mary's.

The Rose-coloured Starling

North Seaton

Jonathan Farooqi

8th 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 meetings are;

14th February 2019

Professor Martin Collinson, Aberdeen University **CSI BIRDING**

DNA technology has advanced to the stage where migrant birds can easily be identified genetically using tiny samples of feathers. The talk will describe the advances and some of the key results from DNA-based identification in recent years. Do forensic techniques spoil birding as a popular hobby or enhance it?

FIELD TRIPS

Contact Steve Anderson seaswan@btinternet.com

CLASSIFIED LIST

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

2,300, mainly of the pale-bellied *hrota* race were at Fenham Flats on 30th (ASJ), and 1,900 *hrota* birds were at Ross on 23rd (MJC). The sole report of dark-bellied *bernicla* race birds concerned 180 feeding in an area of *zostera* near St Cuthbert's Island, Holy Island on 16th (IK). Two un-raced birds were at the Aln Estuary on 27th (GB *et al.*).

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Six flew N at Seaton Sluice on 10th (SSWT). Peaks were 305 at Derwent Reservoir on 12th (PRM), 281 at Grindon Lough on 6th (PRM), 213 at Alnmouth on 28th (MKi), and 50-80 at Colt Crag Reservoir (MR) and Stobswood (MSH). Counts of 20-43 came from Killingworth and QEII CP Lakes, and Newcastle Leazes Park, and two to ten were at Coanwood Pond, St Mary's Wetland and Warkworth.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Good numbers in the Budle Bay-Harper's Heugh area all month included peak estimates of 2,000 on 4th (per NNBC), and 1,700 on 24th and 26th (DF). Elsewhere, singles were at QEII CP Lake on 9th (CDH) and East Holywell on 22nd and 24th (MSH).

'grey goose' (sp.) *anser* (sp.)

22 geese (not Pink-footed or Greylag) flew S at Tweedmouth on 28th (MHu).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Peak counts were 1,000 at Newton Pool on 4th (per NNBC), 650 at Budle Bay on 10th (DF), 400 at Big Waters on 9th (GB), 202 at East Holywell on 24th (MSH), 110-160 at Derwent Reservoir (PRM), Pegswood Moor (TB) and Woodhorn Flashes (TB), and 25-58 at Callerton Pond, Cocklawburn, Grindon Lough, Colt Crag Reservoir and Outchester. One to nine were also at/over Alnmouth, Coanwood and Linton Ponds, Cramlington, Halton-Lea-Gate, Ladyburn and QEII CP Lakes, Newham Bog, Spartylea and Woodhorn Flashes. A neck-collared individual at Budle Bay on 3rd had been ringed in Iceland in 2016 (DF).

Taiga Bean Goose *Anser fabalis*

Four adults were at Newham Hall on 29th-30th (BS *et al.*).

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Well reported. At Seaton Sluice, 293 flew N and 2,128 S during the month, including 750 S on 28th (SSWT); a total of about 1,600 flew S at Sandy Bay during the month (BSt), 1,000 flew S at Ellington on 22nd (TB), 300 S at Tynemouth on 1st (DRW), 110-200 S at Castle Island on 9th (DM/PJA) and New Water Haugh on 2nd (MHu), and 32-70 S at four further sites on several dates, while 35 moved N at Marden Quarry. The largest concentrations were 3,000 at Druridge Bay CP-East Chevington on 23rd-24th (TF/JFa/BS), 2,700 at Budle Bay on 24th (DF), 2,500 at Newham Hall on 29th (BS), 2,300 at East Holywell on 30th (MNC), 2,000 in the Hoppen Kiln-Bradford area on 12th (MSH), 2,000 at Fenham Flats on 22nd (DF), 2,000 at Doddington on 23rd (DF), 1,500-1,800 at Cheswick and Lynemouth, 1,000-1,120 at Druridge hamlet, Elwick and Ross, and 500-915 at Gloucester Lodge (Blyth), Goswick, Eshott, Low Newton, New Hartley, Snab Point, Stobswood and Widdrington Moor Lake. Counts of 250-400 came from Longhirst Flash, Seahouses, Widdrington village and Woodhorn Flashes, 120 flew over Bothal Pond, and 30 were at Ellington. Singles were also at Big Waters and Killingworth Lake.

A neck-collared bird (VXJ) at Longhirst Flash on 9th had been ringed in Iceland on 24th July 2017 and was later noted at Perth, Scotland on 24th July 2017; while another (VPL) at East Chevington on 24th had also been ringed in Iceland on the same date (and was subsequently noted in Lancashire and Merseyside in late October 2017)(TF/JFa).

A Pink Foot at Killingworth Lake
by Chris Barlow 29th December



Tundra Bean Goose *Anser serrirostris*

A flock of 17 flew N at Goswick on 30th (BS), seven were at Cocklawburn on 28th (MHu), and one was noted at Harper's Heugh on 23rd (BS).

White-fronted Goose *Anser flavirostris*

An adult of the Eurasian *albifrons* race was at East Chevington on 4th (NFO) and a first-winter was at Cresswell Pond on 27th (MJC/EFC). An adult of the Greenland *flavirostris* race was with Pink-footed Geese at Druridge Bay CP on 23rd (BS). A group of 11 un-raced birds, including one juvenile, flew in off the sea and high to the west at Cresswell Pond on 13th (NFO).

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Peaks involved 86 grazing in a kale field at Cheswick on 6th (MHu), 83 at QEII CP Lake on 28th (LJM), 58 at Killingworth Lake on 20th (DM), 23-26 at Big Waters and Howdon, 11-19 at Alnmouth, Bickerton (Caistron), Bothal Pond, Shortridge Hall (Warkworth), the Tweed Estuary and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, and six at Castle Island, Ladyburn Lake and Woodhorn Flashes.

Bewick's Swan *Cygnus columbianus*

Two were at East Chevington on 13th (NFO).

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Six flew N at Seaton Sluice on 1st (SSWT), six moved N at St Mary's on 20th (ASJ), and 15 flew S at Longhoughton on 2nd (BS). 59 at Warkworth on 10th included 45 adults (DF), 56 were at East Chevington on 20th (MJC), 40 at Cornhill on Tweed on 11th (MJC), 20 at Cheswick on 2nd (CH), and ten to 17 at Bothal Pond, Budle Bay-Harper's Heugh and Caistron. Six to nine were also reported at Cocklawburn Pond, Elwick and Greenlee Lough, and one to three at Big Waters, St Mary's Wetland and West Ord.

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

At Lindisfarne NNR, 948 were counted at Fenham Flats on 30th (ASJ), 885 were at Beal Point on 9th (a high count for this section; CH), 500 at Ross on 23rd (MJC) and 158 at Budle Bay on 12th (MSH). Elsewhere, 18 were at Howdon on 15th (CB), six at Kitty Brewster on 29th (GB/LAR), three at Castle Island and one to two at Boulmer, Cresswell Pond and Hauxley NR.

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

A duck was at Newcastle Leazes Park on four dates between 21st-31st (GB/DM).

Shoveler *Spatula clypeata*

Peak counts involved a healthy 54 at Budle Bay on 10th (DF), 30 at Swallow Pond on 9th (GPK), six to nine at Arcot Pond (LJM), Gosforth Park NR (MJC), Holy Island Lough (SR) and Monks' House Pool (JPL), and three at Big Waters. One to two were also at Branton GP, Cresswell and Linton Ponds, Killingworth Lake, Longhoughton Quarry Pond and Newham Bog.

Gadwall *Mareca strepera*

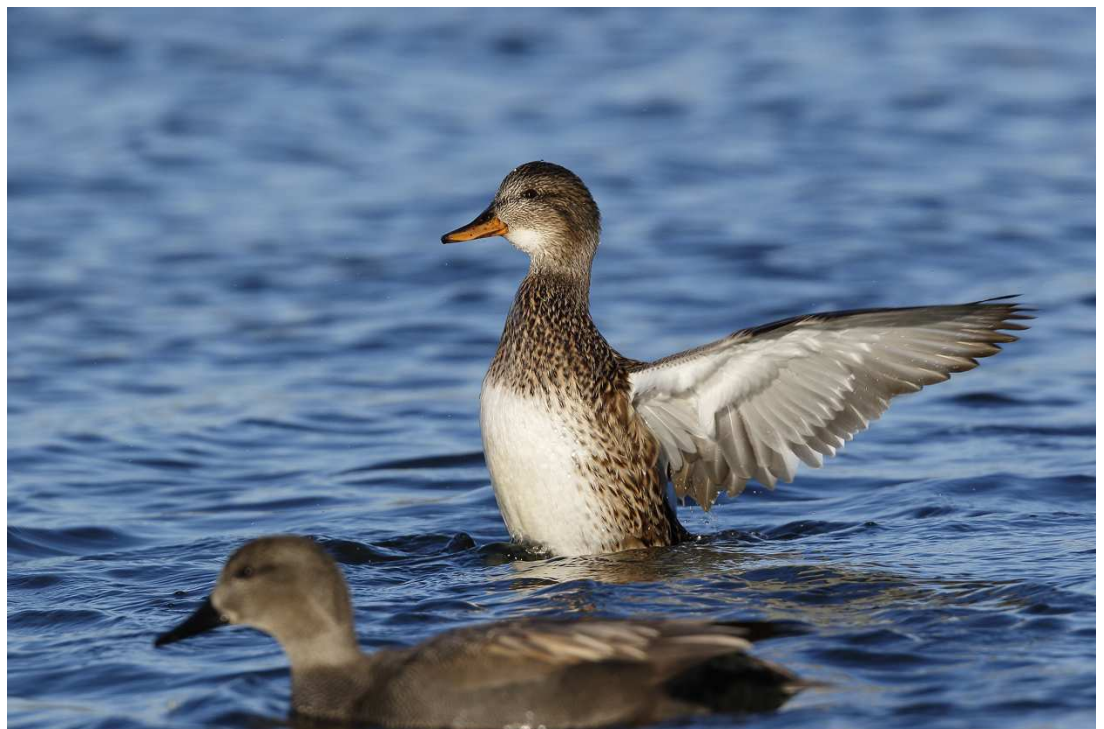
26 were at Caistron on 18th (TRD), 21 at Hedgeley GP on 9th (IBDa/KDa), 14-17 at Big Waters (GB), Killingworth Lake (GB), Linton Ponds (CDH) and Marden Quarry (KWY), five to eight at Bothal Pond, Gosforth Park NR, Holy Island Lough, Howdon Wetland and St Mary's Wetland, and three at Hauxley Reserve. One to two were also at Caistron, Cocklawburn Pond and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

A Gadwall has a stretch

Ladyburn Lake

Chris Barlow

29th December





A Drake Gadwall at St. Mary's on 18th December by Colin Bradshaw

Wigeon *Mareca penelope*

Two flew N at Seaton Sluice on 14th (SSWT). Largest concentrations were 1,800 at Budle Bay on 1st (CGK), 800 at Cresswell Pond on 17th (MSH), 600 at Newham Bog on 16th (DF), 300-328 at Beal Point (CH), Derwent Reservoir (IFo), Druridge Pools (MSH), Low Newton (TD) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs (MR), 229-275 at Boulmer and Grindon Lough, and 135-180 at Alnmouth, Bothal Pond and Warkworth. Counts of 50-95 came from Big Waters, Colt Crag Reservoir, Gosforth Park NR, Linton Ponds, Newcastle Leazes Park, New Water Haugh and Widdrington Moor Lake, and 23-43 at Castle Island, Coanwood Pond, Killingworth and Ladyburn Lakes, Northumberland Park (North Shields), St Mary's Wetland and the Tweed Estuary.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Three flew N at Seaton Sluice on 26th (SSWT). Peak numbers were 248 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 11th (MR), 187 at Derwent Reservoir on 12th (PRM), 168 at the Tweed Estuary on 10th (TBr/APM), and 52-96 at Airy Holm and Colt Crag Reservoirs, Cresswell Pond, Grindon Lough, Longhoughton Quarry, Marden Quarry, Newham Bog and Whiteadder Point (Berwick). Counts of 23-41 also came from Coanwood Pond, Northumberland Park (North Shields) and St Mary's Wetland, while 12-18 were at Bothal, Cocklawburn, Linton and Middle Ord Ponds, QEII CP Lake and Spartylea.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

At Lindisfarne NNR, 130 were at Elwick on 23rd (BS), 44 at Fenham Flats on 11th (MH/AA), and five at Budle Bay on 22nd (CGK). Typically few were noted elsewhere, with one to two at Branton GP, Colt Crag Reservoir, East Chevington and Hauxley Reserve.

Teal *Anas crecca*

High counts involved 522 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 20th (MR), 375 at Druridge Pools on 16th (IRD), 308 at Grindon Lough on 9th (MRS), 300 at Holy Island 'rocket fields' (IK), 203-253 at Colt Crag Reservoir, Grindon Lough and Howdon, and 100-162 at Arcot Pond, Castle Island, Derwent Reservoir, Low Newton and Monks' House Pool. Counts of 52-98 came from Alnmouth, Backworth, Bothal and Cresswell Ponds, the Blyth Estuary, St Mary's Wetland and Warkworth, and 30-47 were at Fontburn, Linton Ponds, Monks' House Pool, Prestwick Carr, the River Tweed between A1-Gainslaw and Widdrington Moor Lake. Three were offshore at Seaton Sluice on 31st (SSWT) and two were on a pond at Linden Hall golf course on 4th (NFO).



A drake Teal at Amble. Chris Barlow on 9th December

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Peak counts were 18 at Killingworth Lake on 29th (AIB), 15 at Swallow Pond on 7th (GPK), 14 at Greenlee Lough on 9th (MRS), and 11 at Widdrington Moor Lake on 12th (IFO). Two to four were also at Bothal Pond, Branton GP, East Chevington, Grindon Lough and Shield on the Wall Dam.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

The largest concentrations were 97 at Killingworth Lake on 30th (AIB), 90 at Greenlee Lough on 9th (MRS), 59 at Caistron on 18th (TRD), and 20-23 at Big Waters, Bothal Pond, QEII CP Lake and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Groups of 13-19 were also at Cocklawburn, Linton and Swallow Ponds, Ladyburn and Tynemouth boating lakes.

Scaup *Aythya marila*

Two ducks were at Cresswell Pond on scattered dates between 2nd-27th (IRD/IK/ASH *et al.*); two were on the River Wansbeck at North Seaton on 21st (MJC), two at Elwick on 23rd (BS) and two at Ross on 23rd (MJC). Single drakes were at East Chevington between 2nd-6th (IRD/NFO), Ladyburn Lake on 30th (TB) and inland at Grindon Lough on 7th (SJH). A duck was inland at Coanwood Pond on 28th (SJH).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

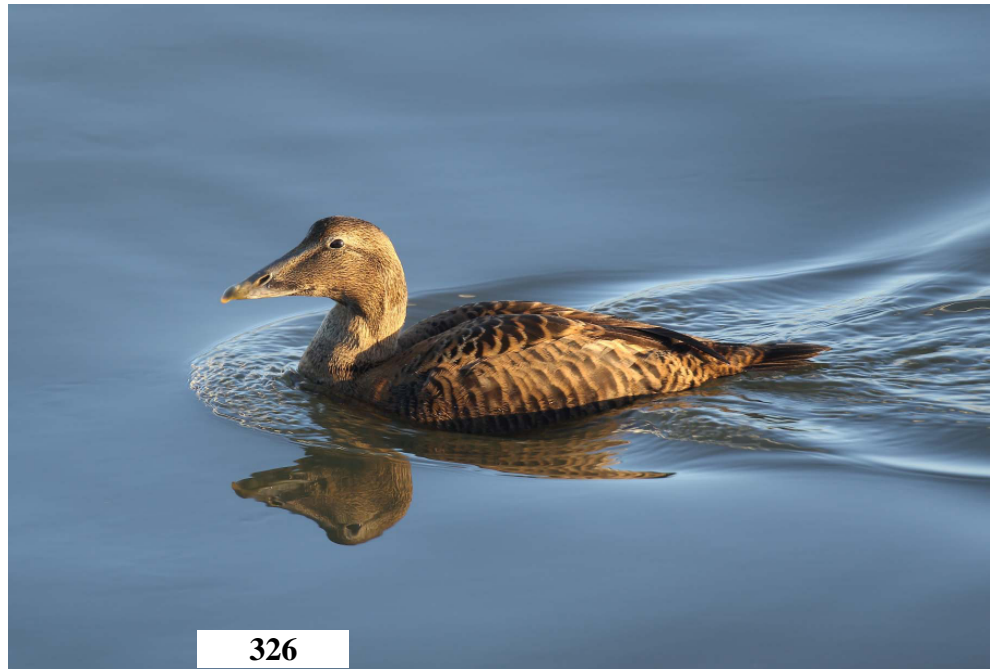
A total of 137 flew N and 57 S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), 200 were off Ross on 10th (MJC), 69 at Boulmer on 31st (BS), 55 at Blyth South Harbour (LJM) and Seahouses (ASJ), 28 at Meadow Haven (Berwick) and ten at Howick.

Eiders, a drake and a duck

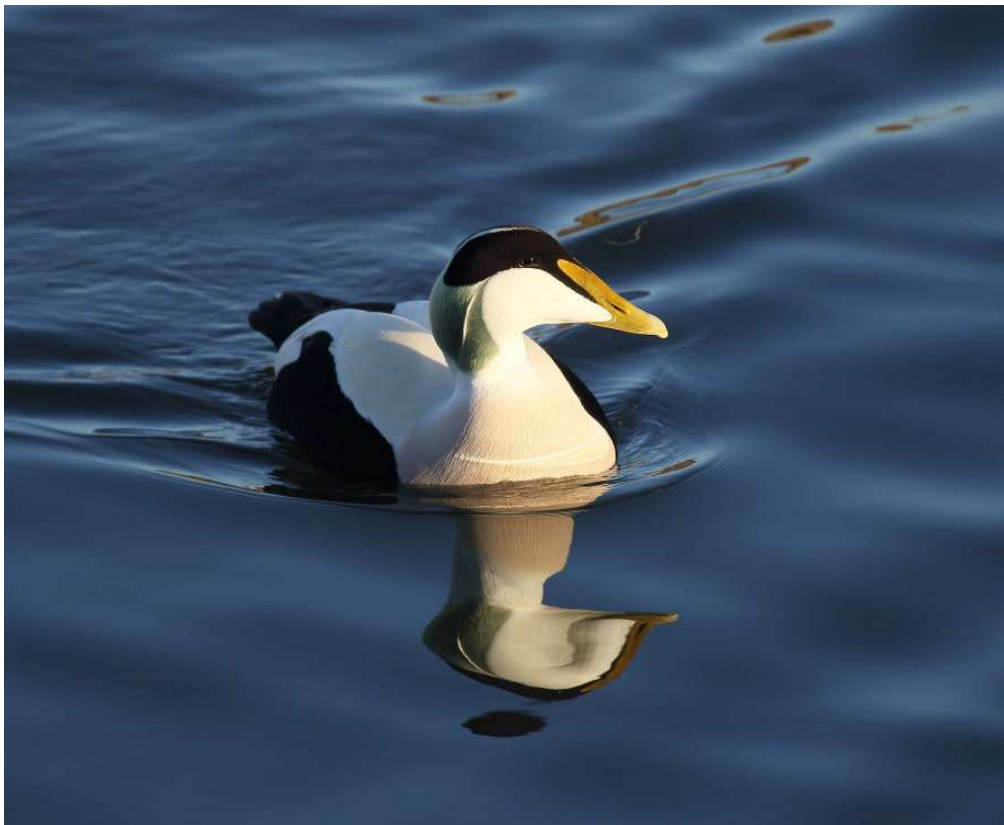
by Alan Jack

Blyth

16th December



326



Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

Two flew N and one S at Seaton Sluice during the month, and one was offshore there between 21st-31st (SSWT). Three were at Howick burn mouth on 7th (BS), two off East Chevington on 24th (TF/JFa), Newbiggin Bay on 18th and 29th (MJC *et al.*) and Stag Rocks on 8th (MJC), and singles at Druridge Bay on 10th (MSH), Holy Island harbour on 4th (SR) and Blyth Harbour on 29th (GB/LAR).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

At Seaton Sluice, the monthly total was 130 N and 92 S, and a small flock offshore peaked at 120 on 21st (SSWT). Peak counts were modest, with 108 at Newbiggin Bay on 10th (CH), 67 at Stag Rocks on 14th (MJC/BC), 61 off Ross on 23rd (MJC), and 20-42 off Druridge Bay CP, Holy Island, North Blyth and Warkworth. Four to ten were also at Goswick and Spital (Newbiggin).

Black Scoter *Melanitta americana*

The adult drake was at Stag Rocks on 14th (MJC/BC).

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

20 at St Cuthbert's Island, Holy Island on 16th mainly involved displaying drakes (IK), 15 were at Stag Rocks on 14th (MJC/BC), and seven were off Ross Back Sands on 24th (CH). Three were at Cheswick and Goswick, and two flew N at Monks' House.

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

At Seaton Sluice, 12 flew N and one S during the month (SSWT). Peak counts were unexceptional, with highs of 42 at West Ord on 30th (MHu), 30 at Howick burn mouth on 25th (PHa/AHa), and 20-27 at Bolam Lake, Boulmer, Grindon Lough, New Water Haugh and the River Tweed between A1-Gainslaw, and ten to 15 at Castle Island, Cresswell Pond, Football Hole, Holy Island, High Newton, Killingworth Lake and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Six to nine were at Big Waters, Castron, Colt Crag Reservoir, East Chevington, Ladyburn Lake, West Ord and Widdrington Moor Lake, and one to three at eight further sites. Display was noted at Killingworth Lake on 30th (AIB).



A Goldeneye reflects at Bolam Lake by John Richards
18th December

Smew *Mergellus albellus*

A 'redhead' was at Widdrington Moor Lake between 9th-30th (DM/PJA/TB/MSH *et al.*)

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

A total of three flew N and four S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). 20 were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 15th (SR), 17 at Branton GP on 9th (SR), ten to 11 at New Water Haugh (MHu), the Tweed Estuary (TBr/APM) and along the River Tyne between Wylam-Newburn (STE) and sixes at Killingworth Lake, Marden Quarry and North Seaton. Three were at Marden Quarry, Morpeth, Newcastle Exhibition Park and West Ord, and one to two at the AIn Estuary, Airy Holm and Derwent Reservoirs, Castron, Cocklawburn and Longhoughton Quarry Ponds, Craggside, Greenlee Lough, Howick Hall, Jesmond Dene, QEII CP Lake, the Tyne Estuary and Wark.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

One N on 1st was the only record of the month at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). 15, mainly in pairs, were at St Cuthbert's Island, Holy Island on 16th (IK), 15 at Elwick on 23rd (BS), ten off Ross on 23rd (MJC), five to seven at Holy Island, North Seaton, the Tweed and Wansbeck Estuaries and Widdrington Moor Lake, and three to four at the Aln and Coquet Estuaries, Cresswell Pond and Stag Rocks. One to two were also at Alnmouth and Druridge Bays, Beadnell, Boulmer, Ladyburn Lake and Warkworth. A pair were well up the River Tweed at Horncliffe on 21st (CH).

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

Three males were displaying at Spartylea on 1st (CT) and one was at Plenmeller Common on 3rd (SJH).

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

Five were at Stublick (Hexham) and up to four were at Plenmeller Common.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

Reported as "locally very common, probably as a result of game releases" at Eden Hill (River Aln) area with ten there on 6th (MKi). Eight were at Farnham Bank (Sharperton) on 11th.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

A large covey of 28 was at East Chevington dunes on 9th (ASJ), 19 were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 20th (MR) and both Big Waters NWT and Crowhall Farm (Holywell) peaked at 14 on separate dates. Further double-figure counts came from Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) with 11, whilst ten were at both West Hartford and Ellington. Two to nine were seen at Allendale, Beal Point-Goswick, Bewick Drift (Lynemouth), Fenham-le-Moor, Prestwick Carr and Woodhorn Flashes.

Correction to previous bulletin: The reports of 38 Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix* made at Chibburn Dunes/Druridge Coal road on 11th November (DM), a covey of ten at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) and five at Berwick Hill on 15th, were inadvertently placed in the Red Grouse section.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

Between two to eight were at Spartylea all month (CT), three males and a female were at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) all month (RS), three were at both Castle Island and Warkworth Lane layby (DM), two females were in an Eachwick garden early on the morning 26th (CDB) and a single male was at Druridge Bay CP.

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

Passage totals at Seaton Sluice were 59N and 136S in 32 hours of watching (SSWT). A large offshore gathering occurred in Alnmouth Bay towards the end of the month with a peak of 215 present on 28th (SW). Up to 50 were also reported on the sea at Birling Carrs (Warkworth) on 25th (CSa), 19 were at Boulmer on 27th (BS), 18 at Ross on 23rd, 15 at Stag Rocks on 25th and 12 at Cheswick Sands 2nd. One to nine were widely reported from other coastal sites including one flying up-river at North Shields Fish Quay on 31st.

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*

Singles were observed on different dates at Blyth Bay, Budle Point, Druridge Bay, Ross and Seaton Sluice.

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

The only sightings at Seaton Sluice were singles flying S on 1st and 16th (SSWT). Stag Rocks peaked at two on 2nd and 8th (TF/JFa/CGK) and two were also at Ross on 23rd (MJC). Singles were seen at Emmanuel Head (Holy Island), Goswick, flying N at Inner Farne Sound (Farne Islands), flying S at Monks' House and a juvenile on the R. Wansbeck 200 yards upstream from the weir at North Seaton.



The Great Northern Diver on the River Wansbeck by Mike Carr on 21st December

White-billed Diver *Gavia adamsii*

What was possibly the same individual was first seen offshore at Stag Rocks on 2nd (TF/JFa/JPL/IBDa/KDa) then feeding in Druridge Bay on 8th (IK/ASH) and Cheswick Sands on 16th (CH).



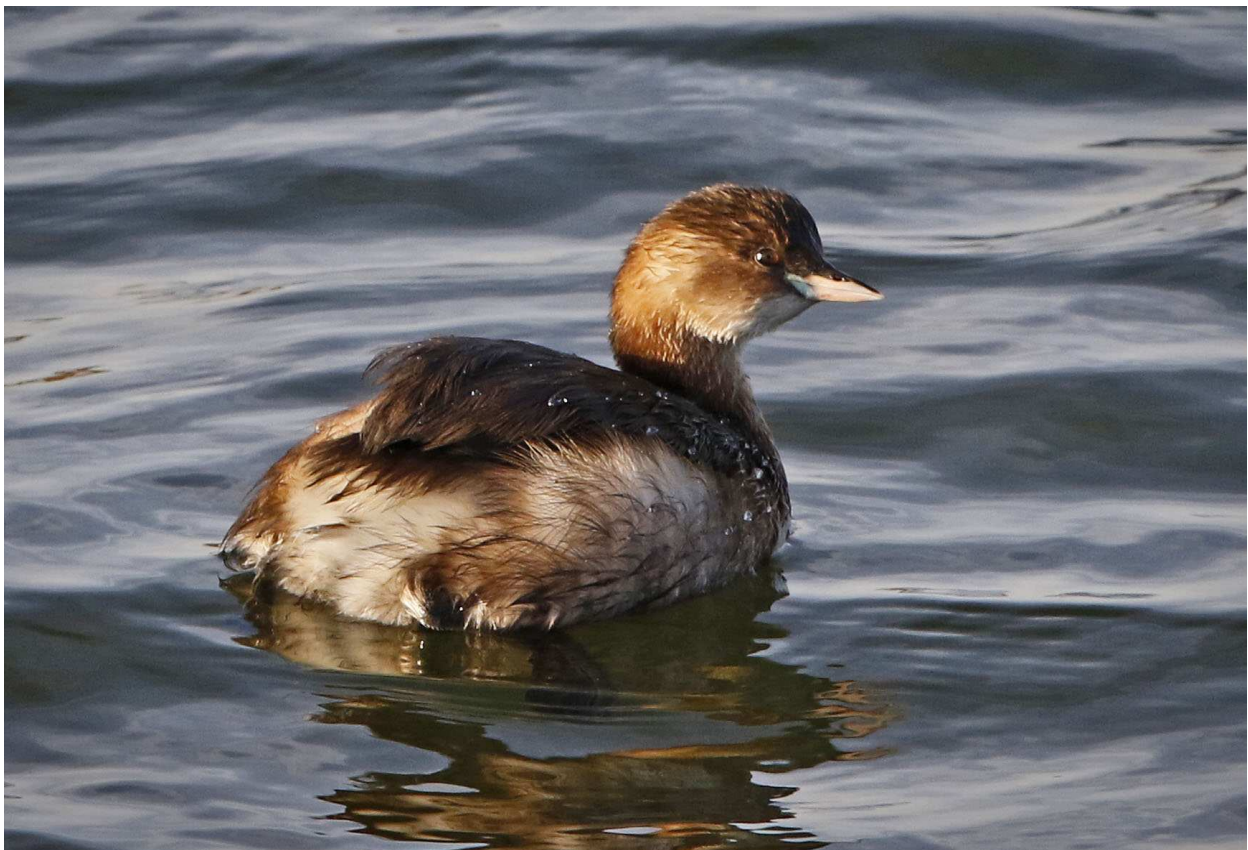
The White-billed Diver at Stag Rocks on 2nd December by Jonathan Farooqi

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

Several reports of birds returning to/inspecting cliff ledge nest sites included a minimum of 80 on the Farne Islands along the west side of Inner Farne and the Wideopens on 4th - reducing to around 12 on 12th (MSH), 23 at Howick on 11th (JAR) and ten pairs there on 27th (ANHS), 12 at Old Hartley with a further six on the sea (MSH) and two to four at Bamburgh, Rockcliffe and Snab Point.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

A minimum of 15 were at East Chevington on 9th (CB) whilst Bickerton (Castron) also held 15 on 24th (MKi) with a total of 14 present during a WeBS visit to Castron on 18th (TRD). A visit to the R. Tweed on 21st found 14 between Gainslaw House-Horncliffe (CH) and the R. Wansbeck peaked at 12 near North Seaton on 21st (MJC). 11 were at Castle Island on 9th (DM), seven were in the Tweed Estuary on 10th and one to six were at 18 other widespread locations.



A Little Grebe at Hauxley NR by Mike Carr on 27th December

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

Three were at Ross on 23rd (MJC) and a single bird was feeding in tidal ponds to the north of Boulmer on 16th (HP/BS). A further sighting was a single at Stag Rocks on 23rd (BS).

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Sightings of birds on the sea came from Birling Carrs/Warkworth beach area on several dates, peaking at four on 27th (GB), whilst Alnmouth Bay area also peaked at four on 27th-28th (SW/DM). Records from inland water bodies were comprised of one to two birds at Killingworth Lake, QE11 CP Lake and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

The popular Ross/Elwick area peaked at 12 on 23rd (MJC), six were in Holy Island harbour on 4th (SR) and singles were offshore at East Chevington and Stag Rocks (Bamburgh).

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigrocollis*

A rare winter sighting of one at Cresswell Pond on 8th (IK/ASH).

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

One was seen at Gosforth Park NR on 31st (MJC).

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

A total of 15 were in the Tweed Estuary on 10th (TBr/APM), ten were at Howdon on 23rd (CB), eight on Holy Island on 31st (ADM) and seven present at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 20th (MR). One to six were at Alnmouth Saltmarsh and Bridge, Big Waters NWT, Castle Island, Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Eachwick, Gosforth Park NR, Howick Pool, Linton Ponds, Monk's House Pool, Northumberland Park (North Shields), Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin), St Mary's, Seaton Sluice, Sidwood, Spartylea, Wark, Warkworth, Whittingham and Widdrington Moor Lake.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

The popular haunt of Lindisfarne NNR peaked at five on the flats on two dates (CH/MJC), including a colour-ringed individual – orange with black A on left tibia and black with white X on right tibia – which was ringed as part of a brood of five young in Hartlepool on May 22/05/2018 and present in the Lindisfarne area since at least 17/10/2018 (MJC). Elsewhere, three were at Shankhouse Bridge (Cramlington), two were at Prestwick Carr and Sleek Burn, and singles were at Alnmouth, Backworth Pond, Branton GP, Monks' House Pool, the R. Pont (Berwick Hill Bridge), Ross, Spittal Bay (Berwick), the Tweed Estuary and the Wansbeck Estuary.



The ringed Little Egret at Beal Point
Mike Carr
30th December

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

Only very small numbers recorded with a monthly total of 16 (13N and three S) past Seaton Sluice (SSWT) and a single juvenile N at St Mary's on 2nd.

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Seaton Sluice reported a monthly total of 17 with two flying N and 15 S (SSWT). 42 were at Ross on 23rd (MJC) and the Meadow Haven (Berwick) roost peaked at 12 on 30th (MHu). One to five were at Birling Carrs (Warkworth), Blyth Harbour, Calot Shad (Tweed Estuary), Cocklawburn, St Mary's and Stag Rocks.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

49 in the Blyth Estuary on 8th was the highest count (LJM), 25 were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 11th (MR), 21 were in the Meadow Haven (Berwick) roost on 23rd (MHu) and 14 were at Colt Crag Reservoir on 17th (MR). One to 13 were reported from ten other localities.

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Two young males were in an Eachwick garden at the same time then they were chased off by a female who sat in a nearby tree for an hour on 25th (CDB). At Lambley Water Treatment Reed beds on 11th two birds were observed diving at a Starling *Sturnus vulgaris* murmuration, the male was seen to take one and struggled to maintain height and slowly dropped to the ground (SJH), and a pair were also seen at Howdon on 26th (CB). Single birds were at 26 sites during the month.

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

A juvenile was seen nr Chillingham on 10th (MH).

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

Two ringtails were at one site on 22nd (SW) and another bird was noted at another confidential site on 2nd (SJH).

Red Kite *Milvus Milvus*

Three birds were along the Northumberland side of Derwent Reservoir on 12th (PRM) and a bird was noted at South Snods (Allensford) on 3rd (IFo).

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Six birds were hanging along an escarpment at Cloudy Craggs (Alnwick Moor on 28th (MH), four were seen at Derwent Reservoir on 12th PRM). The peak count at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) was three birds (TBr) and three were also at Hawkhill (Alnwick) on 24th (ANHS) and at Wark (North Tyne) on 26th (PRM). Two birds were noted at Fell End (Haltwhistle), Fontburn, Plenmeller Common, Spartylea and at West Hartford. Single birds were seen at 17 sites.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Three birds were at Gosforth Park on 31st (MJC). At Cresswell Pond two birds were observed fighting in a cleared area in front of the hide on 8th (IK/ASH), up to two were either seen or heard at East Chevington on several dates (CB *et al.*). Singles were at Big Waters NWT, Cresswell Pond, Linton Ponds, Prestwick Carr, Swallow Pond, (Wallsend), Tyneview Park (Benton) and at Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

17 were at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 30th (Al *per* GB) and 15 were noted there on 19th & 28th (GB/DM). 123 were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 2nd (SR) and at Big Waters NWT feeding station on 20th (GB). 11 birds were at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 28th (DM) and 10 birds were seen at Castle Island (DM/PJA) and at QEII CP (CDH) on 9th. One – six were at Arcot Pond, Chollerford, Cresswell Pond, Jesmond Dene (Newcastle), Killingworth Lake, Ladyburn Lake (Druridge Bay CP), Northumberland Park (North Shields), Spartylea, St Mary's Wetland and at Wansbeck Business Park (Ashington).

Coot *Fulica atra*

Killingworth Lake had the highest counts once again: 95 birds on 20th (DM) and 89 birds on 9th (LJM). Big Waters NWT had 34 birds on 9th (GB), Grindon Lough peaked at 32 on 6th (SJH), 25 were at Linton Ponds on 9th (CDH) and 24 at QEII CP also on 9th (CDH). Leazes Park (Newcastle) had 14 birds on 28th and 12 were at Exhibition Park (Newcastle on the same date (DM).

Crane *Grus grus*

A juvenile flew at a low height past the observer at Kimmer Lough west towards Beanley Moor on 3rd (MHM).

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

St Mary's Island roost had a count of 177 on 29th (ASJ), 64 were at Buston Links on 27th (DM), 50 were feeding at Embleton on 18th (JAR) and 45 were at Alnmouth on 3rd (MKi) with 42 in the Tweed Estuary on 30th (MHu). Counts of 36 or less came from Boulmer, Cocklawburn, Cresswell Pond, Howick Burn mouth, Rockcliffe, Seaton Sluice, Warkworth (Birling Carrs) and Whitley Bay (Brierdene).

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

An impressive 2,000 were "put to air by a Peregrine" at Elwick on 30th (ASJ) and nearby Budle Bay had a report of 1,600 on 24th (DF). Other counts were much smaller with 600 at Harper's Heugh on 30th (MJC) and 500 from Ross on 23rd (MJC). Given the proximity of these sites, duplication of counts is possible. St Mary's had a count of 410 on 28th (ASJ), Bothal (Coney Garth) had 350 on 22nd (TD), 346 were at Warkworth gut on 27th (DM), 320 were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 20th (MR) and 300 were at Derwent Reservoir on 3rd. Seaton Sluice Watch Tower had a monthly total of 286, all flying south, 164 were at both Cocklawburn on 28th (MHu) and at Cresswell Pond on 27th (DM), New Water Haugh (Berwick) reported 160 on 2nd (MHu) and 150 were at Big Waters NWT on 28th (GB). A count of 146 came from Meggie's Burn (Blyth) on 9th (CB), on 27th there were 100 at Prestwick Carr (PCF) and another 100 were seen at West Hartford on 28th (TB), as well as at Alnmouth saltmarsh on 18th.. Smaller counts came from Beal Point to Goswick, Coanwood Lough, Coquet Estuary, Cramlington, Grindon Lough, Gloucester Lodge (Blyth), Hebron (High Laws), Low Newton and Stanington Widdrington Moor Lake.



A Lapwing passes Alan Jack at St. Mary's on 7th December

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

An exceptional 4,000 birds were estimated at Fenham Flats on 12th (AA) – the largest count since October 2014. Another large count was made at Elwick, where 2,500 were reported on 30th (ASJ). Goswick had 1,700 seen in fields behind the dunes on 17th (CH) and 1,000 were at East Chevington on 2nd (IRD). Eight hundred to 1,000 were in the Coquet Estuary on 28th (CSa), 700 were in Budle Bay on 24th (DF), East Chevington had 600 on 6th (NFO) with the same number counted at Tritlington (Widdrington Station) on 22nd (SW). More than 500 were estimated at Low Newton flash on 9th (TD) and a similar number seen at Amble Braid on 27th (DM, GB). Reports of between 110-400 came from Boulmer (Howdiemont Sands), Buston Links, Coquet Estuary, Derwent Reservoir, Greenhaugh (Waterhead) and Newbiggin (Beacon Point). Smaller counts came from Cocklawburn, Corbridge (Portgate), Cresswell Pond, Gloucester Lodge (Blyth), Newcastle Town Moor and Prestwick Carr.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

A count of 59 was made at Boulmer on 31st (BS), Fenham Flats held 26 on 30th (ASJ), 11 were at Newbiggin (Beacon Point) on 29th (GB) and 3-5 were seen at Berwick coastwatch and Spittal-Cocklawburn.



Grey Plover

Chris Barlow

Boulmer

9th December

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Cheswick Sands on 9th reported 39 birds (CH), 38 were at East Chevington on 17th (MSH) and 37 were at Budle Bay on 22nd (CGK). On 16th 26 were at St Mary's (CGK), 17 were at Tynemouth (Spanish Battery) on 14th (DRW) and 12 were at Cocklawburn on 6th and 28th (MHu). Eleven birds were reported from East Chevington on 9th (CDB).

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

A singleton was seen flying south at Church Point, Newbiggin on 2nd (ASJ).

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

A count of 485 at Boulmer on 27th was the largest reported for the year (ASJ). On 8th Budle Bay had 270 or more birds (CGK), 269 were counted at Buston Links (Alnmouth) on 28th (SW) and 161 were seen at Harper's Heugh on 28th (MSH). At Low Newton flash 120 were seen on 31st (TD), 80 were at Alnmouth on 3rd (MKi), 60 were at Belford on 17th (CD) and 56 were at Cocklawburn on 14th (MHu). Counts of 15-43 were made at Cresswell Pond, Berwick coastwatch, Blyth Links, Druridge Pools NR, Hedgeley GP, Howick, Howick Burn mouth, St Mary's and Warkworth (Coquet). Single-figure counts were made at Callerton Pond and Howdon.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

A minimum of 1,200 were at Fenham Flats on 30th (ASJ). Among the 27 birds counted at Boulmer on 9th one was colour-flagged in Norway: Yellow 'NHV' (CDB). Other counts were six at Berwick Coastwatch on 3rd, three at Newbiggin, Beacon Point on 29th and 1-3 at Budle Bay for much of the month with one of these birds still in summer plumage.



Two images by Chris Barlow from 9th December

Below: the Norwegian-ringed Bar-tailed Godwit at Boulmer and above: Black-tailed Godwits at Amble



Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Amble Braid had 59 birds on 10th (ASJ), 14 were at Fenham-le-Moor on 30th (BS), nine were at Budle Bay on 12th (MSH) and eight were at Warkworth Gut on 27th (DM). Three to seven birds were reported from Cresswell Pond, Holy Island (Rocket Field pools) and Howdon.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Groups were established at regular haunts with a minimum of 50 at Stag Rocks on 4th (MSH) and 50 were at Cresswell Pond on 2nd (IRD). A count of 43 was made at Boulmer on 19th (MKi) and Birling Carrs attracted 37 on 31st (ANHS). Three sites in the Berwick area held birds during the month with 32 at Berwick Little Beach on 3rd, 32 were also seen at Calot Shad (River Tweed Estuary) on 23rd and 12 attended the high-tide roost at Greene's Pier on 3rd (all MHu). Other reports were of eight at Cocklawburn and Newbiggin and two at Amble Braid.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

At Budle Bay, the maximum monthly count was four, being described as 'pitiful' by the observer (CGK). However, just around the corner 650 were at Fenham Flats on 30th (ASJ) and 60 were counted from Beal Point- Goswick on the same day (MJC). A report of 23 between Seaton Point (Boulmer) and Howick Haven was made on 31st (BS) and 16 were at a high tide roost on Greene's Pier (Berwick) on 3rd (MHu). The only other reports were four at Birling Carrs (Warkworth) and one at Chiburn Mouth, Druridge Bay.

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

Wintering birds were reported at Elwick (Lindisfarne NNR) with two on 23rd (BS) and a single at Low Newton flash on 31st (TD).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

The Druridge Bay flock was reported throughout the month mainly from the Chiburn Mouth area with a high of 172 counted on 9th but only 20 on 17th (ASJ/NFO/MSH *et al.*). There were notable counts from other locations as birds became more conspicuous along the whole coastline with 119 at Boulmer on 22nd (SW), 113 at St Mary's Island on the same day (ASJ), 110 at Budle Bay on 1st (CGK) and 100 at Sandham Bay (Holy Island) on 16th (IK). At Ross Back Sands a total of 60 was noted on 29 (MHu), 48 were at Cocklawburn on 28th and also at Berwick Little Beach on 30th (MHu) and 30 were on freshwater at Low Newton flash on 31st (TD). In the south of the region, 19 were at Blyth South Beach on 26th and 16 at Newbiggin on 9th. At Buston Links (Alnmouth) six were seen on 27th.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

A huge concentration of 1,000+ was reported from Fenham Flats on 30th (ASJ) and at the start of the month 220 were recorded in Budle Bay on 2nd (CGK). Boulmer, as last month was also a favoured locality with 14 on 9th, 170 on 19th and a high of 210 on 30th (ASJ/MKi/CDB). The estuaries of the River Blyth and River Coquet attracted significant numbers with 101-155 at the former on the 8th and 16th (LJM/ASJ) and 120-150 at the latter on 14th-15th (MKi/IRD). The Tyne Estuary held 86 birds at the Spanish Battery rocks on 14th (DRW), 37 were at Cresswell Pond on 9th (DM), 25 were seen at Birling Carrs on 31st (ANHS) and ten at Low Newton flash on the same day. Three to four were at St Mary's Island and Cocklawburn.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

Birds remained settled at the main haunt of Stag Rocks with a high of 185 counted on 3rd (DF) and a low of 47 on 10th (CKH). Counts were made on various dates up to 30th reporting between 51-145 as being present (TF/JFa/MSH *et al.*). Smaller groups were seen throughout the month from other locations with 50 at High Newton on 31st (TD), 32 at Birling Carrs on the same day (ANHS), 18 were at Berwick Little Beach on 18th (MHU) and 14 were at Cocklawburn on 2nd (CH). One to eight were at Newbiggin, Rockcliffe, Seaton Sluice and Spital-Cocklawburn.



A Purple Sandpiper at Bamburgh by Mike Carr on 3rd December

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

No visible immigration was reported this month with birds noted at scattered locations. Two were at Grindon, Warkworth and Warkworth Lane between 17th-28th (SW/CSa/BS) and singles were seen at Cramlington, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Elswick (flying S over the River Tyne), Haltonlea Fell, Howick, Linden Hall and Quarry House Moor. The remains of an unfortunate bird were found entangled in fishing nets at Holy Island on 31 (ADM).

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyrtus minimus*

At Big Waters, three were located on 9th (GB) and a single was seen at Bewick Moor on 22nd (IBDa/KDa).

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Low numbers of birds and low numbers of reports this month with the maximum number noted being 21 at Big Waters on 9th (GB). Seven were at Cresswell Pond on 7th and five at Arcot Lane flash on 13th (both DM). Singles were reported from Bothal Pond, Howdon and Howick.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

A single was reported from Whittle Dene reservoirs on dates between 8th-20th (SR/MR).

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Howdon remained the favoured haunt with 189 on 26th (CB). Birds were reported from three sites in the Berwick area with 184 in the River Tweed Estuary on 10th (TBr/APM), with 68 at Berwick Little Beach and 38 at Greene's Pier, both on 3rd. (MHu). Four were at St Mary's Island on 4th increasing to 128 by 20th (CDB/ASJ) and 68 roosted at St Mary's Wetland on 6th (MSH). Low Newton flash attracted 80 on 31st (TD), 50 were between Beal Point-Goswick on 30th (MJC), 28 at Newbiggin on 9th (CBD) and 20 at Alnmouth on 27th (DM). One-15 were seen at Amble Braid, Boghouses (unusual at this time of year), Cresswell Pond, Cocklawburn, Howick, Monks' House Pool, Rockcliffe and Seaton Sluice.

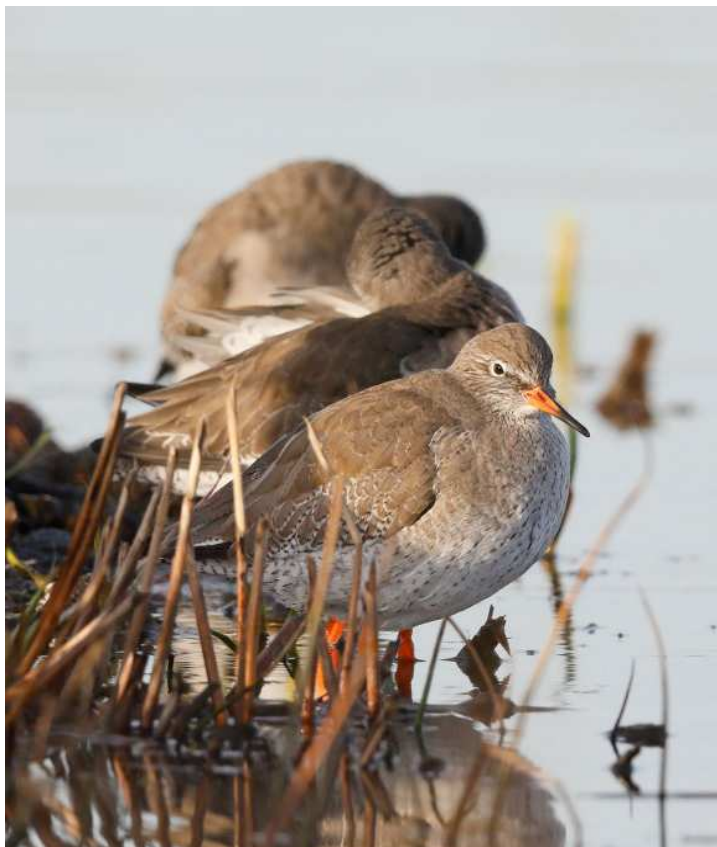
Redshank at St. Mary's wetland

Colin Bradshaw

18th December

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

An impressive gathering of at least 5,500 was in the gull roost at Derwent Reservoir on 12th (PRM) and a pre-roost gathering numbering 900 was in Newbiggin Bay on 10th (CH). Smaller counts of 293 came from the River Tweed Estuary (TBr/APM) and 100-150 at Castle Island, Killingworth Lake and the QEII CP (LJM/DM/PJA/CDH). Elsewhere, at nine other localities, small flocks of 25-90 were present. A Polish-ringed bird, yellow T86W, was seen at Stag Rocks (TF/JFa).



A Black-headed Gull

Chris Barlow

Ladyburn Lake

29th December

Bonaparte's Gull *Chroicocephalus philadelphia*

An adult frequented Stag Rocks, Bamburgh, associating with a large flock of Black-headed Gulls on 1st-3rd and was seen by many observers (CGK *et al.*). (This bird had also been seen at Stag Rocks on 25th and 30th November (RA/MJC).)

The Stag Rocks Bonaparte's Gull

Mike Carr

30th December

**Little Gull** *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

A single record comprised a 1st-winter bird in Newbiggin Bay on 18th (MJC/BCox).

Mediterranean Gull *Ichthyaetus melanocephalus*

Good numbers remained at Newbiggin with maximum counts of 30-32 (CDB/BS) but all other sightings were of one or two at twelve other sites, the majority in the south-east coastal conurbation (*many observers*). Two adults at Big Waters NWT on 16th carried colour rings, one from Poland, red PNY8, the other from Holland, white 3EKV (GB) and a Danish-ringed bird was at Swallow Pond on 9th (GPK).

A Mediterranean Gull
tries a sprout at
Killingworth Lake.

Chris Barlow

28th December



Common Gull *Larus canus*

A very significant count of 16,000+ came from the evening gull roost at Derwent Reservoir on 12th (PRM) and four-figure counts at Budle Point/Bay comprised 3,500+ on 1st, 1,700 on 22nd (CGK) and 1,000+ on 25th (DF). A roost at Alnmouth beach held 200 on 3rd (MKi) with gatherings elsewhere of 25-60 at six localities and up to 13 at a further eight sites.



A Common Gull at Derwent Bay CP on 18th December by Colin Bradshaw

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

Warkworth Gut held 63 on 18th (DM/PJA), a WeBS on 9th at Castle Island included 43 (DM/PJA), 33 were in the River Tweed Estuary on 10th (TBr/APM) and 22 were at Derwent Reservoir (PRM) and at Warkworth weir (DM). Single-figure counts of up to eight came from three other sites.

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

A 1st-winter bird was in Blyth Harbour on 29th (GB) and an 'immature', probably the same individual, was seen at Beacon Point, Boulmer on 31st (BS).

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoideus*

A 2nd-winter bird was seen at Big Waters NWT on three occasions from 17th-20th (GB/AJJ/ISD), this being the same individual seen there last winter, then in 1st-winter plumage, and identified by the same leg deformity.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argentatus*

Maximum counts were 378 in the River Tweed Estuary (TBr/APM), 145 at Derwent Reservoir (PRM), 140 at Colt Crag Reservoir (MR) with smaller numbers of 30-90 at Airy Holm Reservoir (IFo), Castle Island (DM/PJA), Cramlington (DM), Town Moor (Newcastle)(DM) and a Whitley Bay school fields (BS). Up to 20 were at a further eight localities.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

Single birds, the majority adults, were at six sites, Airy Holm Reservoir, Caistron, Colt Crag Reservoir, Cramlington and on the River Tyne at Warden.,

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

One was seen from the eastern shore at Holy Island on 4th (SR).

Auk *sp*

At Seaton Sluice, 60 flew N on 10th, but otherwise there were only small daily sightings there (SSWT).

Common Guillemot *Uria aalge*

Ten were on the sea at Boulmer on 27th (BS) and, on other dates throughout, one to eight were seen at Alnmouth Bay, Bamburgh, Blyth Harbour, Cocklawburn, Goswick, Howick and Ross.

Razorbill *Alca torda*

Ten were on the sea at Boulmer on 27th (BS) and, on other dates throughout, one to five were at Bamburgh, Birling Carrs, Druridge Bay, Ross, St Mary's Island and Snook Point (High Newton).

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

One or two were at Bamburgh Stag Rocks on a number of dates with a single at Goswick on 30th.

Rock Dove *Columba livia*

Large gatherings of 300 at Longhirst grain storage facility on 22nd (GB), 200 at Blyth Town Centre on 17th (RS), 185 at Benwell Shopping Centre on 21st (ADM) and 53 at Asda Supermarket (Gosforth) (DM) with one to 22 at five other locations.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

56 at dusk at Howdon on 15th (CB), 20 at Old Hartley on 23rd (RS), 19 at Big Waters NWT on 28th (GB) and eight at Longhoughton Quarry on 17th (BS) with one to three at six other locations.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

High counts of 600 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 11th (MR), 550 coming to roost at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 8th (DM), 400 at Haughton Castle on 23rd (SW), 300+ at Arcot Lane (Cramlington) on 31st (LJM) and 270 emerging from roost around dawn at Howdon on 13th (CB). Two to 18 were at Jesmond Dene and Whitley Bay.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

The peak count during the month at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) was 19 (RS) with 17 at Fenham-le-Moor on 30th (ASJ), 16 in one tree at Horton Burn (Cramlington) on 2nd (LJM) and 15 at Berwick Hill on 2nd (AHB). Eight were at Ogle on 2nd, seven at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 10th, six at Eachwick on 25th with one to two at Gosforth and Saltwick.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Well reported with two at Codlaw Hill (Alwinton) on 21st (SW), Howick-Embleton on 22nd (JAR) and Haughton Pasture on 30th (SW). Singles were at 25 other widespread localities five off which in daylight with one dead on road at East Nubbock (Hexham) on 23rd.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Four called throughout the month at Howick (JAR). Two at Spartylea on 22nd (CT) with one calling regularly at Rothbury in the second half of the month and singles at five other locations.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

A male in territorial song regularly during the month at Shiremoor (CGK), one at Kirkley on 4th (AHB) and at Blyth on 28th (ASJ).

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

At least four birds were at a roost site in SE Northumberland (GB), one at Barrasford Quarry on 4th (MD) and at Holy Island on 8th (MJC).

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

A total of ten on Holy Island with four noted regularly on farmland areas and six at the Snook on 27th (IK/MD/AM). Elsewhere only singles at Newbiggin on 4th, Druridge Pools on 9th, 10th & 16th, Prestwick Carr on 14th, Alnwick Moor on 24th and Beal Point – Goswick on 30th.



A Shortie eyeballs Mike Carr at Beal Point on 30th December

Short-eared Owl

Druridge

Col Bradshaw

18th December



Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Two at Tyneview Park (Benton) on 12th (KWY) and Jesmond Dene on 30th (MJCo) with regular sightings of singles at that location and at Budle Bay on four dates. Singles were also at two other coastal locations and five inland.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

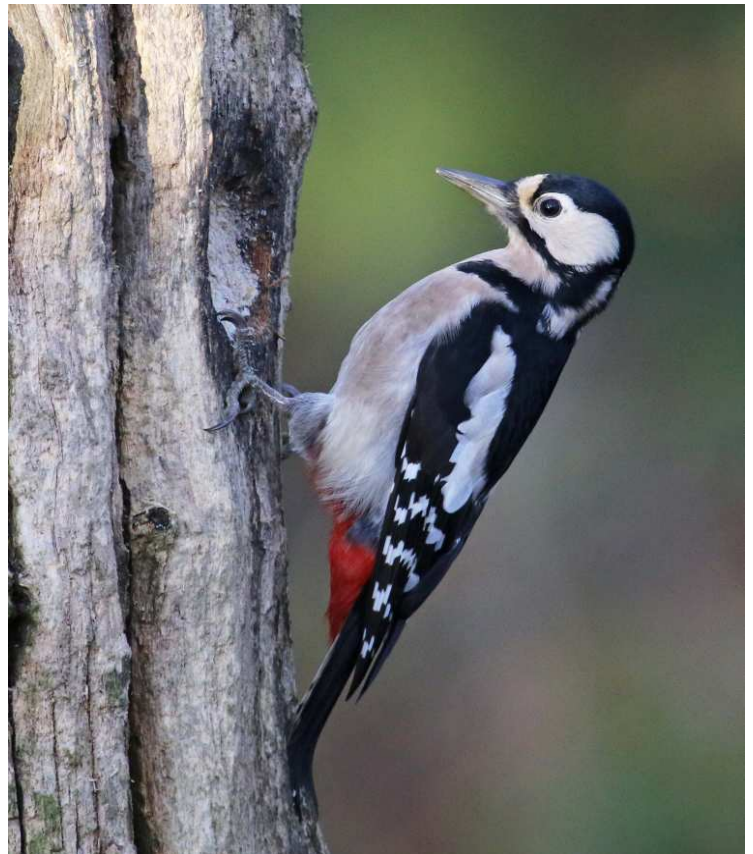
Three at Cragside (Rothbury) on 19th and Jesmond Dene on 30th (MJC/MJCo) with one to two at Spartylea all month (CT). Two were at Howick on 10th, Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 17th, Chollerford on 25th and Tarsset Burn (Sidwood) on 30th. Singles were at ten other locations.

A Great Spotted Woodpecker

Gosforth park NR

27th December

Jonathan Farooqii



Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

One heard at Dukeshouse (Hexham) on 4th (AJH).

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Three birds were on Holy Island throughout the month (IK) and three were also noted at Blyth on 10th (TB) and at East Chevington on 20th (MJC). Two birds were noted at Blyth Links, Holy Island, Laverock Hall (Blyth), West Hartford and Widdrington Moor Lake. Single birds were at 28 sites.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Single birds were seen at Yearle on 15th (per NNBC), Wooperton on 19th (per NNBC), Ross on 23rd (MJC), Warkworth GC on 24th (CSa), Budle Bay (24th (DF), Beal Point on 30th (MJC) and one hunting waders at the Causeway (Holy Island) on 31st (ADM).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Three birds flew over Longhoughton together on 22nd (BS). Two birds were at Colt Crag Reservoir on 21st (MR) and at Ross on 23rd (MJC). Single birds throughout the month at Cresswell Pond, Birling (Warkworth) and at Holy Island and at 17 other sites.

Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

On 24th seven flew over Jesmond (TD) with singles at Berwick Railway Station on 4th, Gosforth Golf Course on 9th, Hiveacres (Tweedmouth) on 14th, Jesmond Dene on 16th and Ord House CP (Berwick) on 24th.

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*

A first winter record for the county, a juvenile found by Alan Priest at Church Point (Newbiggin) on 2nd (GB).



The Newbiggin Red-backed Shrike by Jonathan Farooqi in 2nd December

Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor*

One found hunting a fence line at the east end of Prestwick Carr on 26th was chased off by Magpies not to be seen again (IK).

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Seven at Gosforth Park NR on 31st and four at North Seaton on 21st (MJC) with two at South Snods (Allensford) on 3rd, Jesmond Dene on 4th and Tarsset Burn (Sidwood) on 30th. A unusual record of one at Budle Bay on 1st with singles also at ten other widespread localities.

Magpie *Pica pica*

A roost at Balliol Business Park (Longbenton) of 93 on 21st (ADM), 39 at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 8th (DM), 12 in one tree at Manor Walks (Cramlington) on 10th (LJM) and one to three at Eachwick, Jesmond Dene and Whitley Bay.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

Between 15.15 and 16.15 on 3rd, 1,950 flew out of South Tyne valley toward roost at Brampton (Cumbria) in flocks of 3 to 170 (SW). 200 were at Waterside House (Alnmouth) on 18th and Benton (Newcastle) on 20th (DM/LJM/MP) with 89 at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 14th, 56 at Beal Point-Goswick on 30th and 36 at Spartylea during the month (CT). 17 were at Jesmond Dene on 4th and three at Eachwick on 16th.



A Jackdaw
QEII Lake
9th December
Colin Bradshaw

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

On 30th 262 were found at Beal Point-Goswick (MJC), 140 at Otterburn on 31st (CB) and 83 at Buston Links Beach on 27th with 22 at Dilston (Corbridge) on 9th and five at Cramlington on 14th.

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

87 at Beal Point-Goswick on 30th (MJC), 56 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 10th (MR) with only eight moving off Seaton Sluice Watch Tower and one to five at Jesmond Dene, Newbiggin and Whitley Bay.

Raven *Corvus corax*

Four flew west at Coanwood Lough on 26th (SJH) with two at Windy Gyle on 1st, Quarry House Moor on 10th, Berwick Moor (Blawearie) on 22nd and Alnwick Moor on 28th. A single flew west at Plenmeller Common on 13th.

Waxwing *Bombus garrulus*

On 25th 24 were at Chollerford (SW), 20 at Bellingham Heritage Centre on 12th (AJ), 12 fed on trees outside Northern Stage (Newcastle) on 24th (CW), four at Woodhorn Flashes on 1st and three at Hiveacres (Tweedmouth) on 12th. Singles were at Stobhill (Morpeth) on 10th, Mootlaw Quarry (Ryal) on 14th and Wark (N Tyne) on 24th.

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

Up to eight at Spartylea during the month (CT), six at feeders at Tynemouth on 26th (CB) and four at Allen Banks on 30th (RB/MB). Two were at Dinnington, Jesmond Dene and Whitley Bay with a single at Eachwick.

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

Three were at Linnels Wood (Hexhamshire) on 30th (MD/AM), two at East Linden on 2nd, Peth Foot on the same date, Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 2nd & 3rd and Fontburn area on 15th. Singles were also at Longhoughton Quarry, Mitford, High Ford (Morpeth), Low Cocklaw (Berwick) and Rothbury.

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

At Prestwick Carr on 2nd five were found (MH) with three there on 16th, three visited garden feeders at East Linden on 9th (PHa/AHa), and were at Brier Dene (Whitley Bay) on 31st (IJ). Two were also at Eshott, Linden Hall (Longhorsley), Craster and Big Waters NR with singles at a further seven locations.

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

On 2nd 14 were at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) (IJ), up to 12 at Spartylea during the month (CT), seven in phragmites at Gosforth Park NR on 13th and at Eachwick on 16th (MH/CDB), five at Dinnington on 14th with four at Corbridge, Jesmond Dene and Whitley Bay.

Great Tit *Parus major*

High count of 12 feeding on ground litter at Howick Pool (PHa/AHa), ten at Allen Banks on 30th (RB/MB), eight the high count at Spartylea (CT) and six at Prestwick Carr and Brierdene (Whitley Bay). Three to four were at Dinnington, Eachwick and Jesmond Dene.

Bearded Tit *Panarus biarmicus*

Two seen and heard in reeds at East Chevington on 16th (ASJ).

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

On 30th 43 were found Beal-Goswick (MJC), 25+ at Lindisfarne NNR Beal Saltmarsh on 8th (CGK), 19 at Fenham-le-Moor on 30th (ASJ), 18 at Crowhall Farm (Holywell) on 31st (MNC) and 11 at Boulmer on 29th (BS). One to nine were at six other locations.

Shore Lark *Eremophila alpestris*

Four were at Buston Links (Alnmouth) from 16th till 28th and observed by many with two at Long Nanny (Newton) on 31st (TD).

Shore Lark

Buston Links

Alan Jack

27th December



Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*

A bird was heard calling at East Chevington on 24th December (TF/JFa).

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

A flock of 29 at Warden on 1st was the largest gathering (SW). Two flocks totalling 20 birds were at North Seaton on 21st, 18 at Edlingham on 26th, 17 at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) and 16 at Howick Pool on 25th. Flocks of ten to 12 were reported from Brierdene (Whitley Bay), Cramlington (Southfield Green), Eachwick, High Ford (Morpeth), Humshaugh, Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) and Spartylea. Nine were at Cramlington (Valley Park) and visiting garden feeders at Shilbottle, eight at Howick and Tynemouth and one to seven at a further seven localities.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Singles were noted at Cornhill-on-Tweed on 11th, Elwick on 23rd, Gosforth Park NR on 31st, Longhoughton Quarry on 28th, Ponteland Park on 20th and Swallow Pond on an unspecified date.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

A male visited feeders at Hexham on 10th, a female was in a Benton garden on 26th and 29th and another male was at Gosforth on 27th.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Ten were noted at Bakethin (Kielder) on 1st (MD). The only other reports were of one to two at Annitsford, Cramlington (three localities), Humshaugh, Jesmond Dene and Prestwick Carr.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Four were at Hexham (Dukeshouse) on 4th (AJH) and one to two at Brierdene (Whitley Bay), Jesmond Dene and Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin).

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

A total of five were noted in Jesmond Dene on 16th (MJCo), four + were at Eshott on 10th and one to two at Craggside, Cramlington (Southfield Green/Valley Park), Cramlington Hall, Crooked Oak (Carterway Heads), Derwent Reservoir, East Ord, Holystone, Howick Hall, Hulne Park (Alnwick), Humshaugh Northumberland Park (North Shields), Rothbury, Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth), Spartylea and Yearle.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

There was account of six from Gosforth GC on 9th (MJC) and three were found at Allen Banks on 30th. Elsewhere, two were noted at Colt Crag, Derwent and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, Hexham (Tyne Green), Howick Hall, Humshaugh, Prestwick Carr and Spartylea and singles at Big Waters, Brierdene (Whitley Bay), Dilston (Corbridge), Dipton Mill, Druridge Bay CP, Halton-Lea-Gate, Longhoughton Quarry, Ross, Rothbury, Sidwood and Spindleston.

Rose-coloured Starling *Pastor roseus*

The bird at North Seaton was seen again on 8th (TF/JFa).

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

The regular roost at Lambley Water Treatment Works peaked at 10-11,000 on 11th, when a 30 minute 'murmuration' was so low at times it managed to spook the nearby sheep; the reeds were cut later in the month and the roost displaced (SJH). A less spectacular gathering and 'murmuration' at Wark (North Tyne) numbered 600 on 31st, while 500+ were at St Mary's Wetland on 7th and 400 at Boulmer on 10th. Around 50 were at Spartylea during the month and a similar number at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) on 2nd.

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

A 2km stretch of the Horton Burn (Cramlington) produced an impressive count of 56 on 2nd (LJM). Some 20 were at Howdon on 15th, 17 fed on fallen apples in a Marden Estate (Whitley Bay) garden on several dates and 15 were at Ross on 20th. Nine were noted at Eachwick on 16th and two to five at Brierdene (Whitley Bay), Dinnington, Jesmond Dene and Spartylea.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

Some sizeable flocks continued to be reported with around 400 at Budle Bay on 21st (DF), 300 in a mixed flock with Redwings at Prestwick Carr on 4th and 200 at Eachwick on 8th. Elsewhere, 120-140 were noted at Crooked Oak (Carterway Heads), Rothley Lakes, Thirston and West Ord (Berwick) and 70-75 at Alwinton, Fontburn and Whittingham, with 65 at Embleton and 40-50 at Berwick, Ellington, Flotterton, Houxy Burn (Wark), Low Cocklaw and Sharperton.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

The highest count was 200 in a mixed flock with Fieldfares at Prestwick Carr on 4th (IK). Elsewhere, 60 were at Cornhill-on-Tweed on 11th, 35-40 in this area at Low Cocklaw and West Ord, 35 at Horton (Blyth) and 31 at Howdon. Counts of 15-21 were reported from Dam Dykes (Cramlington), Houxy Burn (Wark), Sidwood, Thirston (Felton) and West Hartford and up to 12 from a further 14 localities. It was noted as being particularly scarce in the Crooked Oak (Carterway Heads) area this autumn / winter.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

It was typically scarce this month, although early singing birds were noted at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 9th, Gosforth Garden Village on 20th and Brandling Park (Newcastle) on 28th. Elsewhere, two were noted at Howdon on 26th, and singles were at Chollerford and Jesmond Dene.



A Song Thrush at Tynemouth by Colin Bradshaw on 5th December

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Six were at Ross on 23rd (MJC) and four at Otterburn and at Whittingham at the end of the month. Counts of three came from Chugdon Wood (Ellington) and Benton and one to two from a further 20 localities. Singing was noted from 4th at Allen Banks, Fulbeck (Morpeth), Hulne Park (Alnwick), Howdon, Linden Hall, Ross and Whittingham.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

A 2km stretch of the Horton Burn (Cramlington) produced a total of 18 on 2nd (LGM), four were at Eachwick on 16th, three at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) and two at Jesmond Dene and Spartylea.

Right: a Robin at Howdon
16th December by Colin Bradshaw

Below: a partial albino Robin in a Byker
allotment by David Moir on 16th
December

**Black Redstart** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Single female / juvenile types were noted at Tynemouth on 23rd (DRW), Lynemouth on 27th (Alan Priest) and Meggie's Burn (Blyth) on 29th (GB).

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

Peak counts were five at Cheswick on 20th (MHu), three at Cresswell Pond on 16th and three at Buston Links on 28th. Counts of two came from Ros Castle (Chillingham), Druridge dunes, East Chevington, Howick, Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) and St Mary's Island with singles at Alnmouth, Cocklawburn, Holystone and Warkworth Gut.

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

Three birds were noted at Allen Banks on 30th (RB/LB). Two were seen at Morpeth, Hexham and Warden in the final week and singles at a further seven sites, including one singing on five occasions at a brook in a Fulbeck (Morpeth) garden (TD).

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Birds were present all month, with a maximum of 80 at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) (RS). 68 were counted along 2 km of the Horton Burn (Cramlington) on 2nd (LJM). Around 60 were at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 30th (TBr). 32 were noted at Chapel House/Park Estates (Newcastle) on 23rd and 30 at Callerton on 22nd (MH). 30 were also seen at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 19th (DM). 17 were at garden feeders at Gosforth Garden village and at Marden Estate during the month (MJC/ASJ). One to 14 were at five further sites.

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

35 at Crow Hall Farm (Holywell Dene) on 2nd was the monthly peak count (ASJ). Up to 33 were at a Morpeth garden during the month (TD). 30 were also in a garden at Linden Hall on 25th (NFO). Around 25 noted during December at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) (TBR). 21 were in hedgerows at Elwick on 30th (ASJ). 20 were at Eachwick on 30th (CDB). One to 16 were seen at a further 13 sites.

Duncock *Prunella modularis*

Six were seen in Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 20th (ASJ). Three were in Jesmond Dene on 16th and at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) all month. Two were at Spartylea and a Marden garden during the month. One was singing at Linden Hall on 16th.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Three were seen at Fontburn on 2nd (MJC). Two were at Humshaugh and Jesmond Dene on 1st and 16th. Singles were at Linden Hall on 3rd and at St. Mary's/Whitley Bay beach on several dates, and at a further eight sites during the month.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

Eight fed on the beaches at St Mary's Island on 12th (ASJ). Six were at Laverock Hall (Blyth) on 17th (TB). Four at Ross on 10th (MJC). One to three were at eight other sites.

Richard's Pipit *Anthus richardi*

One was watched at Ross on 10th (MJC).

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

A good winter flock of 26 birds was found at Quarry House Moor on 10th (MH). 12 plus were at St. Mary's on 2nd with four there on 6th and eight on 12th (MSH/ASJ). One to two were at six further sites in the month.

Omission from November bulletin**Water Pipit** *Anthus spinoletta*

There were several reports in November. One was at Beacon Point on 11th (STH) and again on 12th (DE). A single was also at Howick on 11th (BS) and another at Holy Island on 18th (MJC/ADM). Three were seen at Stag Rocks on 26th (DF).

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

A good count of 60 was made on 4th at Coves Haven (Holy Island) (SR). 17 were on the island on 31st (ADM). Eight to nine were noted at St Mary's on 8th and 15th (CDB/ASJ). Nine were at Boulmer on 20th and five the previous day, eight plus at Stag rocks on 1st (NFO/MKi/MSH). Four were also at Berwick Little Beach, Stag Rocks, Tynemouth, St. Mary's and Cullercoats and Newbiggin during the month (MHu/CDB/ASJ/TB). One to three were noted at a further three sites.

A Rock Pipit at St. Mary's

Colin Bradshaw

17th December



Rock Pipit *Anthus pratensis littoralis*

Birds of the northern sub-species were found at Holy Island, with a minimum of three at the north shore on 31st (ADM). A single was at Stag Rocks on 14th (MJC/BC).

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

80 in stubble at Howick on 20th and 70 in a game crop at Old Bewick on 23rd were the month's largest flocks found (JAR/ASJ). 45 were counted in a mixed finch/sparrow flock feeding in dunes at East Chevington Burn mouth on 9th and 25 seen in a game crop at Crow Hall Farm (Holywell Dene) on 3rd (ASJ). One to 25 were at four other sites.



A Chaffinch at Tynemouth on 5th December by Colin Bradshaw

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

Most sightings were from the South West of the County, with a minimum of 76 feeding at Crooked Oak on 3rd, with similar numbers seen there on 10th. 12 were seen at Airy Holm Reservoir on 11th. Eight at Allensford on 3rd and six at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd (IFo). Two to five were at seven other sites, including singles at garden feeders at Gosforth and Rowfoot.

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Well reported, with eight at Gosforth Park, including a singing male on 31st (MJC). Six were seen regularly in a Morpeth garden during the month (TD). Six also noted at Airy Holm, Derwent Reservoir, Hauxley, Prestwick Carr and Druridge Bay in December. Five were at Atlee Park (Bedlington) on 27th (GB). One to four were also noted at a further 26 locations this month.

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

An impressive pre-roost gathering on 24th and 25th at Linden Hall, numbered 90 birds (NFO). Eight were at Whittle Dene on 20th and six plus were at Spartylea all month. Six at Berwick on 3rd. One to five seen at six further sites.

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*

A flock of 100 was at Goswick on 30th, with 63 between Beal Point and Goswick on 30th (BS/MJC). 85+ noted at East Chevington Burn mouth on 17th with 70 counted there on 24th. 18 to 61 also reported there on several other dates (MSH/TFa/JFa). Another flock of 60 was at Snook (Holy Island) on 20th (JR). Seven were at Cocklawburn on 6th and Boulmer on 7th. Three were at Berwick Little Beach on 3rd.

A Twite

Chibburn mouth

Chris Barlow

27th December



Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

200 were in a game crop at Fenham Mill on 11th (MH/AA). 127 were counted from Beal to Goswick on 30th (MJC). 120 noted at Allensford on 3rd (IFo). 80 plus were at Stag rocks on 12th (MSH). 65 seen at Briar Dene Farm on 15th, increased to 75 by 29th (MNC). 20 were at Buston on 28th.

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis caberet*

100 were found at Colt Crag on 14th (MR). 30 at Linden Hall on 4th increased to 70 by 8th (NFO). One to eight at six further sites, including one briefly at feeders at Marden Estate (ASJ).



A Mealy Redpoll

Linden Hall

Neil Osborne

9th December

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

66+ were at Harwood Head on 30th, including singing males and a displaying pair (MSH). 30 seen in Kidland Forest on 1st (BS). Also on 1st 25 were watched at Whickhopeburn (Kielder). On Alnwick Moor 10 birds were seen on 6th (JD). One to eight were seen during the month at Peth Foot, Corbridge Common, Chillingham, Craggside and seven flew S at the coast at Longhoughton on 2nd (BS).

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

A flock of around 100 fed at Wallsend Swallow Pond on 23rd (ASJ/SPP). 50 were seen at North Sunderland on 15th and 40 at Eachwick on 16th (JPL/CDB). Birds attending garden feeders at Chapel House Estate peaked at 30 on 2nd (MH). 30 were in Cramlington Village on 26th (DM). 25+ were at Spartylea during the month (CT). 22 noted at Brier Dene on 2nd (IF). Four to 16 were seen at a further eight sites.

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

Some large flocks were seen this month, with 160 feeding in alders at Chollerford on 25th (SW). 120+ at Wark on 21st (PRM). 85+ along the East Allen river on 19th (HP). Two to 32 noted at ten other sites.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

40+ were feeding in a game crop at Crow Hall Farm (Holywell Dene) on 3rd (ASJ). 23 noted at Buston Links on 28th (SW). 16 were around chicken coops at Prestwick Carr on 23rd (ASJ). 12 at feeders at Big Waters on 20th (GB). Ten at Low Cocklaw was the peak count for the month here (TBr). Nine were at Chollerford on 25th (SW). One to six were seen at nine further sites during the month.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

22 were in a game crop at Crow Hall Farm (Holywell Dene) on 21st and 12 here on 3rd. 18 at nearby Brier Dene Farm on 15th (MNC/ASJ). Nine noted at Buston Links on 27th (ASJ). Six between Beal Point and Goswick on 30th (MJC). Five were at Whittle Dene on 20th and four at St. Mary's and Big Waters on 4th and 16th. One to three were at eight other sites, including well inland at Carterway Heads and Holystone.



A Reed Bunting at East Chevington
Colin Bradshaw on 9th December

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

A large flock of 29 was seen at Ross on 10th (MJC). Seven flew S at Stag rocks on 7th (TFa/JFa). Four were at Coves Haven (Holy Island) on 4th (SR). On 1st three, one male, fed along Whitley Bay promenade before moving to the promenade at St. Mary's Island later that day and remaining there, feeding on grass seeds on the banks to the month's end (ASJ *et al.*). Two birds flew N at Stag Rocks on 30th (ASJ). Singles were seen at Druridge Bay, Newbiggin and Ross during the month.



One of the popular and confiding Snow Buntings at St. Mary's by Alan Janes on 10th December

ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN**Escapes**

No sightings

Hybrids

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

A single hybrid was seen at Big Waters on 30th (GB).

Mallard x Pintail *Anas platyrhynchos* x *Anas acuta*

A hybrid of this unusual pairing was noted at Colt Crag Reservoir on 17th (MR).

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

Again seen at Swallow Pond with one seen all month (GPK).

Scaup x Tufted Duck *Aythya marila* x *Aythya fuligula*

One at Bolam Lake on 17th was thought possibly to be the same individual as seen at Gosforth in November when initially thought to be Scaup x Pochard (AJR). These *Aythya* hybrids can be very difficult to be sure of parentage.



The hybrid Scaup x Tufted Duck from Bolam Lake
John Richards on 17th December

Birds of Unknown Origin

No sightings

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

A.Allen, A.H.Banks, C.D.Barlow, G. & R.Bell, R.B. & M. Bentley (RB / MB), D.H.W.Blair, T.Blake, A.Bowman,G.Bowman, C.Bradshaw, T.Brewis (TBr), D.J.Carr (DJC), E.F.Carr, M.J.Carr, M.N.Coates, M.J.Cook (MJCo), B.Cox (BCox), T.Daley, I.B. & K.Davison (IBDa / Kda), T.R. & J.Dean, I.R.Douglas, C.Duncan, S.T.Elliott, T. & J.Farooqi (TF / JFa), P.C.Fletcher, D.F.Forshaw, I.Forsyth (IFo), A. & M.Goodall, C.D.Hampton, A. & P.H.Hanmer (AHa / PHa), A.S.Hart, C.Hartley, M.Henry, A.J.Hewitt, S.J.Hingston, M.S.Hodgson, M.Hutcheson (MHu), A.S.Jack, A.Janes, I.Johnson, I.Kerr, M.Kirby (MKi), C.G.Knox, G.P.Knox, J.P.Lumby, P.R.Massey, M.H.Mayfield, L.J.McDougall, D.Mckeown, M.McNeely (MMcN), A.P.Mossop, A.D.Mould, N.F.Osborne, H.Peters, M.Potts, R.Poyer, A.J.Richards, M.Richardson, S.Rippon, J.A.Roper, C.Saunders, M.R.Smith, B.Steel, R.Stevens, A.L.Todd, C.Tudge, D.R.Watson, S.Westerberg, T.Wiffen (TWi), C.Wright, K.W.York.

North Northumberland Bird Club (R Poyer), Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

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

This bulletin was compiled by Graeme Bowman (Geese to Mergansers), Steve Laing (Red Grouse to Cormorant), Trevor Blake (Hawks to Falcons), Tom Brewis (Oystercatcher to Godwit), Clive Hampton (Turnstone to Redshank), Eddie Crabtree (Kittiwake to Puffin), Tim Dean (Escapes, Hybrids and Unknown Origin, List of Contributors, Highlights), Peter Fletcher (Doves to Larks), Mike Richardson (Tits to Stonechat), Alan Jack (Dipper to Buntings).

Thanks to David Sanders of NNBC for providing data.

Proof reading was by Mike Smith.

Mail distribution by Paul Stewart.

Tom Brewis is Data Manager

Edited by Steve Barrett NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com

RECORD SUBMISSION

Please email records for the month to ntbc.records@googlemail.com

Please email for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and grid references: Please use of standard location names and 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

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 online resource for anyone interested in birds. There are:

Photo Galleries – Here you can view hundreds of photos of birds from Northumberland, Newcastle and North Tyneside. Members are encouraged to contribute their own photos. Simply send them to galleries@ntbc.org.uk

Sightings – Here you can view reports of birds recently reported in the County. Anyone who would like to contribute and post sightings to this page, please email sightings@ntbc.org.uk Please note this section is moderated, so there may be a short delay before your record appears.

There are also County Checklists, Records Committee updates, Information on important Surveys, useful articles and reports on Bird ID and Overseas Birding Trips....and much more...

Please submit any other new content for the website to the main club email address at ntbcorg@gmail.com

New content such as Birding Trip Reports etc., is always welcome and very much appreciated.

To find out more please visit www.ntbc.org.uk

BIRDS IN NORTHUMBRIA 2018

Author needed – A section author is needed to write the **Goose** texts. Only seven species, so might appeal to someone new to BiN (but 'old hands' also welcome!). Guidance notes and help provided. A rewarding role that shouldn't be too time consuming and can be completed from now to **early September 2019**.

Photographs - Photos are always welcome for consideration. All members are free to submit images (taken within the county during 2018). Please send as 300Dpi max. resolution images, max. width and height 246mm x 346mm, on one or more emails, or via Dropbox, by **31st May 2019**.

Papers - Papers from members (on any bird-related topic in the county) are always welcome for publication. I have a few already agreed for BiN 2018, but there will be room for one or two more. To discuss a possible paper for BiN 2018, or a future BiN, please contact me **ASAP**.

For any of the above, please contact Andy Mould
tel: 0191 2664265, or mobile 0780 362 3768,
or email: highroller10@btinternet.com

single hit

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	Tot
Woodpigeon	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Collared Dove	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Barn Owl	1		1	1	1			1
Little Owl	1		1		1			1
Tawny Owl	1		1		1	1		1
Long-eared Owl					1	1		1
Short-eared Owl								
Kingfisher					1			1
Green Woodpecker								
Great Spotted Woodpecker		1	1		1	1		1
Skylark								
Shorelark			1			1		1
Meadow Pipit	1	1	1					1
Rock Pipit	1		1		1		1	1
Water Pipit	1	1						1
Grey Wagtail					1			1
Pied Wagtail	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Dipper	1	1	1			1		1
Wren	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Dunnock	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Robin	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Black Redstart					1			1
Stonechat	1		1	1		1	1	1
Blackbird	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Fieldfare	1	1	1	1		1		1
Song Thrush	1	1	1		1			1
Redwing	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Mistle Thrush	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Goldcrest	1	1	1		1	1		1
Firecrest	1							1
Long-tailed Tit	1	1	1		1	1	1	1
Marsh Tit								
Willow Tit					1		1	1
Coal Tit	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Blue Tit	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Great Tit	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Nuthatch		1		1	1	1		1
Treecreeper		1	1		1	1		1
Great Grey Shrike								
Jay		1	1		1	1		1
Magpie	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Jackdaw	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Rook	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Carriion Crow	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Hooded Crow								
Starling	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
House Sparrow	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Tree Sparrow	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Chaffinch	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Brambling	1	1	1	1		1		1
Greenfinch	1	1	1	1	1	1		1
Goldfinch	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Siskin		1	1		1			1
Linnnet	1	1	1	1		1		1
Twite	1		1	1		1	1	1
Lesser Redpoll			1					1
Mealy Redpoll								
Crossbill			1					1
Bullfinch	1		1	1	1	1	1	1
Yellowhammer	1	1		1	1	1		1
Snow Bunting	1	1	1				1	1
Reed Bunting	1	1	1	1	1	1		1
Lapland Bunting								
Total Species	109	106	102	86	98	104	77	131

G: Liam Gormley, John Harrison, Paul King, David Southern