

# Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2018 No 1

MONTHLY SUMMARY JANUARY 2019

4th March 2019



## CONTENTS

NTBC Website – an update

Tyne Kittiwake Partnership news

## CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS HIGHLIGHTS

Tundra Bean Goose	Five at Cocklawburn on 21st.
Taiga Bean Goose	Four remained at Newham Hall until 13th with one there on 16th.
Whooper Swan	Peak of 97 at East Chevington on 12th.
Scaup	Scarce with only two at Cresswell and four at East Chevington noted.
Black Scoter	The drake was seen all month in Goswick / Cheswick area.
Smew	A redhead remained at Widdrington Moor Lake all month.
Red-necked Grebe	Three at Bamburgh and at Holy Island harbour. Singles at Ross and N Blyth.
Bittern	Two at Gosforth Park on 21st.
Great White Egret	First county record in winter with one at Wark on 13th.
Crane	Immature wintering at Coldstream came south of the river from 8th.
Ruff	Only one record with a male at Low Newton.
Jack Snipe	Three at Big Waters on 1st with singles at Branton GP and at Harwood Forest.
Spotted Redshank	Wintering individuals at Budle Bay and at Yarrow Slake, Berwick.
Iceland Gull	Second-winter at Big Waters from 14th to 20th.
Barn Owl	Encouraging number of sightings with 47 records.
Waxwing	Only singles at Morpeth and Holystone.
Shorelark	Four were regularly seen at Buston Links all month.
Firecrest	One seen all month at Northumberland Park, North Shields.
Black Redstart	Singles at Tynemouth and Blyth all month.
Water Pipit	Regular bird at Seaton Pt, Boulmer all month with one at St Mary's on 13th.
Lapland Bunting	One at Beal Pt on 20th.
Snow Bunting	Popular three at St Mary's seen all month with up to 34 at Goswick.



Long-tailed Duck  
Jonathan Farooqi  
19th January  
Holy Island

## 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:

### 14th February 2019

Ian Fisher **Australia - Birding the edge of the Desert**

Ian will talk about an exciting trip made Easter 2018, part birding, part ringing expedition to Bowra "on the edge of the desert" Queensland. Then over into Northern New South Wales.

## FIELD TRIPS

Contact Steve Anderson [seaswan@btinternet.com](mailto:seaswan@btinternet.com)  
 Sunday 28th April Langholm for harriers and other upland species,

Sunday 26th May Geltsdale RSPB reserve,

Saturday 22nd June Winnows Hill for nightjars,

September tbc Musselburgh for sea ducks etc,

## CLASSIFIED LIST

### Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

Peak counts of pale-bellied *hrota* race birds were 800 at Budle Bay on 29th (DF), 200 at Beal Point on 1st (TD) and 100 at Fenham Flats on 7th (TRD/JD). One at St Mary's Island on 6th was killed by a dog (ASJ), and one off Druridge on the same date (TRD/JD). Dark-bellied *bernicla* race birds involved 150 at Holy Island harbour on 19th (TF/JFa), 90 regularly feeding on a *Zostera* bed at St Cuthbert's Island, Holy Island (IK) and 70 using a rock pool on the east side of Holy Island on 12th (IK). On 6th five un-raced birds flew N at Tynemouth (ASJ) and four N at Boulmer (MKi).

### Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Large concentrations involved 740 at Grindon Lough on 17th (MRS), 228 at Big Waters on 1st (a site record; AIB), 207 at Hipsburn on 10th (MKi), 185 at East Chevington on 18th (ST/IFo), and 128-130 at Colt Crag and Derwent Reservoirs (IFo/MR), 53 at the Tweed Estuary, and 24-27 at Castle Island and Newcastle Leazes Park.

### Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

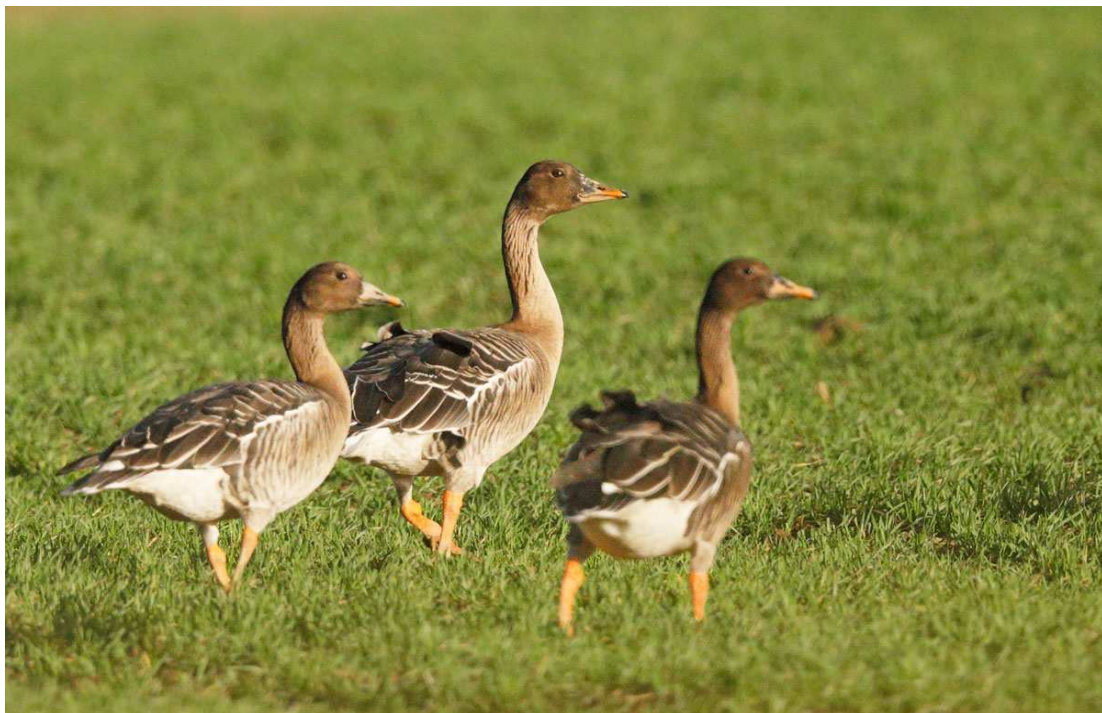
2,000 were at Harper's Heugh-Budle Bay early in the month (IBDa/KDa *et al.*) but declined to 1,050 by 29th (DF). The only report away from this area was of the regular bird at QEII CP Lake.

### Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

920 were at Derwent Reservoir on 16th (IFo), 400 at Big Waters on 20th (GB), 255 at East Holywell on 31st (MSH), 112-172 at Airy Holm and Colt Crag Reservoirs, Arcot Pond, Cheswick-Cocklawburn, Prestwick Carr and Woodhorn, and 51 at Settlingstones. Flocks of 11-30 were at Acklington, Castle Island, Monks' House Pool, Newham Bog and Old Hartley.

### Taiga Bean Goose *Anser fabalis*

Four were regularly reported from Newham Hall (near Chathill) between 4th-10th (BS/JPL *et al.*) and at least one on 16th (TRD/JD).



Taiga Bean Geese by Colin Bradshaw

Seahouses on 7th January



**Pink-footed Goose** *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Active movement included a total of 690 N at East Ord on 19th-20th (MHu), 340 N at Berwick on 6th (MHu), 43 N and 289 S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), 250 N at Howdon on 1st (CB), and 100 N at Eshott on 5th. Groups of 14-88 were also at/over several further sites, and one was again at Killingworth Lake. Some large gatherings included 6,000 at Newham Hall on 14th (CB/GW) where 4,370 were counted on 4th (BS), 5,000+ in the Elford area on 15th (DF), 3,000 S at East Chevington at dusk on 12th (TF/JFa), 2,500 at Widdrington Moor Lake on 22nd (TRD), and 2,000 at Budle Bay-Ross and Cresswell Pond. Counts of 1,500-1,540 came from Druridge hamlet, Low Newton and Widdrington Moor Lake, while 800 were at Acklington and Beal Point-Goswick, and 250-450 at Cocklawburn, Doddington, East Holywell, High Hauxley, Holburn and Seaton Sluice.

At Newham an individual with orange legs and another with an all-yellow bill were noted on 3rd (MSH). Neck-collared individuals (VCJ and VVA) were at Cresswell Pond on 1st and had been ringed at Martin Mere in March 2018 and in Iceland in July 2017 respectively (TF/JFa). The latter bird was at Cresswell in December 2017 and at Loch Leven in October 2018. A leucistic individual was at Colt Crag Reservoir on 11th (MR).

**Tundra Bean Goose** *Anser serrirostris*

Five were grazing in fields next to Cocklawburn Pond on 21st (MHu).

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

Two Eurasian *albifrons* race birds (adult and juvenile) were in the Bell's Pond-Cresswell Pond-Ellington area on three dates between 1st-15th (TF/JFa/TD/TRD). An un-raced adult was with Pink-footed Geese at Embleton on 13th (BS).

**Mute Swan** *Cygnus olor*

Two flew N at Seaton Sluice on 1st (SSWT). Peak counts were 70 at QEII CP Lake on 29th (LJM), 50 at Killingworth Lake on 16th (LJM), 32 on the River Tyne at Howdon on 21st (CB), 30 at Castron (JD), and 12-14 at Big Waters, the Tweed Estuary and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

**Whooper Swan** *Cygnus cygnus*

97 flew in to East Chevington at dusk on 12th (TF/JFa) and 89 were noted there on 19th (IK/ASH), 67 were at Shortridge Hall (near Low Buston) on 3rd and 5th (CSa/ASJ), 27 at Fenham Mill on 20th (ASJ), 25 near Druridge Pools on 2nd (TD), 15-17 at Harper's Heugh and Hartburn Reservoir, and six to nine at Greenlee Lough and Milfield.

**Shelduck** *Tadorna tadorna*

Eight flew N at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT) and four headed N at St Mary's Island on 20th (JBu). The Fenham Flats section of Lindisfarne NNR held 810 on 20th (ASJ), 49 were at Budle Bay on 6th (AJR), 22 at the Blyth Estuary (LJM) and Howdon (CB), and six at Amble Harbour. One to two were also reported from Boulmer, Castle Island, East Chevington, the Tyne Estuary and West Ord.

**Mandarin** *Aix galericulata*

Four were at Holystone on 23rd (DRo) and a duck was at Newcastle Exhibition Park on 22nd (GB).

**Shoveler** *Spatula clypeata*

Budle Bay again held good numbers, with a peak of 39 on 9th (DF) and ten to 35 regularly during the month. Peak counts elsewhere involved 34 at Swallow Pond on 20th (GPK), ten at Holy Island (eight at the Lough and two at the 'rocket field'; IK), and seven to nine at Arcot Pond, Gosforth Park NR and Low Newton scrape. Three were at Killingworth Lake and Marden Quarry, and one to two at Bothal, Cresswell and Linton Ponds, Marden Quarry, Monks' House Pool and Woodridge.

**Gadwall** *Mareca strepera*

39 were at QEII CP Lake on 20th (CDH), 30 at Marden Quarry on 20th (CDH), 21 at Castron (JD) and Hedgeley GP (IBDa/KDa), and ten to 19 at Big Waters, the Blyth Estuary and Howdon. Four to eight were also at Bothal and Linton Ponds, Castle Island, Druridge Pools, Gosforth Park NR, Holy Island and Killingworth Lake, and one to two at Colt Crag and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, Cocklawburn Pond, East Chevington and Howick. A very unusual record involved a drake on the River Wansbeck at Scotch Gill, Morpeth on 12th (ADMc).

**Wigeon** *Mareca penelope*

Two N on 2nd was the only sign of movement at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). A minimum of 900 were at Cresswell Pond on 18th (STH/IFo), 614 were at Derwent Reservoir on 24th (IFo), 600 at Newham on 13th (BS), 450 at Budle Bay on 1st (CGK), 336-354 at Warkworth weir and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, 200-280 at Cresswell and Low Newton, and 104-170 at Bothal Pond, the Coquet Estuary, Grindon Lough, Hedgeley GP and Widdrington Moor Lake. Groups of 50-97 were at Alnmouth, Boulmer, Colt Crag Reservoir, Gosforth Park NR and Linton Ponds, and 28-45 were at Havannah NR, the Tweed Estuary and Woodbridge.

Wigeon at Gosforth NR by Mike Carr on 6th January



**Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*

Peak counts were 306 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 25th (SR), 235 at the Tweed Estuary on 23rd (TBr/APM), 190 at Derwent Reservoir on 24th (IFo), 115-124 at Budle Bay, Colt Crag Reservoir, Cresswell Pond and Hedgeley GP, and 54-80 at Bothal Pond, Castle Island, Eland Hall (Ponteland), Holy Island Lough. Groups of 30-48 were also at Airy Holm Reservoir, Cheswick, Cocklawburn, Grindon Lough, Linton Ponds, Marden Quarry, Newcastle Leazes Park, Warden and Whiteadder Water, and 11-28 at Arcot Pond, Bebside, Fourstones, Greenlee Lough, Newcastle Exhibition Park, Plessey Checks, QEII CP Lake, Spartylea, St Mary's Wetland, Wansbeck Business Park and Tarsset.

**Pintail** *Anas acuta*

Fenham Flats held 30 on 18th (TRD/JD) and 46 on 24th (STH), three were at Budle Bay on 5th (CGK) and East Chevington north pool on 19th (IK/ASH), and one to two at Branton GP, Colt Crag Reservoir and Warkworth Gut/weir.

**Teal** *Anas crecca*

Largest concentrations were 756 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 25th (SR), about 385 at Holy Island (including 335 at the 'rocket field' pool; IK) on 12th, 273 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 1st (MR), 247 at Howdon on 19th (CB), 110-187 at Alnmouth, the Coquet Estuary, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough, Low Newton and Warkworth weir, and 55-82 at Arcot and Bothal Ponds, the Blyth Estuary, Castle Island, Hartburn Reservoir and St Mary's Wetland. Counts of 20-49 also came from Lynemouth Flash, Newham Bog and the Tweed Estuary, while ten to 18 at Holywell and Middle Ord Ponds, West Ord and Whiteadder Water. More unusual were two on the River Blyth at Furnace Bridge on 22nd (LJM).

**Pochard** *Aythya ferina*

Killingworth Lake was the most favoured locality, holding 19 on 16th (LJM) and 34 on 24th (MSH). The species was very scarce elsewhere, with records of just one to two from Bothal Pond, Branton GP and Widdrington Moor Lake.

**Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula*

As with Pochard, Killingworth Lake held the greatest numbers including a peak of 124 on 24th (MSH). Peak counts elsewhere were 50 at Grindon Lough on 17th (MRS), 45 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 31st (AJR), and 25-32 at Bothal Pond, Greenlee Lough, and Ladyburn and QEII CP Lakes. Ten to 17 were also found at Derwent Reservoir, Howick and Newcastle Leazes Park.



Tufted Duck  
Mike Carr  
Gosforth NR  
26th January

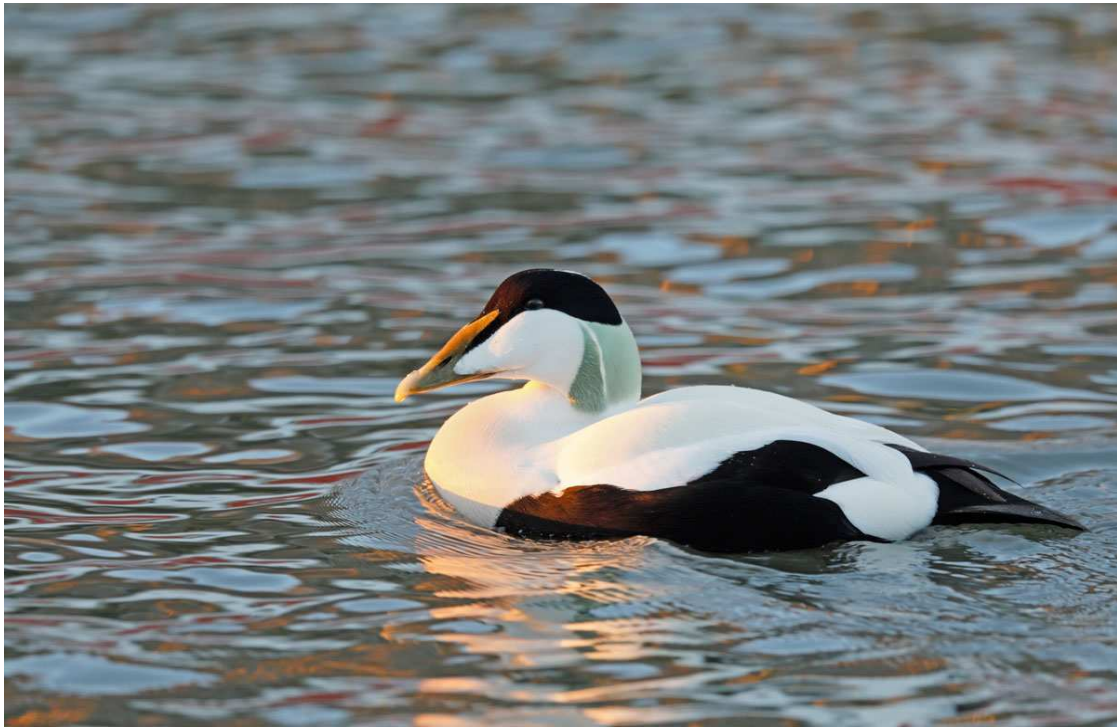
**Scaup** *Aythya marila*

Four were on East Chevington north pool on 29th (ADMc). Two were noted at Cresswell Pond on several dates between 13th-29th (TRD/ADMc/LJM) and one on 25th (IRD), and one was on the River Wansbeck at Castle Island on 20th and North Seaton on 5th (DM *et al.*).



**Eider** *Somateria mollissima*

A total of 53 flew N and 31 S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT); 302 were at Holy Island on 1st (MJC), 94 at Ross Back Sands on 20th (MJC), 76 at Blyth South Harbour on 6th (LJM), and 28-31 at Howick and Newbiggin, and ten to 13 at Cocklawburn, Low Newton and the Tweed Estuary. In December, Blyth Harbour held 109 on 23rd, the largest count there for some years, and 36 were at North Blyth (STH).



Eider at North Shields Fish Quay  
Colin Bradshaw on 20th January

**Velvet Scoter** *Melanitta fusca*

Eight were briefly off North Blyth on 20th (AJR), three were at Newbiggin Bay on 2nd (STH) and two on 5th (JBU/DM *et al.*), three (two on the sea and one S) off Warkworth beach on 20th and two on 23rd (CSa), and two at Howick Haven on 19th (BS). Singles were at Blyth South Harbour until at least 13th (LJM) and Seaton Sluice until 25th (SSWT). A second bird was noted at Blyth South Harbour on 10th (TRD/JD).



Velvet Scoter at Blyth South Harbour  
Tim Dean on 10th January



**Common Scoter** *Melanitta nigra*

The Seaton Sluice monthly total was 49 N and 37 S (SSWT). Generally poor numbers included 83 at Holy Island (MJC), 47 at Stag Rocks on 26th (SW), 20-26 off Druridge and Ross Back Sands, and ten to 17 at Cocklawburn, Low Newton and Newbiggin. One to nine were also at Alnmouth Bay, Cheswick, Cresswell, Hauxley, Seahouses and Seaton Sluice. A flock of 180 was at North Blyth on 3rd December (STH).

**Black Scoter** *Melanitta americana*

A drake was in the Cheswick-Cocklawburn-Goswick area between 18th-26th (DRW/IBDa/KDa *et al.*).

**Long-tailed Duck** *Clangula hyemalis*

At Holy Island, a peak of 22 was noted on 19th (TF/JFa), and 14-21 on several further dates. Also in the north of the county, a peak of 16 was at Stag Rocks on 19th (TF/JFa), 11 at Ross Back Sands on 5th (MJC), ten at Budle Point on 5th (CGK), three were at Beadnell Bay and Fisherman's Bay, Berwick, and one at Cocklawburn.

**Goldeneye** *Bucephala clangula*

Eight flew N at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT) and six flew N at Tynemouth on 9th (DRW). Peak concentrations were 92 on the River Tweed at New Water Heugh on 18th (MHu), 92 at Yarrow Slake (Tweed Estuary) on 22nd (MHu), 35 at East Chevington on 1st (TF/JFa), 22-26 at Grindon Lough and Low Newton, and ten to 18 at Branton GP, Caistron, Castle Island, Close House, Holy Island, Killingworth and QEII CP Lakes, and Warkworth. Six to nine were at Big Waters, Colt Crag Reservoir, Corbridge, Cresswell Pond, Hedgeley GP, Howick, West Ord and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, and four at Budle Bay and Greenlee Lough.

**Goosander** *Mergus merganser*

18 were at Greenlee Lough on 17th (MRS), 12 at Close House on 24th (MRS), nine at Branton GP on 17th (TRD/JD), six to seven at Farley, West Ord and Whiteadder Water, and three to four at Airy Holm Reservoir, Corbridge, Marden Quarry and Wark. One to two were also at Blakehopeburnhaugh, Caistron, Calot Shad (Tweed Estuary), Cocklawburn Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Hedgeley GP, Hexham, Hesleyside, Howick, Killingworth and QEII CP Lake, Marden Quarry, Meldon, and Warden.

**Smew** *Mergellus albellus*

A 'redhead' remained at Widdrington Moor Lake all month (TD/MKi *et al.*).

**Red-breasted Merganser** *Mergus serrator*

Largest counts were 24 at Holy Island on 19th (TF/JFa), 15 off Ross Back Sands on 20th (MJC), five to eight at Alnmouth, Amble Harbour, Blyth Estuary, Calot Shad (Tweed Estuary), Stag Rocks and Warkworth weir, and three to four at East Chevington, Holy Island, Low Newton and West Ord. Nine at Widdrington Moor Lake on 29th (LJM) was a good count for a freshwater site; nine were on the River Wansbeck at North Seaton on 5th (GB/DM/LAR) and five at Stakeford on 7th (IRD), and five well up on the River Tweed at Horncliffe on 17th (CH). One to two were also at Boulmer, Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools and Seahouses. One was at Blyth Harbour on 23rd December (STH).

**Black Grouse** *Tetrao tetrix*

The reliable High Knock Shield Farm (Allendale) site held an adult male, two immature males and two females on 25th. The observer commented "they seem to like the walls here which give them cover" (TRD/JD). A reliable lek at Allendale chimneys only held one bird on 30th in 3cm of snow (AJR).

**Red Grouse** *Lagopus lagopus*

30 were at the Scald Hill-Cheviot area on 31st and six were at Hedgehope on 23rd (IRD). The only other report was one at High Knock Shield Farm.

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

Likely game releases, as last month in this area, produced a count of c.40 west of Bilton (Alnwick) on 17th (MKi), 12 were at Cockle Park on 25th (JR) and Bebside on 26th, with two to six at Bellshiel Law, Caistron, Hedgeley GP and St Mary's.

**Grey Partridge** *Perdix perdix*

A pair with a covey of 13 were at Prestwick Carr on 30th (PCF), a total of 14 were at Big Waters NWT on 2nd (AJH) and along the old railway line at St Mary's on 30th (JBu) and counts of 12 came from Beal Point and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Two to ten were reported from Backworth, Fenham-le-Moor, Linden Hall, Low Steads (Longhoughton), Morpeth bypass, Newham Hall (Chathill) and Plessey Hall Farm (Cramlington). A pair was witnessed in a courtship chase at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 30th (RS).

**Pheasant** *Phasianus colchicus*

Up to eight were at Spartylea all month (CT), three at Castle Island, two at Linton Ponds and a single at Arcot Hall.

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

The passage total of 105 at Seaton Sluice was "average" for January, with 58N and 47S in 30 hours of watching (SSWT). The large offshore gathering in Alnmouth Bay from last month gradually reduced from 101 present on 5th (SW) to ten noted there on 30th (TRD/JD). Some relocation to the Warkworth area may have accounted for a total of 75 seen from the beach there on 20th (CSa) and other good counts on several other dates. Elsewhere, 20 were at Druridge on 22nd (TRD), 18 at Ross Back Sands on 5th (MJC) and up to 17 at Stag Rocks throughout. 14 were present during a WeBS count at

Cocklawburn (Berwick) on 24th (TBr/APM) and 12 were at Budle Point on 5th (CGK). One to six were well reported from many other coastal points including one at St Mary's Wetland on 2nd.

#### **Black-throated Diver** *Gavia arctica*

Two were off Stag Rocks on 5th (JBU/DMcG/JCm/SE), and may have been the same two also seen at nearby Budle Point on that day (CGK), plus a further two were at Ross Back Sands, also on that day (MJC). Singles were observed on different dates at Calot Shad (Tweed Estuary), Cheswick and Cocklawburn.

#### **Great Northern Diver** *Gavia immer*

On 5th, up to four were at Ross Back Sands (MJC) and at least three off Budle Point (CGK/MC). Two had been at nearby Stag Rocks on the previous day (MH/AA) and two flew S together past Cheswick on 23rd (TRD/JD). Singles were seen at Alnmouth, the Blyth Estuary, Boulmer, East Chevington Pool, Holy Island, Seahouses, Seaton Sluice, Tynemouth and on the R. Wansbeck upstream at Castle Island and North Seaton.

#### **Fulmar** *Fulmarus glacialis*

No movements of note were reported from Seaton Sluice (SSWT) but many birds were observed back at nest sites during the month with 40 reported from both Coves Bay (Holy Island) on 25th (IK) and Cullernose Point on 30th (TRD/JD). 28 returned to their cliff edges at Howick on 14th (JAR) and two to six were at several other expected sites.

#### **Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Several good counts were made along the River Wansbeck with 24 present during a WeBS visit to Castle Island on 20th (DM), 15 downstream at North Seaton on 5th (DM) and 14th (PG) and 14 further upstream between Stakeford-Sheepwash on 7th (IRD). Other river stretches were also productive with 20 on the R. Tweed from Gainslaw House-Horncliffe on 17th (CH), 11 on the R. Coquet from Warkworth Weir-Ambleside Harbour on 31st (CSa), nine in the Tweed Estuary during a WeBS count on 23rd (TBr/APM) and eight in the Blyth Estuary on 20th which constituted a "high count for this site" (LJM). 12 were at East Chevington on 22nd and one to six were reported from 20 other locations.

#### **Red-necked Grebe** *Podiceps grisegena*

Three were present at Stag Rocks on 6th (AJR), often close inshore, and Holy Island peaked at three in the harbour on 19th (TF/JFa). Singles were at North Blyth and Ross Back Sands.

#### **Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus*

Six were off Warkworth beach on 20th (CSa) whilst totals of four came from Buston Links (Alnmouth) on 3rd and Boulmer on 4th (JD). Whittle Dene Reservoirs peaked at three on 25th (SR), two were at Colt Crag Reservoir on 21st and singles were at Broomlee Lough, Cresswell/Druridge (on sea), Holy Island, Killingworth Lake and Widdrington Moor Lake.

#### **Slavonian Grebe** *Podiceps auritus*

As usual, sightings were predominantly from the north of the county with peak counts of seven at the Heugh (Holy Island) on 24th (STH), six at Ross Back Sands on 5th (MJC) and six at Stag Rocks on 19th (TF/JFa). At least four were observed at Budle Point on 5th (CGK). The only sighting away from these areas was a single at Saltpan Rocks (Cocklawburn) on 15th (MHu).

#### **Bittern** *Botaurus stellaris*

At least two were present at Gosforth Park NR on 21st – one was watched for 15 minutes in bulrush whilst another stationary bird was seen from the Pearce hide at the same time (MH). One was at East Chevington North Pool on 29th (ADMc).

A Bittern at Gosforth Park NR

21st January

Mike Henry

#### **Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

A grand total of 50 were in the Tweed Estuary during a WeBS count on 23rd (TBr/APM). Howdon peaked at 16 on 6th (CB), nine were on North Blyth staithes on 17th (STH), eight were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 15th (MR) and six were at Monks' House Pool on 26th (SW). One to five were at Airy Holm Reservoir, Arcot Pond, Big Waters, Brenkley Pond, Carterway Heads, Castle Island, Exhibition Park, Farnley (Corbridge), Gosforth Park NR, Greenlee Lough, Linton Pond, Seaton Sluice and Widdrington Moor Lake.



**Great White Egret** *Ardea alba*

One was at Wark on 13th (IBDA/KDa/SVM/AJM).

**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*

Widely reported with the peak count being five along Holy Island causeway on 7th (TRD/JD). Caistron held three wintering individuals on 19th (JD), two were at Arcot Pond on 20th (DM) and one was regularly seen along the Horton Burn (Cramlington) throughout the month (LJM/STH). Singles were also seen at Boghouses Field (Cramlington), Branton GP, Budle Bay, Castle Island, Fourstones, Gosforth (near the Three Mile Inn), Gosforth Park NR, Prestwick Carr, Ross Back Sands, Swallow Pond, Wark, Whittle Dene Reservoirs and Widdrington Moor Lake.

**Gannet** *Morus bassanus*

Only small numbers recorded with a monthly total of 40 (38N and two S) past Seaton Sluice. The maximum daily count was 21N in two hours on 17th (SSWT). Ten flew N in 15 minutes past Snab Point (Cresswell) on 8th and only two N and two S were counted past St Mary's in a whole hour on 27th.

**Shag** *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Seaton Sluice reported a monthly passage total of five (two N, three S) (SSWT). 38 were at Holy Island on 1st (MJC), 14 were roosting at Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 6th (MHu) and one to eight were at several other localities including two feeding in the Aln River mouth whilst managing to remain stationary in a strong incoming current, another seen eating a large prey item in Spital Bay (Newbiggin) whilst being closely watched by a Herring Gull and another already sporting a crest at Seahouses.

**Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Blyth Harbour held 53 on 23rd (STH), 48 were on staithe at Howdon on 5th (CB), 42 were at Holy Island on 1st (MJC), Whittle Dene Reservoirs entertained 23 on 29th (SR) whilst 15 were at Calot Shad (Tweed estuary) on 14th (MHu). Up to 13 were at Colt Crag Reservoir on 28th, 12 in the Meadow Haven (Berwick) roost on 6th and one to ten were seen at Big Waters, Castle Island, Derwent Reservoir, Farnley (Corbridge), Greenlee Lough, Linton Ponds, Prestwick Carr, QE11 CP Lake and St.Mary's Wetland.



A Cormorant stretches  
Blyth  
Chris Barlow on 20th January

**Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus*

A pair was at Howdon on 23rd (CB); two birds were also noted at Gosforth Park NR on 26th (MJC) and a pair in full display at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 28th (STH). A young female was noted throughout the month on Holy Island (IK), another young female was seen at Newbiggin (BS) and a male was seen hunting through gardens at Rothbury throughout the month (TRD/JD). Single birds were noted at Akeld, Chapel House (Newcastle), Cramlington, East Cramlington LNR, Gosforth Park NR, Kenton (Newcastle), Linton Ponds, Longbenton (Newcastle), Longdyke (Shilbottle), Low Newton, Makendon (Upper Coquetdale), Morpeth, North Shields, Seahouses and Woodbridge.

**Goshawk** *Accipiter gentilis*

A large female was seen heading towards Corby Craggs on 24th (TRD) and an adult male was being harried by a kamikaze crow at another site on 28th (MH).



**Hen Harrier** *Circus cyaneus*

A ringtail was observed at an undisclosed site on 28th (NFO).

**Red Kite** *Milvus Milvus*

Three birds were seen on a local farm at Riding Mill throughout the month (IK), two birds were at Snods Edge on 12th and at Carterway Heads on 21st with single bird also seen there on 5th and 16th (IFo). Single birds were also at Derwent Reservoir on 6th (IFo) and 18th (RMH), Whittonstall on 22nd (IFo) and at Mitford on 23rd (ADMc).

**Common Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*

Nine birds were noted between Harehope and Blawearie (Bewick Moor) in mid-morning of 18th (MH). Four birds were seen together along the Morpeth link road on 19th (CDB). Three birds were at Howick on 22nd (JAR) and two were at Gosforth Park NR, Kyoie Woods, Paxton Dean (Longhorsley), Spartylea and at Wheathill (Barrasford). Single birds were seen at 12 sites during the month.

**Water Rail** *Rallus aquaticus*

Two birds were at Big Waters NWT on 1st (GB) and on 5th (DM/GB/LAR). Single birds were either seen or heard at Gosforth Park NR on 6th (MJC) and 22nd (AJ), Arcot Pond on 6th and 9th (STH) and at Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 14th and 28th (IJ).

**Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*

21 birds were at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 8th (GB) was the observer's largest count at that site. 19 birds were present at QEII CP Lake during a WeBS count and this was the highest WeBS count there since 2000 (CDH), 18 birds were at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 4th (DM) and 17 were at Wallington Hall on 9th (TRD/JD). 16 birds were seen at Castle Island during the WeBS count on 20th (DM/PJA), 13 were noted at Big Waters NWT on 20th (GB) and 11 at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 4th (DM). One to eight birds were at Alnmouth, Arcot Pond, Big Waters NWT, Cresswell Pond, East Cramlington LNR, Holy Island, Jesmond Dene (Newcastle), Rising Sun CP (Wallsend), Spartylea, St Mary's Wetland, Wansbeck Business Park (Ashington) and at West Ord (Berwick).

**Coot** *Fulica atra*

Killingworth Lake once again had the highest counts with 119 birds on 16th (LJM) followed by 65 birds at QEII CP Lake on 20th (CDH) and 39 at Linton Ponds on also on 20th (CDH). Grindon Lough peaked at 31 birds on 8th (PRM) and 15 were at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 4th (DM).

**Crane** *Grus grus*

A juvenile was seen within the county at Wark on 8th (TRD/JD) and on 13th (IBDa/KDa *et al.*).



The County (just) Crane  
Wark  
Tim Dean  
8th January

**Oystercatcher** *Haematopus ostralegus*

A notable 232 were counted at Holy Island on 1st and 126 were at Ross Bank Sands on 20th (MJC). St Mary's reported 112 on 10th (ASJ), 106 were counted as part of WeBS at Cocklawburn (Berwick) on 24th (TBr/APM) and 76 were at Beadnell on 20th (ASJ). Berwick Little Beach had a count of 62 on 12th (MHu) and Bamburgh Stag Rocks had 54 on 1st (DF). Counts of 45-48 were reported from Alnmouth GC, Howick and Whitley Bay, while counts of eleven or fewer came from Derwent Reservoir, Hexham sports arena, Low Newton, Tynemouth Pier and Warden.

December Addendum: 30 birds were seen roosting at the breakwater at Newbiggin on 17th December 2018 (STH).

**Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus*

The largest counts by far came from Lindisfarne NNR with 1,700 at Elwick on 20th (ASJ) and a minimum of 1,500 at Budle Bay on 1st (CGK). Warkworth Gut reported 480 on 20th (IRD), there were 400 at Caistron on 14th (JD), 350 were at Slaley on 10th (RMH) and 310 were in the Coquet Estuary on 22nd (RPo). Counts of 300 were made at the Aln at Foxton (5th), Blyth (Gloucester Lodge Farm) (26th) and Derwent Reservoir (16th). Between 150-250 were seen at Alnmouth, Big Waters NWT, Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Longhoughton, Seaton Sluice (Seaton dune meadows), St Mary's, West Hartford and Widdrington Moor Lake. Counts of 50-130 were made at Blagdon, Cocklawburn, Derwent Reservoir, East Chevington North Pool and Yarrow Slake (Berwick). Smaller counts came from Big Waters NWT, Castle Island, Cheswick, Fontburn Reservoir, Siloans Farm (Otterburn MOD range), Wallsend (Swallow Pond) and Whiteadder Water (Berwick).

Addendum: a precise count of 200 was made at Cresswell Pond on 12th December 2018 (STH).

**Golden Plover** *Pluvialis apricaria*

An impressive count of 1,500 was made at Amble Braid on 15th (TRD/JD). Over 1,200 were estimated at Budle Bay on 5th (CGK) and Boulmer reported a count of 750 on 13th (BS). Seaton dune meadows at Seaton Sluice had a count of 400-450 on 18th and 20th (MSH, AJR, respectively). On 23rd, 400 were seen at West Minsteracres, Slaley (IFo), c. 350 were at Longhoughton Steel on 1st (MKi), Blyth, Gloucester Lodge Farm had 300+ on 8th (LJM) and the same number flew over Holywell Pond on 25th (DLo). A count of 296 was made at Cocklawburn on 12th (MSH), 268 were at Plenmeller on 28th (SW), 250 were seen at Beal Point on 1st (TD) and 130 were reported from Cheswick on 24th (MHu). Counts of 60-120 came from Berwick (Ord Mains Fm.), Big Waters NWT, Cresswell Pond, Low Newton and Prestwick Carr. Smaller counts were reported from Alnmouth, Blyth, Carterway Heads (Crooked Oak), Dudlees Farm (Rochester). MOD range, Fenham-le-Moor, Fontburn area, Newcastle (Jesmond), Newham, Ross Back Sands, St Mary's and Whitley Bay (East Holywell).

**Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola*

More records than usual and with higher counts were submitted this month. An impressive 130 were seen at Budle Bay on 2nd (DF), at least 100 were seen interspersed with Knot at Goswick Sands on 1st (TD) and 50 were at Buston Links Beach on 6th (CSa). On 19th Warkworth, Birling Carrs hosted 35 (CSa), Alnmouth Bay had a count of 33 during a WeBS on 20th (RPo) and 21 were at Boulmer on 30th (TRD/JD). On 22nd there were 14 seen at Newbiggin (TRD/JD) while counts of six or less came from Boulmer (Howdiemont Sands), Cocklawburn (Berwick), Holy Island Harbour and Low Newton.

**Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula*

The largest count came from Goswick with 49 on 20th (CH). Forty-four were present at Little Beach (Berwick) on 12th (MHu), 31 were at Alnmouth, Buston Links on 22nd (MH/AA) and 28 were at Cocklawburn during a WeBS on 24th (TBr/APM). Newbiggin Beacon Point had 22 on 28th (STH), 19 were at Budle Bay on 5th (CGK) and 18 were reported from Chevington Burn (beach) on 2nd (TD). Counts of 16 or fewer came from Alnmouth, Boulmer, Holy Island and Newcastle (Walkerville). The last of these was a report of a bird heard calling after dark while flying S (CDH).

**Curlew** *Numenius arquata*

Boulmer reported 308 birds on 19th (BS), a single flock of 109 was at Holy Island (Straight Lonnen) on 12th (IK) and 106 were at Cocklawburn on 24th (TBr/APM). About 80 birds were foraging in a stubble field at Lesbury on 14th (MKi), 78 were at Monks' House Pool on 26th (SW), 73 were at Alnmouth on 10th (MKi) and 63 were at St Mary's on 31st (MSH). There were 54 birds at Druridge Pools on 25th (IRD), 50 were at Howick on 1st (JAR) and another 50 were at Cresswell Pond on 2nd (TD). Between 26 and 46 birds were counted at Blyth (Gloucester Lodge Farm), Coquet Estuary, Seaton Sluice, Tweed Estuary, Woodhorn and Yarrow Slake (Berwick).

**Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica*

Nearly all records came from the north of the county. The largest count was of 80 at Sandham Bay, Holy Island on 12th – a high count for this site (IK). Counts of up to 55 were made at Budle Bay with the peak count on 2nd, when a bird in summer plumage was noted (DF). A roost of 42 was reported at Beadnell on 20th (ASJ), 28 were at Boulmer on 19th (BS) and 16 at Berwick, Little Beach on 12th (MHu). Counts of 1-3 came from Blyth Estuary, Cocklawburn, Fenham-le-Moor, Holy Island Harbour and St Mary's Island.

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

Counts were well down this month with the highest count of 12 coming from Warkworth Gut on 23rd (CSa). Eleven were off Fenham Mill, Lindisfarne NNR on 20th (ASJ) and counts of 1-7 came from Amble Braid, Budle Bay, Druridge Pools, Hauxley, Holy Island, Howdon and Lynemouth Flash.

**Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*

The first day of the year produced a high count of 127 at Holy Island (MJC). At Low Newton, eight were present on 7th increasing to 47 by 24th (TRD/JD/MJC). Twenty were at Fenham-le Moor on 18th (TRD/JD), 17 were at Boulmer on 1st (MKi) and 12 at both St Mary's Island and Cocklawburn (IJ/TBr/APM). One-eight were seen at Alnmouth, Cresswell Pond and Stag Rocks.



**Knot** *Calidris canutus*

A New Year's Day count at Goswick Sands revealed at least 1,000 birds (TD) and the highest number seen at nearby Budle Bay was 75 on 2nd (DF). Further south, 35 were at Alnmouth bay on 20th (ANHS), 20 at Amble on 8th (MH/AA) and 20th (CSa) and 11 were at Buston Links (CSa). One-five were at Birling Carrs, Boulmer, Fenham-le Moor, Longhoughton Steel, Newbiggin and Seaton Sluice during the month.

**Ruff** *Calidris pugnax*

The wintering bird from last month was present at Low Newton scrape between 1st-24th (JPL/TRD/JD/MJC).

**Sanderling** *Calidris alba*

The largest flock this month was seen at Low Newton, with 148 counted on 24th (MJC). This included a bird colour- ringed on Sanday (Orkney) in April 2017, subsequently summering in Iceland and wintering mainly at Low Newton. Berwick Little Beach held another significant group with 132 on 12th (MHu) and a high of ca.80 was at Boulmer on 1st declining to 50 by 30th (MKi/TRD/JD). The regular Druridge Bay flock reached a high of 75 at Chevington Burn beach on 2nd (TD) with 56 at nearby Hadston Links on 15th (MKi). A gradual increase at Cocklawburn was recorded during the month with 15 on 8th, 32 on 11th and 62 on 24th (MHu/CH/TBr/APM). At Whitley Bay the highest number seen was 50 on 20th (DM). On 1st, 45 were present in Budle Bay (CGK), 37 were reported from St Mary's Island on 1st (ASJ), 33 were at Ross Back Sands on 5th (MJC), 26 at Holy Island north shore on 1st (MJC) and 20 at Alnmouth on 15th (TRD/JD). Other counts of two-18 came from Buston Links, Cheswick, Druridge, East Chevington, Fenham-le Moor and Stag Rocks.

Addition to December 2018 report:

152 were at Newbiggin south bay beach on 3rd (STH).



A group of Sanderling  
30th January  
Tim Dean  
Boulmer

**Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*

Budle Bay attracted a minimum of 300 on 5th (CGK) and ca.300 were at the River Coquet Estuary on 20th (CSa). The River Blyth Estuary held 214 on 20th (LJM) and 200 were at Boulmer on 5th (ASJ), although only 10 were reported by 16th (TRD/JD). At Fenham-le Moor, ca.100 were seen on 7th (TRD/JD), with 65 at Low Newton on 24th (MJC), 56 at Berwick Little Beach on 12th (MHu) and 50 at Low Newton scrape on 11th (TRD/JD). The WeBS count at Cocklawburn recorded 46 on 24th (TBr/ADM), 35 were at Newbiggin on 28th (STH), 30 at Cresswell Pond on 19th (CDB) and 20 at both Amble Braid on 15th and Whitley Bay on 5th (TRD/JD/DM). One-five were at Buston Links, Grindon Lough and Holy Island harbour.

Addition to December 2018 report:

59 were seen at North Blyth staithes on 3rd (STH).



**Purple Sandpiper** *Calidris maritima*

The group at Stag Rocks was well observed during the month with the maximum there being 132 on 1st (DF). Away from here, the highest number reported was from a WeBS count at Alnmouth bay which recorded 46 on 20th (ANHS). On 1st, 31 were at Holy Island, 31 at Birling Carrs on 23rd(CSa), 28 were at Cocklawburn beach on 3rd (CH), 19 at Low Newton on 24th (MJC), 17 at Newbiggin on 2nd (STH), a maximum of 15 at Boulmer on 19th (BS) and eight at Tynemouth on 27th (DRW). One-five were at Snab Point (Cresswell), Cullernose Point, Seaton Sluice and Tynemouth Pier.

Addition to December 2018 report:

28 were at Blyth harbour on 23rd and nine were at Newbiggin on 3rd (STH).

**Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola*

Three were noted at Colt Crag Reservoir on 11th (MR) and two were at both Arcot Pond on 20th (DM) and Big Waters on 1st (GB). The secretive nature of this species was illustrated by several birds only being detected by observers when flushed. Singles were reported from Blagdon, Cresswell Pond, Howdon, Howick, Morpeth, Prestwick Carr, St Mary's Island and West Hartford.

**Jack Snipe** *Limnocyptes minimus*

At least three were still present at Big Waters on 1st (BB) and 5th (DM). Singles were at East Chevington north pool on 22nd (ADM), well inland at Branton GP on 6th and 31st (IBDa/KDa) and Harwood Forest on 20th (TRD/JD).

**Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago*

Low numbers continued to be reported with the highest number seen being 14 at Big Waters on 1st (GB). Nine were at Newburn Riverside on 17th (MH), six were at Arcot Pond on 1st (DM) and three at Woodbridge on 26th (SW). Singles were at Castron, Cocklawburn, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Howdon, Howick and Lynemouth Power Station.

**Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*

Single wintering birds were at Gosforth on 2nd (GB), Hedgeley GP on 3rd, 9th and 17th (IBDa/KDa/TRD/JD) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 3rd (SR).

**Redshank** *Tringa totanus*

The River Blyth and River Tweed Estuaries attracted the greatest numbers with 240 at the River Blyth Estuary on 30th (AJ) and 210 at Yarrow Slake on the River Tweed on 22nd (MHu). Budle Bay held 160 on 1st (CGK), 140 were at Calot Shad on the River Tweed on 14th (MHu) and 135 at the River Coquet Estuary on 22nd (ANHS). The maximum count at St Mary's Island and Wetland was 83 on 2nd (IJ) and 50 were at Low Newton on 24th (MJC). One-18 were reported from Alnmouth, Berwick Little Beach, Bothal Pond, Castle Island, Cresswell Pond and Tynemouth Pier.

Addition to December 2018 report:

73 were roosting at Newbiggin on 17th (STH).

**Spotted Redshank** *Tringa erythropus*

A wintering bird was again present at Budle Bay on 5th and 19th (MJC/CGK/TF/JFa) and one was at Yarrow Slake (River Tweed) on 23rd (TBr/APM).

**Kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla*

At Seaton Sluice, birds were only recorded in any numbers late in the month with a maximum of 30 passing on 27th (SSWT). Elsewhere between 22nd-27th, 13 moved N in one hour at St Mary's Island (MSH), with five at Stag Rocks (SW) and two in Druridge Bay (TRD). One was offshore at Holy Island on 1st (MJC).

**Black-headed Gull** *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

The largest counts were 200-230 at Castle Island and Exhibition Park (DM) and the QEII CP Lake (CDH) with smaller gatherings of 100-200 at Boulmer, Jesmond Dene, Killingworth Lake, St Mary's, Whiteadder Water (Berwick), Widdrington Moor Lake and 20-90 at seven other localities; one bird at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) was ringed X3C1 (PCF).

**Mediterranean Gull** *Ichthyophaga melanocephalus*

Up to 30, almost all adults, came in to feed regularly at Quarry Cottage, Newbiggin (BS) with other counts of five-14 recorded in the Newbiggin vicinity (LJM/STH/CH/TRD/TF/JFa/DM). Elsewhere, one to three were seen at Big Waters NWT, Boulmer, Longhoughton, St Mary's Island, Seaton Sluice, Swallow Pond and Tynemouth.,

**Common Gull** *Larus canus*

The gull roost at Colt Crag Reservoir held 3,500 on 4th (MR) with 300 at Tarsset Bridge on 6th (JR), 160 at Grindon Lough (MRS) and 103 at Alnmouth (MKi). Smaller counts of 30-70 were recorded at Arcot Pond, Brinkburn, Low Leam and Town Moor, Newcastle (AJ/DM/JR/MSH) and 11 were at Longhoughton Steel (MKi).

**Great Black-backed Gull** *Larus marinus*

At Cresswell, Snab Point, 20 flew N in 15 minutes on 8th (MSH) and small numbers elsewhere were 30 at Castle Island (DM/STH), 14 in the roost at Colt Crag Reservoir (MR), 12 at St Mary's Island/Wetland (IJ) and one to two at Corbridge and West Hartford.

**Iceland Gull** *Larus glaucoides*

The 2nd-winter bird was again recorded on three occasions as it visited Big Waters NWT (PCF/IK/GB).



Iceland Gull  
Big Waters  
Chris barlow  
4th January

**Herring Gull** *Larus argentatus argenteus*

The Colt Crag Reservoir roost held 380 on 4th (MR) with 50-100 at Airey Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield), Amble Braid, Low Leam, Whittle Dene Reservoirs and Widdrington Moor Lake; one at Amble Braid was ringed T47U at Montrose in 2017 (TF/JFa). Smaller groups of 10-30 were at five sites and up to ten at eight other localities including a pair with their 1st-winter offspring coming to feed regularly throughout at Quarry Cottage, Newbiggin (BS).

**Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus fuscus graelsii*

Only three sightings were reported comprising singles at Colt Crag Reservoir, Low Leam and Swallow Pond (GPK/JR/MR).

**Auk** *sp*

At St Mary's Island, 32, mainly Guillemots, flew N in one hour on 27th (MSH).

**Little Auk** *Alle alle*

One flew N at Seaton Sluice on 2nd (SSWT).

**Common Guillemot** *Uria aalge*

Two unusual large mid-winter counts comprised 252 in Alnmouth Bay on 5th (SW) and 60 on the sea at Newbiggin on 22nd (TRD). One to five were reported at eleven other widespread coastal sites on dates throughout.

**Razorbill** *Alca torda*

Eleven were reported at St Mary's Island on 27th (MSH) with eleven records of one to six at nine other widespread sites on dates throughout.

**Rock Dove** *Columba livia*

Around 200 were in Blyth Town Centre on 1st (RS), 80 at Stakeford Road bridge on 20th (DM/STH), 60 at Seaton Sluice on 31st, 35 at Newbiggin and Blyth Harbour with two to ten at Cramlington and Jesmond Dene.

**Stock Dove** *Columba oenas*

A pre roost gathering of 69 at Howdon on 5th (CB), 28 on game crop at Laker Hall (nr. Whittle Dene) on 15th, eight at Jesmond Dene on 27th, seven at Widdrington Lane on 22nd and one to six at 16 other widespread localities.



A Stock Dove in Northumberland Park (North Shields)  
Tim Dean on 10th January

**Woodpigeon** *Columba palumbus*

Approximately 1,000 at Linton on 12th (JR/NA), 900 at Whiteadder Water (Berwick) on 20th (TBr), 825 leaving roost at Arcot Pond on 1st (DM/STH) and 800 at Ord Moor (Berwick) on 13th (MHu). Three-figure counts up to 500 at nine locations and single figures from a further five.

**Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto*

High count of 28 at Berwick Hill on 10th (AHB), 24 at Sleafy Village on 22nd (RMH), up to 19 at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) during the month (RS) and four at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 3rd (DM).

**Barn Owl** *Tyto alba*

On 1st three were at Holy Island (SR/AH), two regularly during the month at Denwick, Howick and Humshaugh (BS/JAR/TWi) and two at Middleton on 3rd (RCra). One was seen regularly at Rothbury and at an encouraging 27 other widespread localities with one roadkill at Alnwick on 11th.

**Tawny Owl** *Strix aluco*

Three called at Sleafy Hall on 2nd with two at Fontburn, Howick and Spartylea all month (BS/JAR/CT) and two called at Alnwick on 5th (MKi). Singles were at eight locations with two road casualties at Howick and Burgham.

**Little Owl** *Athene noctua*

Two noted on five dates at East Holywell and at Derwent Reservoir on 23rd (CGK/IFo) with a male in territorial song all month at Shiremoor (CGK). Singles were at Derwent Reservoir on four dates and near Big Waters on 1st, at Blyth on 5th & 8th, Branton on 15th and Startup on 24th.

**Long-eared Owl** *Asio otus*

Four were noted at a confidential site in SE on 23rd (GB), two were present for several days at Blyth (SJL) with singles at both locations and hunting early morning at Rimside Moor (Rothbury) on 31st (BS).

**Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus*

A peak of five near Cramlington on 5th with one to three there till 14th (DM/STH), two at the Snook (Holy Island) on 11th (IK) and at Widdrington Moor Lake on 19th (CDB). Singles were at Prestwick Carr on five dates and Holy Island on 6th.



**Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis*

Two at Morpeth on 12th (ADMc) and Jesmond Dene on 27th (MJCo) with singles at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) on three dates and 12 other locations.

**Great Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos major*

During the month up to three were at Spartylea (CT) also three at Dilston on 6th (IFo) and Jesmond Dene on 27th (MJCo) with two drumming at Haughton Mains on 30th (SW). Singles were at 13 other widespread localities.

**Green Woodpecker** *Picus viridis*

Two heard at Letah Wood (Hexham) on 20th (AJH) and one flushed in snowy conditions at Tyne Riverside (Newburn) on 17th (MH).

**Kestrel** *Falco tinninculus*

Ten birds were counted on a journey between Newcastle and Bamburgh on 4th (MH/AA). Four birds were seen at Low Hedgeley on 23rd (AJH); three were on Holy Island throughout the month (IK) and two at Plessey Checks (Cramlington) on 1st (DM/STH). Single birds were at 12 sites including a 1w male hunting most days at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) (BS).

**Merlin** *Falco columbarius*

Two birds were noted on Holy Island on 23rd (SR/AH). Single birds were noted at or near the coast at Beal Point, Holy Island Causeway, North Sunderland (Seahouses), Ross Back Sands and Whitley Bay. Single birds were also seen at two inland locations.

**Peregrine** *Falco peregrinus*

Two birds travelling together at Longhoughton Steel made several passes at some alarmed gulls and Curlews before heading S over Boulmer on 5th (MKi). Single birds were noted on Holy Island and at Widdrington Moor Lake on several dates and other single birds were at Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir, East Holywell, Lucker, Ross Back Sands, St Mary's Island, and Seaton Sluice and at Swallow Pond (Wallsend). A bird drifted SE over a roof top car park at a Gosforth shopping centre on 25th (ADM).

**Ring-necked Parakeet** *Psittacula krameri*

Heard at Armstrong Park (Newcastle) on 2nd (GB) and one with Starlings at Prior's Park (Tweedmouth) on 5th (MHu).

**Jay** *Garrulus glandarius*

A peak of seven at Gosforth Park NR on 6th (MJC), four at Plessey Checks (Cramlington) on 6th and Arcot Pond on 9th (STH). Three were at Arcot Hall GC and Dipton Wood on 1st, South Snods (Allensford) on 5th, Harwood Village on 20th and Gosforth Park NR on 23rd. One to two were at 20 other locations.

**Magpie** *Pica pica*

Highest count at this site for the observer of 97 at Balliol Business Park (Longbenton) on 7th, 34 to roost at Whitelea Chase (Cramlington) on 31st and 27 roosted at Northumberlandia (Cramlington) on 1st (STH/DM). 12 were at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 20th, 10 at Rising Sun CP (Wallsend) on 1st with one to nine at six other locations.

A Magpie

Howdon Wetland

Colin Bradshaw

6th January

**Jackdaw** *Corvus monedula*

On 20th 243 were recorded flying south at Windmill Lane (Cramlington) and 200 at Plessey Hall Farm on 9th (DM/STH) presumably to Prestwick Carr roost where 200 were present evening of 2nd (PCF). 120 were at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 24th, 100 at Slaley on 22nd, 98 at Low Leam on 5th, 80+ at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 12th, 61 at Bebside on 26th and 56 to roost at East Ord on 11th. Four to thirty were at four other locations.

**Rook** *Corvus frugilegus*

In fields west of Otterburn 250 gathered late afternoon of 25th (PCF), 220 at Low Leam on 6th (JR), 164 at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) heading further north to roost at dusk and 114 at Cocklawburn on 24th (MHu). Six were at Derwent Reservoir on 9th and 52 at Alnmouth on 10th. 10 to 27 were at five other sites.

**Carrion Crow** *Corvus corone*

21 were at St Mary's Island on 20th and Featherwood (Byrness) on 27th (IJ/JR). 16 were at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 2nd (STH) and two to ten at ten other widespread localities.



Carrion Crow at St. Mary's  
Jack Bucknall on 17th January

**Hooded Crow** *Corvus cornix*

The individual was at Linton Crossing (Ellingham) on 1st (TF/JFa).

**Raven** *Corvus corax*

Four at Brizlee Wood (Alnwick) on 1st (MH), two at Byrness on the same date, Howick on 8th, Stonehaugh on 13th, Alwinton on 14th, Spartylea on 20th, Beanley Moor on 22nd and Lucker Moor on 28th. Singles were at five other locations.

**Waxwing** *Bombycilla garrulus*

One over calling at Stobhill (Morpeth) on 12th (TF/JFa) and one, possibly two at Holystone on 28th (DRo).

**Coal Tit** *Periparus ater*

A high count of 11 at Alwin Valley (Upper Coquetdale) on 12th (JR/NA), eight during the month at Spartylea (CT), six at Allen Banks on 31st (ANHS) with one to four at Corbridge, Gosforth and Jesmond Dene with singing bird at Gosforth Garden Village on 26th.

**Marsh Tit** *Poecile palustris*

Two at the established locations of Borough Woods (Morpeth) on 23rd (MJC) and Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 28th (NFO). One visited garden feeders at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) all month (TBr) with singles at a further eight locations.

**Willow Tit** *Poecile montanus*

Prestwick Carr the favoured location with six the high count on 8th (IK) and two to five recorded on six other dates. At least four called at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) on 26th (JBU) with two there on 2nd & 3rd. Two were at Big Waters NR on 4th & 5th, Bedlington on 15th, Linton Ponds on 22nd and singing birds at Sleafy on 30th. Singles were at seven other locations.

A Willow Tit

Prestwick Carr

31st January

Dennis Lovatt





**Blue Tit** *Cyanistes caeruleus*

There were some good numbers with 50 within a 1km radius at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 24th (TBr), 30 at Crooked Oak (Carterway Heads) on 5th (IFo), 26 feeding on sunflower seeds at Low Buston on 5th (ASJ), 25 at Gosforth Park NR on 29th (MH/AA) and 20 at Whitley Bay Community Gardens on 27th (IJ). 18 trapped and ringed at Eschott on 5th (MSH) and one to 16 at ten other locations.

**Great Tit** *Parus major*

26 were within a 1km radius at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 24th (TBr), 20 coming to feeders at Howdon on 27th (CB), 10 at Borough Woods (Morpeth) on 23rd (MJC), eight at Spartylea during the month and two to six at four other locations.

**Skylark** *Alauda arvensis*

On 18th 15 were at Fenham-le-Moor (TRD/JD) with nine there on 20th, 10 at St Mary's Island on 10th (ASJ), seven at Buston Links (Alnmouth) on 22nd (MH/AA) and one at Arcot Pond on 1st and Newcastle Town Moor on 7th.

**Shore Lark** *Eremophila alpestris*

Four remained at Buston Links (Almouth) all month seen from 4th (STH *et al.*), two at Long Nanny (Newton) on 14th and Low Newton on 24th (CB/GW/MJC) and one at Fenham-le-Moor on 20th (ASJ).

## Shore Larks

Right: - at the Long Nanny by Mike Carr on 24th January

Below:- at Buston by Jonathan Farooqi on 6th January





**Long-tailed Tit** *Aegithalos caudatus*

The largest 'tribes' were 14 at North Seaton Colliery on 20th (DM/PJA) and 13 at Mitford Church on 17th, while 11 were noted at Spartylea and ten at Alexandra Park (Cramlington), Low Cocklaw (Berwick), Plessey Checks and Slaley Hall. Counts of eight to nine came from the Alwin Valley, Bedlington, Castle Island, Howick, Jesmond Dene, Rothbury, Shilbottle and Warden, while five to seven were noted at Allen Banks, Crooked Oak, East Ord, Farnley, Furnace Bridge (Bedlington), Gosforth Park NR, Leazes Park, Marden Quarry, Prestwick Carr and Valley Park (Cramlington). Two to four were reported from a further eight localities.

Long-tailed Tit  
Mike Carr  
26th January  
Gosforth Park NR



December bulletin omission: 15 were at Arcot Pond on 20th December 2018 (STH).

**Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita*

At least eight wintering birds were noted in January. Two were at Low Newton on 24th (MJC), with one here on 11th and further singles at Branton GP on 1st, Close House (Wylam) from 17th-22nd, East Chevington on 6th, Gosforth Park NR on 6th, Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 13th and Swallow Pond on 21st.

**Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla*

Up to two females were noted in a Benton garden from 11th-28th (MP). Singles were also noted at Branton GP on 15th, Gosforth on 18th and Northburn (Cramlington) on 28th.

A male Blackcap

Gosforth NR

Chris Barlow

19th January

**Firecrest** *Regulus ignicapilla*

The wintering bird at Northumberland Park (North Shields) was relocated on 3rd and seen on many dates until at least 15th.

**Goldcrest** *Regulus regulus*

There were four at Mitford Church on 17th, three at Ha'penny Woods (Blyth) and at Northumberland Park (North Shields), two at Prestwick Carr and Warden and singles at Furnace Bridge (Bedlington), Gosforth, Jesmond Dene and Valley Park (Cramlington).

**Wren** *Troglodytes troglodytes*

A notable 22 were found at Gosforth Park NR on 6th (MJC), while elsewhere the only other reports were of two at Brierdene (Whitley Bay), Jesmond Dene and St Mary's Wetland and a single at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin).

**Nuthatch** *Sitta europaea*

Five were at Arcot Hall GC on 1st and in Jesmond Dene on 6th (DM/STH/MJCo) and four were singing in Ha'penny Woods (Blyth) on 22nd. Counts of three came from Allen Banks, Bolam Lake and Corbridge and one to two at Cramlington (Seven Oaks Park), Darras Hall, Derwent Reservoir, East Ord, Furnace Bridge (Bedlington), Gosforth Park NR, Harbottle, Leazes Park, Mitford Church, Northumberland Park (North Shields) and Ridley Park (Blyth).

**Treecreeper** *Certhia familiaris*

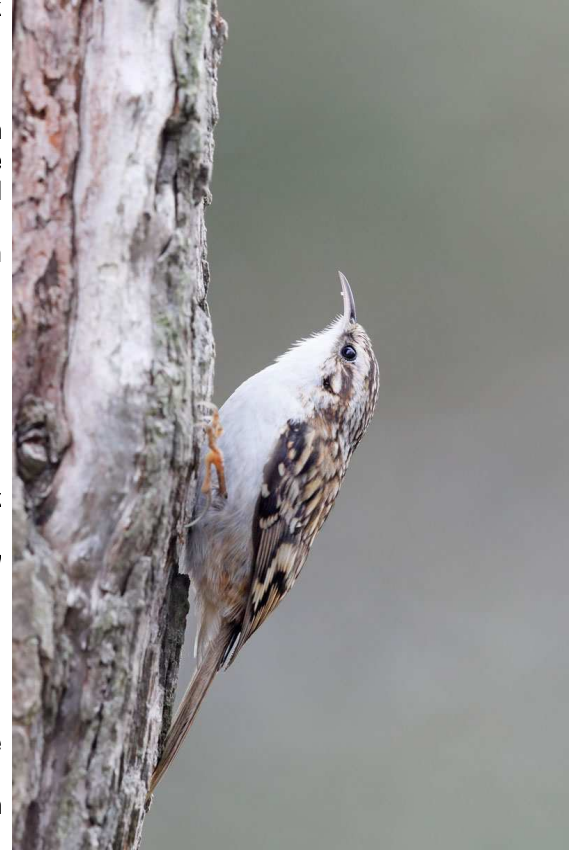
Well reported this month, with a total of five at Gosforth Park NR on 6th (MJC) and one to two at Allen Banks, Alnmouth, Beanley, Beacon Lane (Cramlington), Big Waters, Brierdene (Whitley Bay), Castle Island, Crooked Oak, Gosforth Park NR, Harbottle, Holywell Pond, Howick, Jesmond Dene, Mitford (castle, church and village), Morpeth, Northumberland Park (North Shields), Prestwick Carr, Rothbury, Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth), Spartylea, Valley Park (Cramlington) and Wallington.

Treecreeper

Northumberland Park

Colin Bradshaw

21st January

**Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris*

A roost of 400 were in a Humshaugh garden on 13th (SW), while elsewhere counts were modest, with 40 at Siloans Farm (Otterburn MoD) on 2nd, 25 at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin), 20 at Spartylea, ten at Cottonshope (Otterburn MoD), six at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) and two at Tynemouth Pier.

**Blackbird** *Turdus merula*

A total of 57 were found within a 1km radius of Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 24th (TBr), 25 were feeding on sunflower seed at Low Buston on 5th and 20+ were at Prestwick Carr on 31st. Elsewhere, 12-15 fed in gardens at two Corbridge localities and at Gosforth Garden Village and up to eight were at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, with one to four at a further three localities. A bird was in song at Gosforth Garden Village on 26th.

Omission: 21 roosted at Whitelea Chase (Cramlington) on 4th December 2018 (STH).

**Fieldfare** *Turdus pilaris*

320 near Bolam Lake on 13th was the largest gathering (AJ), followed by 220 at Letah Wood (Hexham) on 25th. In addition, counts of 45-50 came from Blanchland, Carterway Heads, Cottonshope (Otterburn MoD), Linton, Low Cocklaw (Berwick) and Overacres (Otterburn) during the month, while 30-36 were noted at Colwell, Doddington and Ponteland. There was a cold weather movement of 26 E at Beacons Hill (Cramlington) on 17th, 12-17 were reported from Bilton, Easington, Longhorsley and Tranwell, with one to ten at a further 12 localities.

A Fieldfare Prestwick Carr  
by Dennis Lovatt on 31st January



Redwing  
19th January  
Chris Barlow  
Gosforth NR



**Redwing** *Turdus iliacus*

The species was typically quite scarce this month, with the largest gathering of about 80 at Letah Wood (Hexham) on 25th (AJH). Elsewhere, 20 were at Humshaugh on 13th, 17 at Halton Shields (Corbridge) on 31st and 14-15+ at Greenlee Lough and North Seaton; one to six were noted at Corbridge, Cottonshope (Otterburn MoD), Doddington, Gosforth, Longbenton and Ross Back Sands.

Omission: 232 roosted at Whitelea Chase (Cramlington) on 4th December 2018 (STH).

**Song Thrush** *Turdus philomelos*

A notable five were singing at Gosforth Garden Village by 26th (MJC). Three were reported from Prestwick Carr on 2nd, two at Crooked Oak, Jesmond Dene and Northumberlandia (Cramlington) and singles at Big Waters, Castle Island, Corbridge, Dinnington Elsdon, Exhibition Park, Gosforth, Howden, Leazes Park, Northumberland Park (North Shields), Nuns Moor, Rothbury and Southfield Green (Cramlington).

**Mistle Thrush** *Turdus viscivorus*

Eight were at Derwent Reservoir on 19th (IFo), six at Greenlee Lough on 17th, five in a stubble field at Howick on 6th and four at Embleton, Gosforth, Leazes Park and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. One to two were also reported from Big Waters, Byrness, Castle Island, Corbridge, East Cramlington NR, Exhibition Park, Jesmond Dene, Prestwick Carr and Stonehaugh.

**Robin** *Erithacus rubecula*

Four at Spartylea, three at Jesmond Dene and singles at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) and Gosforth were the only reports.

A Robin at  
Howdon wetland  
Colin Bradshaw  
on 6th January

**Black Redstart** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Birds first found in December 2018 remained at Tynemouth Pier throughout the month and at Gloucester Lodge / Meggie's Burn (Blyth).

Black Redstart  
Tynemouth  
Chris Barlow  
20th January





**Stonechat** *Saxicola rubicola*

A total of five were noted between Alnmouth-Warkworth on 28th (JAR) and, notwithstanding some overlap, four were at Warkworth Gut on 20th and three at Buston Links on 5th. Elsewhere, two were at Cheswick, Goswick, Holy Island, Low Newton and Stag Rocks (Bamburgh), with singles at Boulmer, Cocklawburn, Howick and West Hartford.



A Stonechat at Long Nanny  
Mike Carr on 24th January

**Dipper** *Cinclus cinclus*

Four were noted along the River Alwin on 14th (IRD). Three seen at Warden on the Tyne on 6th (SW). Two were at Hedgeley, Furnace Bridge and Blanchland during the month with singles at a further eight sites.

**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*

Two large flocks were seen on 24th, with 70 at Whittle Dene and about 50 at Low Cocklaw (MR/TBr). 68 were counted at Holy Island village on 16th (ASJ). Up to 60 were noted throughout the month at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) and on 5th at Low Buston, feeding on sunflower seeds (RS/ASJ). 40+ attended feeders at Gloucester Lodge (Blyth) on 6th (LJM). 30 present all month in a Corbridge garden (RFL). Roosts at Cramlington produced counts of ten and 21 birds during the month (DM). 17 to 20 noted in a Newcastle beer garden on 4th and at feeders at Marden all month (DM/ASJ). Eight to ten were at two other sites.

**Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus*

A kilometre of roadside sunflowers at Low Buston attracted 50 plus, feeding on 5th (ASJ). On 22nd, 45 were at Doddington and 40+ at Widdrington Lane (JD/MSH). Around 30 were at Lesbury on 17th (MKi). 21 seen at Prestwick Carr on 30th and around 20 were at Low Cocklaw on 24th (PCF/TBr). One to 16 noted at a further 16 sites, including garden feeders at Tynemouth, Marden and Shilbottle.

Tree Sparrow

Dennis Lovatt

Prestwick Carr

31st January

**Dunnoek** *Prunella modularis*

Three were seen in Jesmond Dene on 27th and at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin), with two at a Marden Estate garden and at Spartylea during the month.

**Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*

Three were seen in Newcastle at Jesmond Dene on 6th and Armstrong Park on 2nd (MJCo/GB). Three also in a supermarket car park at Wallsend on 30th (CGK). A pair was along Horton Burn (Cramlington) on 4th (LJM) and two at Killingworth Lake on 5th (DM). Singles noted at 15 further locations.

A Grey Wagtail by Iain Johnstone  
2nd January

**Pied Wagtail** *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

27 counted at Low Newton on 24th was the month's peak (MJC). 14 had also been there on 14th. One to six were noted at a further eight sites during the month.

**Meadow Pipit** *Anthus pratensis*

A flock of 27 arrived at St. Mary's Wetland on 24th and 25 were together at Beaconhill (Cramlington) on 22nd (ASJ/STH). Five were at St. Mary's on 11th and four seen at Fenham Le Moor on 20th (ASJ). One to two were at six other sites during January.



Meadow Pipit  
Mike Carr  
Cheswick  
30th January

**Water Pipit** *Anthus spinoletta*

The long stayer was seen all month at Boulmer having been present since early November. A single was at St. Mary's on 13th (JBu).

December omission

Two were at Holy Island on 4th. One was at Boulmer from 3rd to month end.

**Rock Pipit** *Anthus petrosus*

Well reported this month with 30 birds across Holy Island on 1st and 15 at Sandham Bay the following day (MJC/IK). 13 were seen at Low Newton on 24th and ten+ at St. Mary's on 2nd and ten at Boulmer on 16th (IJ/TRD/JD). Eight frequented the Coquet Estuary on 20th (CSa) and seven were seen at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 28th, with six there on 2nd (STH). One to five seen at a further six sites.

**Rock Pipit** *Anthus petrosus littoralis*

Seven noted on Holy Island on 1st and a single at Budle Bay on 5th (MJC).



**Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelebs*

A kilometre stretch of roadside sunflowers attracted a huge number of mixed species between Low Buston and Buston Hall, with two flocks of Chaffinches here estimated at around 400 birds, feeding on the seeds on 5th. 100 + counted the following day and 300 + on 11th (ASJ/TFa/JFa), the largest number seen in the county in many years. Flocks of 30 to 50 were seen elsewhere at Crooked Oak, Longhorsley and Low Cocklaw (IFo/AB/LB/TBr). Around 25 observed during the month at Spartylea (CT). One to ten were at six other sites.

**Brambling** *Fringilla montifringilla*

A large feeding flock of up to 180 were in a game crop at Crooked Oak (Carterway Heads) between 5th and 24th (IFO). A minimum of 60 + fed on sunflower seeds with many other finch species at Low Buston on 5th and 11th (ASJ/JBu *et al.*). 50 + also in a mixed finch flock at Fieldhead (Longhorsley) on 21st (AB/LB). One to five were seen at six other locations.



A Brambling by Colin Bradshaw at Howdon on 23rd January

**Hawfinch** *Coccothraustes Coccothraustes*

The sole report this month was of a single at the unusual site of Colt Crag Reservoir on 1st (MR).

**Bullfinch** *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

A good count of 21 was made at Branton on 8th (IBDa/KDa). Ten were noted at Prestwick Carr on 1st (PCF). Nine were seen at Gosforth Park on 6th and at Plessey Checks on 20th (MJC/STH). Eight came to garden feeders at Rothbury all month (TRD/JD). Eight also at Howick on 6th and at Big Waters feeders on 5th. Seven at Howick on 12th (JAR/DM *et al.*). One to six were at an impressive 33 further sites this month.



A Bullfinch at Brierdene by Jack Bucknall on 26th January



**Greenfinch** *Chloris chloris*

There were two large pre - roost gatherings this month, with around 150 at Jesmond Dene between 25th and 31st and 80 at Linden Hall on 29th (MPF/NFo). 50 + fed on sunflower seeds at Low Buston on 5th, 6th and 12th (ASJ/TFa/JFa). 20 +, including some in song, were in the Brier Dene on 26th (JBu). One to 17 were noted at 14 other sites.



A Greenfinch at Howdon by Colin Bradshaw on 6th January

**Twite** *Carduelis Flavirostris*

A flock at Cocklawburn all month, peaked at 110 on 15th (MHu). 60 at Chevington burn mouth on 2nd increased to around 90 on 6th (TD/TRD/JD). The Beal Point flock peaked at 70 on 7th (TRD/JD). 50 was the peak count at Snook (Holy Island) during the month (IK). 33 were at Goswick on 3rd.



Twites bathing at Chibburn mouth by Chris Barlow on 6th January



A Twite at Goswick by Tim Dean on 3rd January

**Linnet** *Carduelis cannabina*

Some encouraging counts were made as 350 fed in an unharvested rape field at Allensford on 5th (IFo). A huge mixed finch flock feeding on sunflower seeds at Low Buston held around 200 Linnets on 5th and 11th (ASJ). 200 also gathered in trees at Big Waters on 4th and around 200 were at Bamburgh on 11th (GB/ASJ). 180 were at Goswick on 11th (ASJ). About 150 seen at Boulmer on 26th (AB/LB). 140 at Flodden on 8th and 120 at Hemscott Hill on 15th (TRD/JD). One to 65 were observed at ten other sites.

**Lesser Redpoll** *Carduelis caberet*

60 were along the old railway line at Rothbury on 12th (JD). 20 were at Derwent Reservoir on 10th (IFo). One to 11 were noted at ten further sites, including gardens at Rothbury and Gosforth.

**Crossbill** *Loxia curvirostra*

Around 40 were at Longframlington Common on 26th (NFO). 35 counted at Harwood on 20th with 27 in the village there on the same day, thirteen here on 30th (TRD/JD/PG/AJ). Near the coast, 21 flew low, SW at Widdrington Moor Lake on 5th (ASJ). 15 to 18 were seen at Byrness, Corbridge, Winnows Hill, Kylloe and near the coast over Howick Hall during the month. 12 noted at Beanley on 2nd (IBDa/KDa). One to nine were seen at 11 other locations this month.



A Crossbill at Harwood by Ian Janes on 31st January





A Crossbill at Harwood by Alan Janes on 31st January

**Goldfinch** *Carduelis carduelis*

Sunflowers at Low Buston attracted 100 plus on 5th, 6th and 11th as part of a huge gathering of a variety of species (ASJ/TFa/JFa). 60 were at North Sunderland on 15th and 50 seen at Cresswell on 18th, with 32 there on 2nd (JPL/STH/IFo/AJH). 32 also at East Ord on 3rd visiting garden feeders (MHu). 31 noted at Ridley Park (Blyth) on 26th (LJM). 30 were in a Corbridge garden on 20th with 25 also at another garden there throughout the month (MR/RFL). The month's peak in a Chapel House garden, was 24 seen on 21st (MH). 24 were also seen at Cramlington Hall on 11th (DM). Elsewhere, one to 20 noted at seven sites.

**Siskin** *Carduelis spinus*

Around 100 were at Ford Moss on 6th (BWG). 60 seen at Chollerford on 23rd (SW). 50 plus fed with other finches on sunflower seeds at Low Buston on 5th and 6th (ASJ). A Corbridge garden attracted 30 to feeders during the month (RFL). 20 noted in Gosforth Park on 6th (MJC). One to 12 were at a further 15 sites during the month.

**Yellowhammer** *Emberiza citronella*

Well reported with a count of a minimum of 100 made at Alnmouth dunes on 3rd. 25 were there the following day (CSa/STH/ASJ). 70 were at Newham Bog on 15th (MH/AA). 60+ seen along Widdrington Lane on 22nd (MSH). 50 noted in field margins near Bellasis Bridge on 20th (PCF). 30 seen at Beaconhill (Cramlington) on 14th and at Eden Hill (Lesbury) on 17th (STH/MKi). 23 were at Crooked Oak (Carterway Heads) on 4th (Ifo). 16 seen at Fenham Le Moor on 11th and East Fleetham on 7th (ASJ/CB/GW). 12 at Low Cocklaw on 29th (TBr). One to eight were seen at 15 other sites.

Yellowhammer  
Chris Barlow  
4th January  
Big Waters





**Reed Bunting** *Emberiza schoeniclus*

33 were counted feeding on sunflower seeds at Low Buston on 5th (ASJ). Up to 25 noted at Widdrington Lane on several dates (MSH/SPP). 10 to 12 were in dunes at Alnmouth/Buston on 4th, 5th and 12th (STH/ASJ/JAR). One to seven were at seven further sites during the month.

**Lapland Bunting** *Calcarius lapponicus*

One was present at Longbridge End (Beal) on 20th (CH).

**Snow Bunting** *Plectrophenax nivalis*

A flock at Goswick was present all month, peaking at 34 on 20th (CH/DRW/MJC). The three (one male) wintering at St. Mary's Island were present all month (ASJ/JBu *et al.*). One was seen at Buston links on 4th (STH). Singles were also seen at Otterburn Ranges, Low Newton and Holy Island during the month.



Snow Bunting at St. Mary's – the most photographed birds of the winter

Above: by Colin Bradshaw on 28th January

Below: by Alan Jack on 19th January



**ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN****Escapes**

No sightings

**Hybrids****Gyrfalcon x Saker** *Falco Rusticolus x Falco Cherrug*

One seen at Warkworth Golf Club on 21st (CSa) was presumably the regular individual which has been at large since September 2016.

**Mallard x Pintail** *Anas platyrhynchos x Anas acuta*

The hybrid seen last month at Colt Crag Reservoir was again present there with a male hybrid seen on 1st and a female hybrid on 25th (MR). It is thought possible that a drake Pintail seen in June 2017 may have been responsible for this unusual pairing! Interesting Mallard head and Pintail stern on male with female looking like Mallard on water but with a Pintail wing pattern when it flew.

**Birds of Unknown Origin**

No sightings

**LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS**

A.Allen, N.Anderson, A.H.Banks, C.D.Barlow, R.J. & M. Bentley (RB / MB), G.Bowman, C.Bradshaw, T.Brewis (TBr), A. & L.Brunst, J.Bucknall (JBU), M.J.Carr, M.J.Cook (MJCo), R.Craig (RCra), A.Curry, 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), M.P.Frankis, P.Gilbert, A.Hall, C.D.Hampton, A.S.Hart, 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, I.Kerr, M.Kirby (MKi), C.G.Knox, G.P.Knox, S.J.Laing, D.Lovatt (DL0), J.P.Lumby, G.Maskell, P.R.Massey, A.J. & S.V.McCormick, L.J.McDougall, D.McGibbon (DMcG), D.Mckeown, A.D.Mclevy (ADM), A.P.Mossop, A.D.Mould, N.F.Osborne, H.Peters, A.G.Pitches, M.Potts, A.J.Richards, J.Richardson, M.Richardson, S.Rippon, D.Robinson (DRo), J.A.Roper, C.Saunders, M.R.Smith, B.Steel, R.Stevens, P.A.Tapsell, C.Tudge, D.R.Watson, S.Westerberg, T.Wiffen (TWi), G.Woodburn, K.W.York.

North Northumberland Bird Club (R Poyer and J Lumby), 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](mailto:NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com)

**RECORD SUBMISSION**

Please email records for the month to [ntbc.records@googlemail.com](mailto: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](mailto: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. 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 [ntbcorg@gmail.com](mailto:ntbcorg@gmail.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 [ntbcorg@jobentleyplus.com](mailto:ntbcorg@jobentleyplus.com) or [ntbcorg@gmail.com](mailto:ntbcorg@gmail.com)

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 WEBSITE UPDATE

The club website is an excellent online resource for anyone interested in birds.

**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](mailto:galleries@ntbc.org.uk)

If you are not a regular visitor to the Club Website, there are some updates to the following pages you may be interested in;

**Trip reports** (April visits to birding destinations, interesting reading and well illustrated),

**Publications** (pdf versions of some Annual Reports),

**County List** (*per* M Hodgson), Indoor and Outdoor Meetings details,

**Bird Notes** (Med Gull),

**Survey** news and **WeBS** tables for 2018.

The committee considers the "**Other Sightings**" facility on the website to be obsolete, and the intention is to remove this page. Please do not send anything to the email address given on the page.

To find out more please visit [www.ntbc.org.uk](http://www.ntbc.org.uk)

Andrew Brunt

**Hon Sec**

## TYNE KITTIWAKE PARTNERSHIP

Since the 1960s, the River Tyne has supported the most inland breeding colony of Kittiwakes in the world. Each spring, these pelagic gulls return to the Newcastle-Gateshead Quayside where they nest on buildings and structures, including the Tyne Bridge. Kittiwakes are now part of this iconic cityscape and a tourist attraction in their own right

A local ornithologist has been monitoring the Tyne kittiwakes for 25 years during which time a great increase in their numbers at Newcastle-Gateshead Quayside has been recorded. This is incredible, not just because of the special place these birds have chosen to nest, but in light of the significant reductions in Kittiwake populations elsewhere.

Globally, kittiwakes are thought to have declined by around 40% since the 1970s, and were added to the Red List Birds of Conservation Concern in 2015. This was followed by the species being uplisted from Least Concern to Vulnerable in 2017. In the UK, Kittiwake numbers have plummeted, particularly in Orkney and Shetland where breeding birds have declined by 87% since 2000, and on St Kilda in the Western Isles where as much as 96% of the breeding population has been lost. Climate change and fishing that sets aside too little for the birds are likely causes of serious declines in Kittiwake numbers. Protecting this unique river-nesting colony is therefore an important part of the wider conservation effort for this species.

Unfortunately, the Tyne Kittiwakes face risks at their artificial nest sites. Last year saw these birds receive unprecedented media attention following a series of incidents where individual kittiwakes became accidentally caught, and in some instances perished, as a result of unfit bird deterrent netting. Members of the Tyne Kittiwake Partnership worked alongside the RSPCA to support rescue operations and collaborative efforts have continued in an attempt to prevent this from happening again.

The installation of bird deterrents, such as netting, is perfectly legal outside the breeding season. This does require consent on listed buildings (once approved this cannot be revoked) and the property owner has a responsibility to ensure the safety of the deterrent. Unfortunately, when deterrents are not fit for purpose (e.g. netting too slack, loose and/or poorly maintained) they can become a danger to Kittiwakes.

Once birds have started nesting, it is not possible to remove dangerous netting, as this would dislodge nests built on top of the deterrent. Action must be taken outside the breeding season, prior to their return. Together the RSPB, Newcastle City Council, RSPCA and the Tyne Kittiwake Partnership have been working with businesses and property owners to make Newcastle's buildings and structures safe in time for spring. There has been a positive response from many of these stakeholders who have already, or are in the process of, removing dangerous netting before the Kittiwakes return. Alongside this, procedures are being developed to enable swift and informed action should Kittiwakes experience trouble this year.

As netting is removed, alternatives may be installed including bird gel and avishock. Avishock is an electrical deterrent, which like the others, is a legal way to prevent birds nesting on structures (provided it is installed outside the breeding season). All available evidence suggests the product is not harmful to any bird species.

Newcastle City Council have produced guidance on deterrents to help those considering and using these measures to understand the implications and their responsibilities (property owners have a responsibility to ensure their deterrents are safe and must act to release any caught birds). This will be available online and circulated to business across Newcastle.

People can help by contacting the RSPCA's 24-hour cruelty and advice helpline (0300 1234 999) if they see a live Kittiwake caught in netting. To help the RSPCA respond as quickly as possible, please provide as much information you can. Where possible, please also alert the property owner.

This work represents a significant step, but there is more to do. We need to protect this unique river-nesting colony as part of the wider conservation effort for Kittiwakes. As well as ensuring their safety every breeding season, with others, we want to raise awareness and celebrate these special birds.

For more information, please keep an eye on the Tyne Kittiwake Partnership webpages, hosted by NHSN, which will be updated during March with new content including answers to frequently asked questions and updated details on the Kittiwake population.

**Editor Note:** - NTBC is in the partnership. The chief action from club members is in recording and reporting. Dan Turner and others have been the mainstay of this work. Please note the contact number 0300 1234 999 which should be used to avoid repeated calls to the Fire Service if birds are trapped.



A Kittiwake on the Tyne Bridge  
A 2004 photograph by Steve Barrett



# Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2019 No 2

MONTHLY SUMMARY FEBRUARY 2019

4th April 2019



## CONTENTS

The Treasurer's address is 80 Western Avenue not 89 as stated in BIN.

BBS Squares availability for 2019

Chairman's email address confirmation is [martindavison3@gmail.com](mailto:martindavison3@gmail.com)

County Rarities spreadsheets for 2017, 2018 and 2019

## CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Tundra Bean Goose	One was on Fenham Flats on 16th. Quiet year for species.
Egyptian Goose	Separate singles seen on 19th at Newton scrape and Big Waters.
Green-winged Teal	Male found at Druridge Pools on 12th and present until end of month.
Ring-necked Duck	Drake seen on Coanwood Pond from 11th to 18th and then Grindon Lough from 26th.
Black Scoter	The returning drake was seen off Holy Island on 3rd and Budle Pt on 16th.
Smew	Single redheads found at Widdrington Moor Lake, Hexham and Mootlaw Quarry.
Manx Shearwater	Extremely unusual for February with one south off Seaton Sluice on 21st.
Red-necked Grebe	Singles off Holy Island harbour and Ross Back Sands.
Crane	The immature last month on the Tweed was seen east of Wark from 10th to 24th.
Avocet	Two on Blyth Estuary on 23rd equalled earliest return and five at Cresswell on 26th.
Whimbrel	Earliest county record with one at Coanwood Common on 25th.
Black-tailed Godwit	High winter counts of 21 at Fenham Mill and 16 on Coquet Estuary.
Ruff	Singles at Cresswell, Druridge and Newton scrape.
Spotted Redshank	Wintering individual still at Budle Bay.
Greenshank	Single at Grindon Lough on 21st. First record of year.
Iceland Gull	Second-winter at Big Waters again all month.
Waxwing	Two at Dinnington and a single at Corbridge.
Shorelark	Four were again seen at Buston Links until 21st.
Cetti's Warbler	Male singing occasionally and calling at Woodhorn Flash from 22nd.
Firecrest	One still wintering at Northumberland Park, North Shields.
Black Redstart	Single at Tynemouth all month.
Lapland Bunting	One calling at Beal Point on 6th.
Snow Bunting	Popular three at St Mary's again seen all month with up to 24 on Holy Island.

A Kestrel hovers over  
Tynemouth

26th February

Alan Jack



## 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;

**11th April 2019.**

**Stuart Brooker – “The Dawn Chorus and Bird Song”.** Stuart is a PhD student in the Department of Biosciences at Durham University. In northern temperate zones, seasonal patterns in birdsong are closely tied to breeding cycles in birds, but we still do not fully understand daily patterns in song and why birds sing most intensely at dawn. Stuart will explain.

## FIELD TRIPS

Contact Steve Anderson [seaswan@btinternet.com](mailto:seaswan@btinternet.com)

**Sunday 28th April 2019**      **Langholm Harriers**

**Sunday 26th May 2019**      **Geltsdale RSPB Reserve**

**Saturday 22nd June 2019**      **Winnows Hill (Nightjars)**

## CLASSIFIED LIST

### **Brent Goose** *Branta bernicla*

Reports of pale-bellied *hrota* race birds included 1,200 at Budle Bay on 3rd (MJC), 650 there on 16th (ASJ) and about 500 on 23rd (CGK), 200 at Lindisfarne on 6th (TRD/JD), and three at Beadnell, while 64 flew S at Ross Back Sands on 17th (MJC). Dark-bellied *bernicla* race birds involved 162 (including only 11 juveniles) at Holy Island on 3rd (MJC) and 150 feeding in a *Zostera* bed at St Cuthbert's Island, Holy Island on 11th (IK), and ten at Budle Bay on 23rd (CGK). Counts of un-raced birds included 1,700 at Budle Bay on 20th (AJR), and 1,000-1,500 at Harper's Heugh-Budle Bay between 3rd-23rd (DF).

### **Canada Goose** *Branta canadensis*

Grindon Lough attracted a peak of 470 on 17th (MRS) and 113-327 on various dates between 4th-21st (SJH/PRM *et al.*). Largest counts away from there involved 235 at Hartburn Reservoir on 15th (MNC), about 200 at Druridge Pools on 9th (IDR), 124 at Widdrington Moor Lake on 4th (AJR), 66-85 at Capheaton Lake (STE) and Cresswell Pond (MKi), and 18-46 at Bothal and Linton Ponds, Castle Island, Newcastle Leazes Park, Plenmeller Common West, West Ord and Whiteadder Water.

### **Barnacle Goose** *Branta leucopsis*

Numbers in the Budle Bay-Harper's Heugh area included a peak of 1,500 on 3rd (MJC), and 160-1,250 regularly between 4th-27th (DF/MSH *et al.*), and 600 were at Ross Back Sands on 17th (MJC). The only report in the south of the county involved one at Widdrington Moor Lake on 19th (BS).

### **Greylag Goose** *Anser anser*

325 were at Budle Bay on 11th (DF), 320 at Crowhall Farm (Holywell) on 17th (MNC) and 285 at nearby Earsdon on 17th (MSH), 300 at Big Waters on 3rd (GB), 117-146 at Cheswick (MHu) and Coanwood Pond (SJH), and 60-90 at Plenmeller Common West, Spittal-Cocklawburn and Wark. Groups of 12-22 were at Grindon Lough, Linton Ponds and Whiteadder Water (Border-River Tweed), while one to two were at Bothal and Middle Ord Ponds, Capheaton, Druridge Pools and Spartylea.

### **Pink-footed Goose** *Anser brachyrhynchus*

In the Druridge Bay area, 4,000 were at Druridge Pools on 26th (TD), 3,500 over East Chevington on 12th (TRD/JD), 3,000 at Cresswell Pond on 6th (TB), 2,500 at Widdrington Moor Lake on 19th and 27th (BS/TRD/JD), and 2,000 at Cresswell Links on 15th (TB). In the north of the county, 3,200 were at High Newton on 16th (BS), 2,000 at Elwick on 16th (NS), up to 1,650 at Budle Bay-Harper's Heugh (DF/CGK), 1,000 at Ross Back Sands on 17th (MJC), and 300 at Newham. Further south, 1,100 were at Gloucester Lodge, Blyth on 10th (MSH) and 1,000 at Earsdon on 16th (JBu), 500 at Linton Ponds, and 50-100 at West Stobswood and Woodhorn.

A total of about 1,000 moved NW at Holy Island on 23rd-24th (IK), and 120-350 flew N/NW at Berwick, Harwood Forest, Newbiggin and Tynemouth on 22nd-23rd, and 75-160 N or W at Cheswick, Cocklawburn, Cramlington, QEII CP Lake, Sandy Bay and Tynemouth on several further scattered dates. Flocks were heard overhead at Shiremoor on seven dates during the month (CGK). One remained at Killingworth Lake all month.

A Pink Foot at Killingworth Lake  
Chris Barlow on 3rd February





**Tundra Bean Goose** *Anser serrirostris*

One was at Fenham Flats on 16th (BS).

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

An adult of the Eurasian *albifrons* race was at Low Newton on 19th (TRD/JD) and two were present on 22nd (BS).

**Mute Swan** *Cygnus olor*

Peak counts were 62 at QEII CP Lake on 17th (CDH), 37 at Killingworth Lake on 20th (LJM), 30-32 at Hartburn Reservoir (MNC) and on the River Tyne at Howdon (CB), 20-24 at Cheswick, Druridge Pools and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, and 17 at Big Waters. Five to seven were at Cornhill on Tweed, Grindon Lough and Harper's Heugh.



Mute Swan and fox eyeball each other

Mike Carr

Gosforth NR on 2nd February

**Whooper Swan** *Cygnus cygnus*

22 flew N at Colt Crag Reservoir on 27th (MR), 20+ NW at Harwood Forest on 25th (MSH), and 12 N at Longhoughton Steel on 27th (STE). A 'herd' of 131 fed on brassicas at Norham on 18th (CH), 90 were near Druridge Pools on 26th (TD), 35 on the sea off Alnmouth on 25th later flew N (JAR), 31 were at Fenham Flats on 16th (BS), 31 at Harper's Heugh (near Budle Bay) on 27th (MSH), and 12-19 at Coanwood Pond and East Chevington. One to two were also at/over Broomlee and Grindon Loughs, Capheaton Lake, Cocklawburn, Hartley Lane and the Tweed Estuary.



Whoopers at Druridge Pools on 27th February by Tim Dean

**Egyptian Goose** *Alopochen aegyptiaca*

Two different individuals were found on 19th, with one at Big Waters (Dan Downer *per* GB) and another at Low Newton scrape (TRD/JD).

**Shelduck** *Tadorna tadorna*

14 flew N at St Mary's on 16th (JBu). Budle Bay held a peak of 174 on 27th (MSH), 60 were at the Blyth Estuary on 23rd (LJM), 34 at Howdon on 2nd (CB), 27 in the Scotswood area on 24th (PCF), and ten to 12 at Boulmer, Castle Island and Widdrington Moor Lake. Six to seven (some paired up) were at the Aln Estuary, Druridge Pools and Warkworth. Four were well inland at Branton GP on 16th (IBDa/KDa). One to three were also at Arcot Pond, Ellington, the Long Nanny and Wansbeck Estuaries, Monks' House Pool, Tughall, Woodhorn Flashes and Yarrow Slake.

**Mandarin** *Aix galericulata*

A duck was at Newcastle Leazes Park on 6th and 11th (DM/KWY) and a drake visited Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 22nd (MR/SR).

**Shoveler** *Spatula clypeata*

Budle Bay continued to attract substantial numbers, with peaks of 50 on 4th (CH) and 44 on 3rd (MJC). Peak counts elsewhere involved 33 at Swallow Pond on 22nd (GPK), 30 at Druridge Pools on 26th (TD), and ten at Low Newton scrape (TRD/JD) and Monks' House Pool (IDR). Three to seven were at Arcot Pond and Holy Island, and one to two at Big Waters, Grindon Lough and Linton Ponds.

**Gadwall** *Mareca strepera*

This month's peak counts were 29 at Bothal Pond on 26th (TF/JFa), 23 at the Blyth Estuary on 23rd (LJM), 23 at Marden Quarry on 3rd (KWY), and 19 at QEII CP Lake (CDH). Ten to 11 were at Branton GP and Howdon Wetland, and seven to eight at Breamish caravan site, Castle Island and Linton Ponds. Three to four were also at Arcot and Cresswell Ponds, Druridge Pools and East Chevington, and one to two at Big Waters, Budle Bay, Colt Crag and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, Ladyburn Lake and Woodhorn Flashes.

**Wigeon** *Mareca penelope*

Budle Bay held 2,200 on 3rd (MJC), 885 were at Cresswell Pond on 3rd (IRD), 376 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 2nd (SR), 300-350 at Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough and Tughall, and 200-212 at Derwent Reservoir and Newham Bog. Counts of 102-150 came from Big Waters, Bothal Pond, Boulmer, Branton GP, Capheaton Lake, Foxton Bend, and Widdrington Moor Lake, and 50-85 at Coanwood Pond, Linton Ponds, New Water Haugh, Warkworth and Woodhorn Flashes. Counts of 20-49 also came from Colt Crag Reservoir, Plenneller Common, the Tweed Estuary and West Stobswood. More unusual were seven at the Blyth Estuary on 23rd (LJM) and three at Bank's Pond, Dinnington on 12th (AHB).



A drake Wigeon at QEII CP by Jack Bucknall on 4th February

**Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*

247 were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 2nd (SR), 238 at Derwent Reservoir on 3rd (IFo), 110 on the River Tweed at Wark on Tweed on 2nd (GB/DM/LAR), and 50-96 at Allen Banks (River Allen), Calot Shad (Tweed Estuary), Cocklawburn Pond, Colt Crag Reservoir, Fourstones, Grindon Lough, Marden Quarry and Newcastle Leazes Park. Counts of 20-45 also came from Bothal and Coanwood Ponds, Capheaton and Killingworth Lakes, Castle Island, Cornhill on Tweed, Druridge Pools, Newcastle Leazes Park, Spartylea and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

**Pintail** *Anas acuta*

184 were counted at Tealhole Point, Fenham Flats on 16th (BS). Typically few were noted elsewhere, with one to two at Branton GP, Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, East Chevington north pool, and Warkworth weir.

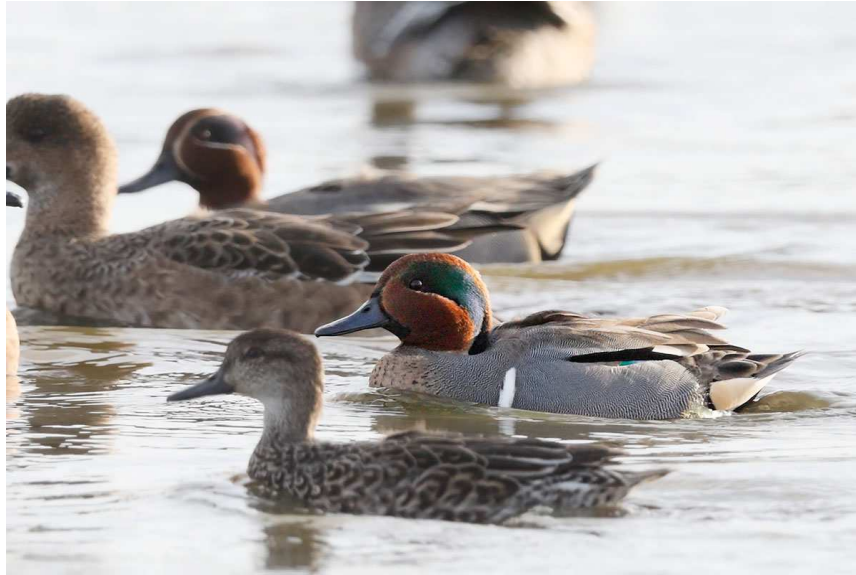
**Teal** *Anas crecca*

Peaks were 563 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 2nd (SR), 407 at Druridge Pools on 17th (IDR), 200-206 at Colt Crag Reservoir (MR) and Howdon (CB), and 101-141 at Derwent Reservoir, Elswick, Grindon Lough, Holy Island ('rocket field' pools). Groups of 28-61 were also at Arcot, Bothal, Coanwood and Swallow Ponds, Big Waters, the Blyth and Tweed Estuaries, Capheaton Lake, Castle Island, Gosforth Park NR, Monks' House Pool and Newham Bog.



**Green-winged Teal** *Anas carolinensis*

A drake was found at Druridge Pools on 12th (ADMc) and remained until at least 26th. On 22nd it was noted as displaying (MKi).



Green-winged Teal on 21st February at Druridge Pool by Colin Bradshaw

**Pochard** *Aythya ferina*

Killingworth Lake held a peak of 35 on 9th (BS), 26 were at Linton Ponds on 17th (CDH), and four to six at Bothal Pond (TRD), Branton GP (IBDa/KDa), Broomlee Lough (RFL) and Swallow Pond (CDH). Singles were also at Bakethin Reservoir, Big Waters and Widdrington Moor Lake.

A drake Pochard on Killingworth Lake  
Chris Barlow

**Ring-necked Duck** *Aythya collaris*

A drake discovered at Coanwood Pond on 11th was still present on 16th (SJH). Presumably the same bird then moved to Grindon Lough, where it was noted on 26th-27th (PRM).

**Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula*

Peak counts were 63 at Killingworth Lake on 20th (LJM), 41 at Castron on 9th (JD), 40 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 3rd (MR), 21-34 at Bothal, Coanwood and Swallow Ponds, Grindon Lough, Newcastle Leazes Park and QEII CP Lake, and ten to 14 at Capheaton Lake, Druridge Pools, Howick Hall, Linton Ponds, Shield on the Wall and Wansbeck Business Park.

**Scaup** *Aythya marila*

Three were at Cresswell Pond on three dates between 9th-17th (IK/ASH/ADMc) and one to two on several further dates between 7th-28th (TRD/JD/MKi), two were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 19th and 25th (ADMc/BS), and singles on the River Wansbeck near Ashington on 27th (TB), Budle Bay on 20th (AJR), Grindon Lough on 26th (SJH) and off Newbiggin Church Point on 12th (STH).



The Scaup at Cresswell on 27th February by Tim Dean

**Eider** *Somateria mollissima*

Only small numbers were reported, with 32-33 at St Mary's Island (MSH) and North Shields (DRW), and 24-29 at Newbiggin, Spittal Bay (Berwick) and Stag Rocks, and eight at Holy Island.



A drake Eider on 11th February at Alnmouth by Mike Carr

**Velvet Scoter** *Melanitta fusca*

On 17th, two were at Holy Island (DLo) and Ross Back Sands on 17th (MJC/NFO). One was at the former site on 3rd (SR) and one was also at Newbiggin on 12th (STH).

**Common Scoter** *Melanitta nigra*

Light passage at Seaton Sluice involved 47 N and 14 S during the months (SSWT), and 33 were offshore there on 28th (LJM). About 50 were off Spital Bay, Newbiggin on 14th-15th (PG/BS), 44 off Ross Back Sands on 17th (MJC), 33 at Stag Rocks on 3rd (MJC), and 14-18 at Cheswick and Spittal Bay (Berwick). Six to eight were also off East Chevington and Holy Island.

**Black Scoter** *Melanitta americana*

On 3rd, a drake off Holy Island later flew S (SR). On 16th, it was seen flying in to the Stag Rocks-Budle Point area from the direction of the Farne Islands (CGK/PS).

**Long-tailed Duck** *Clangula hyemalis*

One flew S at Cheswick on 2nd (GB), 24 were off Ross Back Sands on 17th (MJC), seven at Stag Rocks on 3rd (MJC), five to six at Cheswick Sands (CH) and Holy Island harbour area (MJC), and two at Fenham Flats and Fisherman's Haven (Berwick).

**Goldeneye** *Bucephala clangula*

74 (12 drakes) were at Capheaton Lake on 15th (STE), 62 were on the River Tweed at New Water Haugh on 24th (MHu), 60 at East Chevington north pool on 26th (BS), 56 at Boulmer (BS) and the Tweed Estuary (TBr/MMcN), and 22-24 at Holy Island and Killingworth Lake. Counts of ten to 19 came from Branton GP, Broomlee Lough, Castle Island, Colt Crag Reservoir, Grindon Lough, QEII CP and Widdrington Moor Lakes, Wark on Tweed and Yarrow Slake, five to nine were at Big Waters, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Hallington and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, Tyne Green and West Ord, and three to four at Bakethin and Derwent Reservoirs, and the Blyth Estuary (where brief display was noted).

**Goosander** *Mergus merganser*

13 were at Branton GP on 11th (NFO), 11 at Tyne Green, Hexham on 6th (MR), six to nine at Coldstream (GB/DM/LAR) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs (MR), and four at Dilston (RB/MB). One to two were also found at Berwick Hill, Cornhill on Tweed, Elswick, Jesmond Dene, Lesbury, Morpeth, Newcastle Exhibition and Leazes Parks, QEII CP Lake, Stakeford and Wark.

**Smew** *Mergellus albellus*

Single 'redheads' were at Tyne Green, Hexham on 5th-6th (RB/MB/MR), Mootlaw Quarry on 14th (ALT) and Widdrington Moor Lake between 11th-27th (TB/TRD *et al.*).

**Red-breasted Merganser** *Mergus serrator*

Ten were at East Chevington on 27th (TRD/JD), nine at Widdrington Moor Lake on 9th (MSH), five to eight at Budle Bay (CGK), Holy Island (DLo) and Ross Back Sands (MJC), and three to four at the Blyth, Long Nanny and Tweed Estuaries, and Spittal Bay (Berwick). One to two were also at Castle Island-the Wansbeck Estuary, the Coquet Estuary, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Stag Rocks and Warkworth. More unusual was a duck at Big Waters on 8th (GB).



**Black Grouse** *Tetrao tetrix*

All reports came from the North Pennines stronghold. The reliable High Knock Shield Farm (Allendale) site peaked at three males and seven greyhens on 24th (SJH), six males and a single female were at Westburnhope on 22nd (RMH) and Far Town (Slaggyford) had totals of six birds on two separate dates (JSe). Five females were at Carrshield on 8th (EC/JSB), four males were at Swinhope Shield on 18th (ADM), two birds were seen feeding on roadside hawthorn at Paxhill (Allenheads) on 2nd and single males were at Acton Moor, Coanwood Common and Plenmeller Common.

**Red Grouse** *Lagopus lagopus*

Some good counts from the North Pennines included several reports from Plenmeller Common peaking at 45+ there on 21st (PRM). On 24th many displaying birds were in a total of 21 seen at Paxhill (Allenheads) and 15 at High Knock Shield Farm (SJH). Seven were at Coanwood Common on two dates and six displaying males were at Hollin Green Farm (Keenley). Reports from the Cheviots were of fewer birds with likely several pairs calling in the Belford Moor-Bowden Doors area on 27th (DF), four in the Harthope Valley and three near Harwood Forest. Two were at Longframlington Common and Alnwick Moor.

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

A flock of around 20 birds along the railway line at St. Mary's on 8th was the highest count (JBu). One to four were at Big Waters NWT, Debdon (Rothbury), Ellingham, Glanton, Harthope Valley, Monks' House Pool, Newham and Plenmeller Common West.

**Grey Partridge** *Perdix perdix*

In a show of strength towards Red-Legged Partridges a flock of 20 were also along the railway line at St. Mary's on 6th (JBu). 12 were at Druridge Pools NR on 9th (IDR) and eight were seen at Beal and Spartylea. Four pairs were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs, seven birds were at Knock Shield and one to six were at Boulmer, Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay), Colt Crag Reservoir, Corbridge, Crowhall Farm (Holywell), East Linden, Ellington, Fenham-le-Moor, Heighley Gate, Prestwick Carr, Quarry Cottage, Shorestone, Spartylea, Spital Bay (Newbiggin) and Woodhorn Flashes.

**Pheasant** *Phasianus colchicus*

Druridge Pools NR peaked at 15 on 17th (IDR) as did West Hartford on 20th (TB). Up to ten were at Spartylea, four at Druridge Lane and Cornhill-on-Tweed with one to three at Castle Island, Crow Hall Farm (Holywell), Holywell Pond and Linton Ponds.

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

The monthly passage total at Seaton Sluice was 47 (23N, 24S) in 10 hours of watching (SSWT). Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) peaked at 28 there on 6th (DF), 12 were at Ross Back Sands on 17th and five were off the north shore of Holy Island on 26th. Five flew N at Rumbling Kern (Howick) on 10th and one to three were sighted at several other widely scattered coastal locations.

**Black-throated Diver** *Gavia arctica*

Singles were spotted at three separate locations – the mouth of the River Tweed on 7th (PNo/MNo), Holy Island on 17th (DLo) and in the Blyth Estuary on 23rd (LJM).

**Great Northern Diver** *Gavia immer*

Only single birds were seen this month, with one flying N at St. Mary's Island on 2nd, one flying S at Spital Burn (Newbiggin) on 15th and further birds at Cheswick Sands, Hauxley, Holy Island, Ross Back Sands and Stag Rocks.

**Fulmar** *Fulmarus glacialis*

Howick Bay peaked at 58 on 14th (RPo), ca.30 were paired off on nesting cliff ledges at Dunstanburgh on 22nd (DLo), 20 were around the cliffs at Old Hartley on 26th (MSH) and at least ten were at Spital Bay (Newbiggin) on 14th with four nests visible from the coastal path (PG). Singles were at Seahouses and Snab Point (Cresswell).

Fulmar

Alan Jack

Tynemouth

26th February

**Manx Shearwater** *Puffinus puffinus*

An extremely unexpected sighting of one flying S was a bonus for the watch tower observers at Seaton Sluice Watch Tower on 21st – the first site February record in 26 years! (SSWT).



**Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

River counts reduced this month as birds headed back to breeding sites, however 12 were at Castle Island on 17th (DM) and 11 still present on the R. Tweed from Yardford Shiel-Horncliffe on 23rd (CH). Six were on the R Tweed at Wark on 2nd (DM), five were at Coanwood Pond by 25th (SJH) and one to four, with many being very vocal, were at the Aln Estuary, Big Waters NWT, the Blyth Estuary, Bothal Pond, Breamish Caravan Site, Caistron, Cornhill-on-Tweed, Druridge Pools NR, East Chevington, Grindon Lough, on the sea at Howdiemont Sands, Howick Pool, Killingworth Lake, Linden Hall, Linton Ponds, QE11 CP Lake, Swallow Pond, Tyne Green (Hexham), Wansbeck Estuary, Warkworth Weir, Whittle Dene Reservoirs and Woodhorn Flashes.

**Red-necked Grebe** *Podiceps grisegena*

At Holy Island singles were reported on several dates and then two were off Steel End on 15th (NFO/MJC/IK/DLo/DF). One at Ross Back Sands on 14th and 17th (MJC) was considered a long-staying bird (CH).

**Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus*

Eight had already returned to Widdrington Moor Lake by 27th and all were in summer plumage (TRD/JD). The two lakes at Killingworth held a total of four birds on 20th (LJM) and one to two were seen Big Waters NWT, Colt Crag Reservoir, Cheswick, Druridge Pools NR and Swallow Pond.

**Slavonian Grebe** *Podiceps auritus*

Numbers at Ross Back Sands grew to an impressive 22 on 17th (MJC), whilst Stag Rocks peaked at eight on 27th (MSH) and up to seven were at St. Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) on 11th (IK).

**Bittern** *Botaurus stellaris*

One was seen at Chevington North Pool on 10th (ADMc).

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

Howdon peaked at 16 on 15th (CB), 15 were at Druridge Pools NR on 17th (IDR), Prestwick Carr hosted nine on 21st (PCF) and eight at Howick Pool on 24th suggested possible breeding (PHa/AHa). Totals of six were at Linton Ponds, Warkworth and Whittle Dene Reservoirs whilst one to five were seen at the Aln Estuary, Breamish Caravan site, Cornhill-on-Tweed, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Grindon Lough, Holy Island, Leazes Park, Monks' House Pool and QE11 CP Lake. A pair were seemingly trying to build a nest in reedbed at Newton Pool on 19th (TRD/JD).

**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*

Four at Elwick (Lindisfarne NNR) on 5th was the highest count of the month (MH/AA). One to two were seen at Beal, Branton GP, Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay), Budle Bay, Caistron, Wark, the R. Coquet at Rothbury, Garden Village (a garden tick!), Holy Island, Horton Burn (Cramlington), the R. Ouseburn (Gosforth), Sleaf Burn, St. Mary's Island, Valley Park (Cramlington), the R. Wansbeck at North Seaton and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

**Gannet** *Morus bassanus*

At Seaton Sluice only seven (two N and five S) were recorded in ten hours of watching during the month (SSWT). Five adults moved S past Holy Island during a storm on 9th (IK) and the only other location with any records was Berwick with one fishing offshore at Needles Eye on 2nd.

**Shag** *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Only four (two N and two S) were recorded past Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). The Meadow Haven (Berwick) roost peaked at 14 on 10th (MHu) and 11 birds on Admiralty Dolphin in Blyth South Harbour on 23rd included four juveniles. One to three were at several other localities.

**Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

The regular congregation at Howdon staithes reached a total of 136 on 19th (CB). 29 were in Amble Harbour on 24th (LJM), 18 was the peak count from Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 15th (SR) and up to 17 were at Colt Crag Reservoir (MR). One to three were at Castle Island, Cornhill-on-Tweed, Druridge Pools NR and on the R. Tyne at Newcastle Business Park. Three at Linden Hall included a single continental *sinensis* race bird (NFO).

A Sparrowhawk makes short work of a Wood Pigeon  
Dennis Lovatt's garden on 13th February

**Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus*

Only single birds were noted this month, with a 1st-winter male seen hunting Starlings *Sturnus vulgaris* most days at a Newbiggin by the Sea garden (Bst). Other singles were seen at Ashington, Beal, Bilton Banks, Capheaton, Colt Crag Reservoir, Corbridge, Cornhill on Tweed, Druridge Bay CP, Druridge Lane (Widdrington), Druridge Pools, Edlingham Castle, Ellington, Harwood Forest, Holy Island, North Seaton, North Shields, Plenmeller Common, Spartylea, Spindlestone, Valley Park (Cramlington), Whitley Bay cemetery, Whittle Dene Reservoirs and Woodhorn Flash.





**Goshawk** *Accipiter gentilis*

Three birds including two males displaying and a sub-adult bird were at a confidential site on 17th (*per* IK), two birds were seen doing a food pass at Harwood Forest on 22nd (STE) with another male seen there on 6th (MJC). Single birds were also noted at three other sites.

**Hen Harrier** *Circus cyaneus*

A ringtail was observed at a site on 2nd (MH), and a male was noted at another site on a couple of dates (TRD/JD/NFO). A male passed through S at another site on 21st (SJH).

**Red Kite** *Milvus Milvus*

Two birds were at Snods Edge on 2nd (IFo) and single birds were at Kiln Pit Hill, Derwent Reservoir, Allensford (South Snods) on 3rd (IFo). Single birds were also at Derwent Reservoir on 7th (IFo) Carterway Heads on 16th (RMH), Blake Law (Warrenford) on 19th (CH), Prestwick Carr on 21st (*per* PCF), Newton Tors (East Cheviots) and Plenmeller on 22nd (MHM/CT), Humbleton Hill on 24th (SBr) and at Holy Island on 27th (PT).

**Common Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*

At Kyloe Woods eight birds were seen on 27th (MJC). Six birds were in the air over Cranberry Moss (Colt Crag Reservoir) on 15th (MR) and six birds minimum, possibly as many as 11 were in the Belford Moor – Bowden Doors area on 27th (DF). Five birds were at Harwood Forest on 6th (MJC), Druridge Pools on 16th (TB) and at Slaley Hall on 26th (RMH). Two pairs were noted at Staward (RB/MB) and at Allen Banks (RB/MB) on 10th; four birds were also seen at Harwood Forest, Wark (North Tyne) and at West Hartford. One to three birds were seen at 34 sites during the month.

**Water Rail** *Rallus aquaticus*

Five – six birds were at East Chevington North Pool on 25th (ADMc) and two were at Swallow Pond (Wallsend) on 1st (GPK *et al.*). Single birds were either seen or heard at Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Prestwick Carr, St Mary's Wetland and a bird at Big Waters NWT was observed clambering up trees to one of the bird tables (GB).

A Water Rail poses nicely at Gosforth Park NR  
Colin Bradshaw on 25th February

**Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*

18 birds were at Castle Island on 17th (DM/PJA) and 17 were at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 11th (DM). At Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 11th, 15 birds were present (DM) and 14 were at Whiteadder Water (Border – Tweed) on 16th (TBr). One – nine birds were at Benton – Tyneview Park, Coanwood Park, Druridge Pools NR, Howick, Jesmond Dene, Plenmeller Common, QEII CP Lake, and Spartylea & at Wansbeck Business Pond (Ashington).

**Coot** *Fulica atra*

East Chevington had the highest count with 120 on 5th (TRD) followed by 66 birds at Killingworth Lake on 20th (LJM) and 49 at Linton Ponds on 17th (CDH). QEII CP Lake had 32 birds on 17th (CDH) and 30 were noted at Big Waters NWT also on 17th (GB). 26 were at Grindon Lough on 4th (SJH) and 25 were at Bothal Pond on 10th (TD). One to 12 was seen at Coanwood Pond, Druridge Pools NR, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Grindon Lough, Leazes Park (Newcastle) and at Middle Ord Pond (Berwick).

**Crane** *Grus grus*

The juvenile was seen at Wark (R Tweed) on 2nd (DM/GB/LAR) and 10th (CDB), and at Cornhill on Tweed and at West Learmouth on 24th (MJC/AB/LB). Just in the County at Wark on 8th (TRD/JD) and on 13th (IBDa/KDa *et al.*).



The Wark Crane

Just inside the county

by Chris Barlow

**Oystercatcher** *Haematopus ostralegus*

A count of 143 was made at Holy Island Causeway on 5th (DF) and ca. 100 were reported on 6th from Howdiemont Sands-Longhoughton Steel (MKi). The first large inland count of the season came from Derwent Reservoir where 93 were recorded on 28th (IFo). Further large coastal counts were 82 at Budle Bay on 23rd (DF), 79 during the Spittal-Cocklawburn WeBS on 22nd (TBr) and 64 at St Mary's on 24th (ASJ). On 16th, 63 were logged venturing upstream on the Tweed near West Ord (TBr) while a count of 57 was reported from Cresswell Pond and 22nd (MKi). More inland, counts were 55 at Branton GP on 15th (IBDa/KDa), 48 at Spartylea on 24th (CT) and a group of 47 in a riverside field near Melkridge on 24th (CJH). Counts of 16-40 were made at Coanwood Pond, Howick and Whittle Dene Reservoirs with smaller numbers seen at Bamburgh (Stag Rocks), Big Waters NWT, Capheaton, Colt Crag Reservoir, Cramlington, Druridge Pools NR, Grindon Lough, Heighley Gate (Morpeth), Holystone, Killingworth Lake, Newcastle (Benton), Newham (Embleton's Bog), Redesdale, Wark (North Tyne), Warkworth (Birling Carrs) and West Hartford.



Oystercatchers fly over Newton  
Tim Dean on 19th February

**Avocet** *Recurvirostra avosetta*

The earliest-of-the-year reports to date, made in 2014, were equalled when two were seen in the Blyth Estuary on 23rd (LJM, AJ). Five birds were reported on 26th to 28th at Cresswell Pond (ADM, TB, TRD/JD).

**Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus*

Budle Bay had a peak count of 920 on 14th (CH) while inland locations reported increased numbers, the largest of which were of ca. 580 at Plenmeller Common West on 21st (SJH), 450-550 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 20th (RMH) and at Ramshaw Fell (Coanwood) on 11th (SJH). The Aln Estuary reported a count of 320 on 13th (MKi) and Low Acton Farm, Allendale had 300 on 24th (SJH). A count of 250 came from Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) on 10th (TD), a similar number were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 24th (MSH), 172 were seen at Hedgeley GP on 17th (IBDa/KDa) and a single group of 115 were reported from Allendale, High Knock Shield Farm on 24th (SJH) with 114 at Shorestone (Seahouses) on 15th (IRD). Counts of 50-100 were made at Bellasis Bridge (Blagdon), Boulmer, Coanwood Pond, Cresswell Pond, Heighley Gate (Morpeth), Howdiemont Sands-Longhoughton Steel, Spartylea and West Hartford. Counts of less than 50 came from Big Waters NWT, Catton, Cocklawburn, Druridge Pools NR, Ellington, Ellington, Grindon Lough, Holy Island, Holystone, Howdon, Keenly (Hollingreen Farm), Newcastle (Elsick), North Shields, Paxhill (Allenheads) and Tynemouth.

**Golden Plover** *Pluvialis apricaria*

On 23rd, 2,000 were present at Budle Bay (CGK). On 14th a mixed flock of 3,000, made-up of both Golden Plovers and Lapwings (proportions not known), was seen at Harper's Heugh (DF). An estimated 800 were seen on Holy Island, near St Cuthbert's Island on 11th (IK, DF) and the largest inland count so far this year was made at Plenmeller Common West on 21st and 26th when 600-660 birds were present (SJH). A high-tide roost at Longhoughton Steel on 6th was made up of 330 birds (MKi), 330+ were present at Blyth, Gloucester Lodge on 10th (MSH), 223 were in the Warkworth Gut on 25th (NFO) and 150 were at Cullercoats on 5th (KWY) with approximately the same number at Widdrington Moor Lake on 24th (MSH). Smaller counts came from Allendale (Low Acton Farm), Amble Braid, Blyth Estuary, Boddle Moss (Simonside), Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Cheswick, Cullernose, Druridge Pools NR, Ellington, Monks' House Pool, Newcastle Town Moor, Prestwick Carr, Ramshaw Fell (Coanwood Common), Spartylea (Green Pits) and Tynemouth.



**Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola*

More than 50 birds were seen in a high-tide roost at Budle bay on 23rd (CGK), counts of 36-45 were made between 6th-16th at Birling Carrs (CSa, RPo) and 22 were reported from Boulmer on 15th (BS). Ten were counted at Fenham Mill (Lindisfarne NNR) on 6th (TRD/JD) and counts of one or two came from the Coquet estuary, Holy Island and the Tweed Estuary.

**Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula*

A high-tide roost of 42 at Budle Bay on 19th (NFO) was the highest count. Blyth Estuary on 23rd reported 29 birds (LJM), Ross Back Sands had 26 on 17th (MJC) and the same number was at Cocklawburn on 17th (MHu). Up to 17 birds were reported from St Mary's on 2nd and 15th (MSH, MH) while 16 were reported from Boulmer on 24th (BS). A singleton was seen at Holy Is. on 16th.

**Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus*

A single bird was seen among a group of Curlews at Coanwood Common, Burnhouse Farm on 25th (SJH).

**Curlew** *Numenius arquata*

There were some very high counts along the coast as movements of birds began. At Low Newton, Long Nanny on 21st 510 were reported (IRD), 480 were at Boulmer on 24th (BS), over 400 were reported from Budle Bay on 23rd (CGK) and 318 were at Longhoughton Steel on 27th (STE). One hundred and eighty to 220 formed an overnight roost at Druridge Pools on 26th (STE), Plenmeller Common had the largest inland record so far this year as 170-190 birds dropped in at dusk on 25th (SJH) and 88 were at Low Acton Farm in Allendale, where four birds were seen displaying, on 24th (SJH). Other inland records were 42 at Hedgeley GP on 17th (BS), 41 at Allendale, High Knock Shield Farm on 4th (SJH), 40 at Caistrone on 9th (JD), 38 at Coanwood Common, Burn House Farm on 25th (SJH), 36 at Grindon Lough on 23rd (ASJ), 30 at Spartylea on 23rd (CT), the same number at Prestwick Carr on 24th (PCF), with single-figure counts coming from Colt Crag Reservoir, Derwent Reservoir, Heighley Gate (Morpeth), Keenly (Hollingreen Farm), Melkridge village area, Otterburn, Paxhill (Allenheads) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Other coastal or near-coastal counts were 108 at Cocklawburn on 17th (MHu), 66 at Cresswell Pond on 22nd (MKi), 48 (N) at Seaton Sluice on 20th (SSWT), 45 on 15th at Shorestone, Seahouses (IRD), 35 at Newbiggin, Spital Bay on 14th (PG) with smaller counts from Holy Island, Holystone, Howdon, Monks' House Pool and West Stobswood Pool. December Bulletin revision The 485 count at Boulmer was by Ben Steel.

**Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica*

The Holy Island roost at St Cuthbert's Island was counted as 955 on 16th (ASJ). Seventy or more birds were estimated in a high-tide roost at Budle Bay on 23rd (CGK). Holy Island causeway at Beal Road Ends had 46 birds on 15th (DF) and 35-39 were reported between Howdiemont Sands and Boulmer on 1st and 6th (BS, MKi). A single bird was seen in the Tweed Estuary on 4th.

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

On 6th, 21 were seen at Lindisfarne NNR, Fenham Mill (TRD/JD) and 16 were in the Coquet Estuary on 24th (CSa). Counts of 1-8 came from Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Hauxley NWT, Holy Island, Howdon and Warkworth Gut.

**Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*

An increase was noted at St Mary's Island with a high of 68 reported on 28th (ASJ). The Howdiemont Sands- Longhoughton Steel stretch of coastline attracted ca.50 on 6th (MKi), 24 were at Birling Carrs (Warkworth) on 6th and 14 were seen at Cocklawburn on 5th. The only other reports were one-three at Holy Island, Low Newton and Stag Rocks.

**Knot** *Calidris canutus*

Lindisfarne NNR continued to host a large flock with at least 1,000 seen this month at Holy Island causeway on 16th (ASJ). Much smaller numbers were reported elsewhere with 60 at Birling Carrs on 14th (AB/LB), 43 at Beal Road Ends on 15th (DF) and 20-25 at the Coquet Estuary on 1st, 5th and 14th (BS/MKi/CSa). Boulmer held 21 on 27th (STE) and two-three were at Fenham Mill, Seaton Sluice and St Mary's Island.

**Ruff** *Calidris pugnax*

The wintering bird was present at Low Newton scrape on 19th (TRD/JD) and 22nd (BS). Other singles were at Cresswell Pond on 7th (MJC) and Druridge Pools on 18th (DG).

**Sanderling** *Calidris alba*

An impressive concentration of 213 was at Boulmer on 24th (BS) and 109 were at St Mary's Island on the same day (ASJ). Cocklawburn beach attracted 38 on 5th increasing to 74 by 19th (MHu). On 22nd, 36 were reported from Newbiggin (STH) and the high numbers reported from Low Newton last month had declined to 20 by 19th (TRD/JD). At Holy Island north shore, 17 were counted on 26th (DF). The regular Druridge Bay flock was not reported this month with only two-16 noted from East Chevington and Druridge beach between 9th-21st (IDR/JD/TRD). Eight were in the Cheswick area on 2nd (DM) and a single was at Birling Carrs on 6th (Rpo).

**Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*

The River Coquet Estuary/Amble Braid area held 232 on 1st (BS), 140 on 5th (MKi) and 150 on 12th (TRD/JD). Counts of 140 also came from Budle Bay on 23rd (CGK) and the Blyth Estuary on 25th (AJ). Reports from Cresswell Pond produced counts between 27-120 from 7th-27th (MSH/MKi/JD/TRD). Other notable counts were 109 at Boulmer on 6th (MKi), ca.100 at Fenham Mill also on 6th (TRD/JD) and 77 at nearby Beal Road Ends on 15th (DF). A minimum of 40 was recorded at St Mary's Island on 2nd (MSH) and 20 were at Low Newton scrape on 19th and nearby Long Nanny on 15th (TRD/JD/IDR). Two were reported from Birling Carrs and Cocklawburn and a single was at Cheswick Black Rocks.

**Purple Sandpiper** *Calidris maritima*

Birling Carrs attracted the highest number with 62 on 6th (RPO). The mobility of the Stag Rocks flock was illustrated by counts of one (TRD/JD) and 60 (DF) both made on 6th. Counts of 18-57 were made at the same site during the month (MH/AA/CDB *et al.*). A high of 55 was reported at Low Newton on 22nd (BS) and 12-18 were at Cocklawburn from 2nd-22nd (TBr/GB/MHu). Eight were between Howdiemont Sands-Longhoughton Steel (Boulmer), seven at Cheswick Black Rocks, six on the rocks at Seaton Sluice and a lonely single at St Mary's Island.

**Woodcock** *S colopax rusticola*

A notable seven were counted on Holy Island on 3rd (SR/AH). Most other reports were away from the coastal belt, with two at Allen Banks on 2nd (AJH) and Longhorsley Moor on 17th (AB/LB). Singles were seen at Beanley Wood, Branton GP, Breamish caravan site, Capheaton, Colt Crag Reservoir, Harwood Forest, Holywell, Howick, Park End, Prestwick Carr, Swallow Pond and Widehope.

**Jack Snipe** *Lymnocyrtus minimus*

Two were disturbed from a small marsh at Kirkley Mill on 26th (AHB) and singles were at Big Waters, Cocklawburn and Cheswick dunes (GB/DM).

**Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago*

Big Waters again held the highest numbers with 18 on 17th (GB), 15 were at Swallow Pond on 24th (GPK) and 14 at St Mary's wetland on 10th (MSH/AC). One-six were at Allendale, Arcot Pond, Brinkyburn, Cocklawburn Pond, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Howdon, Kirkley Mill, Longhorsley, Plenmeller Common and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

**Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*

Three birds were wintering at Hedgeley GP on 17th (KDa/IBDa) and two birds flew two circuits above the observer's garden at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 22nd (TD). Singles were seen at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 2nd and 22nd (SR/MR) and another was along the river at Kilham on 21st which was the first record for the site (TRD/JD).

**Redshank** *Tringa totanus*

Much smaller numbers were reported this month with the highest count being 100 at the Blyth Estuary on 23rd (LJM). Reports from the River Tweed were 95 at the estuary on 11th (TBr/MMcN) and 86 at Yarrow Slake on 25th (MHu). At Budle Bay, 83 were recorded on 23rd (DF), ca.80 were at Cresswell Pond on 22nd (MKi) and 54 were at Newbiggin on the same day (STH). Birds were present at Elswick on the River Tyne on 6th, 11th and 15th with the maximum being ca.50 on 15th (DM/KWY/GB). Other double-figure counts were 15 at the River Aln Estuary on 13th (MKi) and 14 at Cocklawburn Pond on 11th (MHu). One-eight were reported from Birling Carrs, Bothal Pond, Cheswick Black Rocks, Coanwood Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Grindon Lough, Holy Island, Long Nanny, Monks' House Pool, North Seaton weir and the River Wansbeck Estuary.

**Spotted Redshank** *Tringa erythropus*

The regular adult was reported from Budle Bay on 3rd, 16th, 23rd and 25th (MJC/CGK/PS).



Spotted Redshank on 3rd February in Budle Bay by Mike Carr



**Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*

An unusual winter record was of a single at Grindon Lough on 21st (PRM).

**Kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla*

Very few records came from Seaton Sluice with a maximum of 4 N on 1st (SSWT); four were offshore at Howick before flying off N (MKi).

**Black-headed Gull** *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

The maximum count was 1,300 in Budle Bay on 23rd which included 8% 1st-winter birds (CGK) and in the River Tweed Estuary a WeBS included 445 on 11th (TBr/MMcN). Other three-figure gatherings included 347 in the Blyth Estuary on 23rd (LJM) and 100-240 at Bothal Pond, Castle Island, Exhibition Park, Grindon Lough, Jesmond Dene, Linton Ponds, the Long Nanny and Melkridge (DM/CDH/TD/MJCo/IDR/SJH) with smaller groups of up to 90 at 15 other localities; one at Bamburgh was yellow-ringed T86W (CDB).



A Black-headed Gull at Bamburgh by Chris Barlow

**Mediterranean Gull** *Ichthyaetus melanocephalus*

The wintering population at Newbiggin remained at a maximum of around 31, mostly adult birds, on 22nd (STH) with one to two elsewhere at five sites from Amble-Tynemouth and further north at Fenham-le-Moor and Waren Mill; two adults at Quarry Cottage, Newbiggin were already in summer plumage (RS) and an adult Danish-ringed bird was at Swallow Pond plus two immatures on a number of dates throughout (CGK).

**Common Gull** *Larus canus*

Budle Bay held 1,000 on 23rd (CGK), 500 were on fields at Benridge (Morpeth) on 21st (TD) with 50-200 at Big Waters, Catton, Grindon Lough, Howdon, the Long Nanny and West Ord and smaller groups at ten other localities.



Common Gull at Killingworth Lake by Chris Barlow on 3rd February

**Great Black-backed Gull** *Larus marinus*

The largest flocks were 69 in Budle Bay (DF), 54 in the Coquet Estuary (MKi) and 39 at Castle Island (DM) with eight in the Tweed Estuary and one to four at Grindon Lough, Linton Ponds, the Long Nanny, the River Tyne at N/C Business Park and Tughall.

**Iceland Gull** *Larus glaucoides*

The wintering 2nd-winter bird again visited Big Waters NWT regularly throughout (GB).

**Herring Gull** *Larus argentatus argenteus*

The WeBS survey in the River Tweed Estuary recorded 623 on 11th (TBr/MMcN), 600 were in Budle Bay on 23rd, 285 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 25th (MR), 150 at Linton Ponds on 21st (MSH/CDH), 90 at Castle Island (DM) and 80 at the Long Nanny (IDR). Thirty birds scavenged household waste at the Alnwick recycling centre (MKi) and one to 25 were at 12 other sites,

**Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus fuscus graelsii*

The number of returning birds increased significantly after mid-month, no doubt encouraged by the exceptionally spring-like conditions and 13-24 were located at Budle Bay on 22nd-23rd (CGK/DF), six at Swallow Pond (GPK) and one to four at 12 sites elsewhere with the majority recorded after 15th.

**Auk** *sp*

A large movement N, mainly Guillemots, was recorded at Seaton Sluice during first light on 20th when 2,200 passed the watch-point in half an hour, falling rapidly thereafter (SSWT).

**Common Guillemot** *Uria aalge*

At the month end 25+ were at Bamburgh Stag Rocks (MSH), 12 were on the sea off Newbiggin on 12th (STH) and one to four were elsewhere at Cocklawburn, Dunstanburgh and Spittal Bay (Berwick).

**Razorbill** *Alca torda*

Two records only of four in Druridge Bay and one in the River Coquet Estuary.

**Rock Dove** *Columba livia*

High counts of 112 at Old Eldon Square on 11th, 47 at Stakeford Road Bridge on 17th (DM), 30 at Druridge Pools NR on 2nd, 19 at Shorestone on 15th (IDR) and 18 at Stakeford Railway Bridge on 17th with a pair at Jesmond Dene on 24th.

**Stock Dove** *Columba oenas*

A pre-roost gathering of 48 at Howdon on 19th (CB). At least 30 at Druridge Lane (Widdrington) on 24th (IDR), 11 at Spartylea on 8th (EC/JSB) with one to seven at 12 other widespread localities.

**Woodpigeon** *Columba palumbus*

1,200 were at Gosforth Park NR on 2nd and at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 3rd (MJC/MR), 500 at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 26th (TBr), 400 at Arcot Pond on 11th (STH) and 350 at Howick on 17th (JAR). Ten to 22 were at Druridge Pools NR, Shorestone and Widdrington with one to eight at nine locations with a juvenile noted at Howick on 20th (JAR).



A Woodpigeon in snowy Tynemouth on 3rd February by Colin Bradshaw



**Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto*

Up to 19 visited feeders at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) during the month (RS), eight at Berwick Hill on 28th (AHB) and two to three at Trent House Beer Garden (Newcastle), West Sleekburn and Southfield Green (Cramlington).

**Barn Owl** *Tyto alba*

Well reported with the peak being three at Holy Island on 3rd (SR/AH), two at St Mary's Island on 10th (JBu) and at Holy Island on 17th (DLo). Singles were reported regularly at Alnwick, Cresswell Pond, Holy Island, Plenmeller Common, Prestwick Carr, Spartylea Swallow Pond and 24 other widespread localities. One road casualty at Whorral Bank (Morpeth).

**Tawny Owl** *Strix aluco*

Calling birds numbered two pairs at Capheaton on 17th (STE), three males at Ellington on 5th (TB), three at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 19th and Slaley Hall on 23rd (NFO/RMH) with two at Spartylea during the month (CT). Singles were at five other locations.

**Little Owl** *Athene noctua*

Two were at Derwent Reservoirs on 2nd (NFO) with singles at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) on 16th and a bird singing at Shiremoor throughout the month (DRW/CGK).

**Long-eared Owl** *Asio otus*

Two were seen and heard at a site in the SW of the county from mid-month and one hunted in the snow at Howdon on the 2nd (GPK/CB).

## Perching Owls

A Long-eared Owl at  
Howdon on 2nd February  
by Colin Bradshaw

and a Shortie at Prestwick  
Carr by Tim Dean on  
22nd February



**Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus*

Two were regularly at Holy Island from 11th, at Plessey Checks (Cramlington) on 11th (STH) and at Prestwick Carr on three dates from 16th (PCF). Singles at Holy Island regularly and also Beal / Fenham le Moor and Widdrington Moor Lake on 11th.

**Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis*

Two were at Jesmond Dene on 10th (MJCo) and Breamish Caravan site on 23rd (PHa/AHa) with singles at Bakethin, Benton, Big Waters NWT, Cornhill on Tweed, Dilston, Felton, Gosforth, Newbiggin, Stakeford and Thropton.

**Great Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos major*

More than five were at Spindlestone during the month (BRS), four drumming at Gosforth Park NR on 2nd (MJC), Harwood Forest on 22nd (STE) and Kyoie Woods on 27th (MJC). Three were at Jesmond Dene, Warkworth and Spartylea with one to two at a further 16 widespread localities.

**Green Woodpecker** *Picus viridis*

All were singles; at Slaty Hall on 11th, Dukeshouse (Hexham) on 15th, Gosforth Park NR on 16th, Letah Wood (Hexham) and Harwood Forest on 22nd, Prestwick Carr and Newburn Ind. Estate on 24th and Langleeford (Harthope Valley) on 26th.

**Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*

Two birds were noted at West Hartford on 4th (TB), Laverock Hall (Blyth) on 4th (TB), Howick on 6th (JAR) and at Widdrington Moor Lake on 18th (TB). Single birds were at 18 sites.

**Merlin** *Falco columbarius*

Two birds were noted at Holy Island on 3rd (SR/AH). Single birds were noted at Berwick, Boulmer, Carterway Heads, Cresswell Pond, Edlingham, Elwick, Hartley Lane, Holy Island, Long Nanny (Newton), Newham, Prestwick Carr and at Widdrington Moor Lake.

**Peregrine** *Falco peregrinus*

Only single birds were reported this month from Bothal Pond, Boulmer, Castron, Capheaton, Cresswell, Derwent Reservoir, Elwick, Fenham-le-Moor, Goswick Sands, Grindon Lough, Holy Island Lough, Holywell Dene, Longhirst Flash, Newcastle Quayside, Plenmeller Common, Seaton Sluice and Widdrington Moor Lake.



Ring-necked Parakeets by Mike Carr  
Gosforth on 2nd February

**Ring necked Parakeet** *Psittacula krameri*

At Gosforth Garden Village on 12th five flew south from roost at dawn and four were at Gosforth on 2nd (MJC), two at Black Woods (Gosforth) on 7th and Jesmond Dene on 10th (LAR/MJCo) with one heard at Brandling Park (Jesmond) on 11th.

**Jay** *Garrulus glandarius*

Five at Capheaton on 15th (STE), four at Kilham on 21st (TRD/JD), more than three at Spindlestone on 22nd and three at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 26th. One to two were at 12 other locations.



**Magpie** *Pica pica*

The roost at Balliol Business Park (Longbenton) reduced to 33 on 2nd (ADM), 32 at Howdon pre-roost on 19th (CB), 13 in horse field at Rising Sun CP (Wallsend) on 24th (CDH) and six in Jesmond Dene on the same date (MJCo). One to three were at seven other locations.

**Jackdaw** *Corvus monedula*

On 8th 70 were at Catton (CT), 50 at Druridge Pools NR on 2nd (IDR), 48 at Howdon on 15th (CB) with up to 40 at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) during the month (RS) and up to 25 at Spartylea (CT). One to ten were at five locations.

**Rook** *Corvus frugilegus*

Eighty was the peak at Colt Crag Reservoir on 11th (MR), 32 at Catton on 8th (CT), 30 at Druridge Pools NR on 2nd (IDR) with up to 14 at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) and four to eight at Bamburgh and Spartylea.



A Rook at Bamburgh by Chris Barlow

**Carrion Crow** *Corvus corone*

On 11th, 88 were at Colt Crag Reservoir (MR), 28 at Beacon Hill (Cramlington) on 17th (DM) and a peak of 18 at Druridge Pools NR on 10th (IDR). 13 were at Shorestone on 15th with one to five at five other locations.

**Raven** *Corvus corax*

Ten at Harthope Valley on 26th were a group of four with three pairs (TRD/JD). Two were at Plenmeller / Coanwood on 2nd, R Alwin on 10th, Ramshaw Fell on 11th, Harbottle on 14th, Plenmeller West on 24th and Sipton Burn (Allendale) on 25th. Singles were at the above and seven other locations.



A Raven by Tim Dean in the Harthope Valley on 26th February

**Waxwing** *Bombycilla garrulus*

Two were at Dinnington from 10th to 20th (PCF *et al.*) and one in the observer's garden at Corbridge on 8th (RB/MB).

A Waxwing at Dinnington  
by Alan Jack 14th February

**Coal Tit** *Periparus ater*

A 1km radius at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 26th held 12 (Tbr). A total of nine were trapped and ringed at Spindlestone on 16th and 22nd (BRS), eight at Spartylea during the month (CT) with one to four at five other locations.

**Marsh Tit** *Poecile palustris*

Six were found in the East Linden – Paxton Dene NZ19S area on 27th (NFO), five at Scotch Gill Woods on 25th (MJC), three were ringed at Hartburn Grange Wood on 15th and three at Fontburn and Benridge. One to two were at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) regularly and eight other locations.

**Willow Tit** *Poecile montanus*

In the East Linden – Paxton Dene NZ19S area on 27th eight were found (NFO), at least three different birds were at Big Waters NWT during the month (GB) with two at Bedlington, Linton, Linton Ponds, Longhorsley Moor, Prestwick Carr, Slaley Hall, Weetslade CP and Whitley Bay. Singles were at a further eight locations.

**Blue Tit** *Cyanistes caeruleus*

A 1km radius at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 26th held 59 (TBr). A total of 29 were trapped and ringed at Spindlestone on 16th and 22nd (BRS), 15 at Spartylea during the month. 12 come to feeders at Howdon on 2nd and ten Brierdene (Whitley Bay). One to eight were at five widespread localities.



A Blue Tit at Howdon by Colin Bradshaw on 3rd February

**Great Tit** *Parus major*

A 1km radius at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 26th held 35 (TBr). A total of 25 were trapped and ringed at Spindlestone on 16th & 22nd (BRS), 20 came to feeders at Howdon on 2nd (CB), 11 at Jesmond Dene on 24th (MJCo) and one to eight at five other locations.



**Skylark** *Alauda arvensis*

There were high counts of 21 at Boulmer on 1st and Shorestone on 15th (BS/IDR), 16 were at Druridge Links on 4th and Bellasis Bridge (Blagdon) on 14th (MSH/ASJ) and 11 in 1km radius Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 26th (Tbr). Ten were at Grindon Lough on 23rd, Longframlington Common on 26th and East Linden – Paxton Dene (NZ19S) area on 27th. One to nine sang or moved over at 24 widespread localities.

**Shore Lark** *Eremophila alpestris*

Four, of which two were males, remained at Buston Links (Alnmouth) on 19th (MH/AA).

**Cetti's Warbler** *Cettia cetti*

One was heard and / or seen at Woodhorn Flashes on 22nd-23rd (STH/GB/TB).

**Long-tailed Tit** *Aegithalos caudatus*

There were flocks of 19 at Ellington on 17th, 12 at Rothbury and Spindleston on 4th and 16th respectively, 11 at Spartylea, ten at Howick on 24th, eight to nine at Longdyke, Northumberland Park (North Shields), Tynemouth and Whitley Bay Cemetery and six to seven at Gosforth Park NR, Holywell Pond and Newcastle Business Park. One to four were reported from a further 13 localities.



A Long-tailed Tit at Tynemouth by Colin Bradshaw on 3rd February

**Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita*

Two were at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 2nd (IJ) and the wintering bird was singing at Rising Sun CP on 22nd and 27th (GPK).

**Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla*

Two wintering females were at Benton to 26th (MP), a female at Berwick (BWG) and a male in a North Shields garden throughout the month (per CGK).

**Firecrest** *Regulus ignicapilla*

The wintering bird at Northumberland Park (North Shields) was noted on 14th (MNC).

**Goldcrest** *Regulus regulus*

One to three at seven localities included singing birds at East Cramlington LN, Eshott and Grindon Lough on 21st-23rd.

**Wren** *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Three were at Druridge Pools NR and Jesmond Dene and one at Whitley Bay Cemetery.

**Nuthatch** *Sitta europaea*

Seven were noted at Jesmond Dene (six sites) on 17th (MJCo). Two to three were at Derwent Reservoir, Dilston and Melkridge and singles at East Ord, Harbottle, Howick, Leazes Park, Rothbury, Spartylea, Spindleston, Valley Park (Cramlington) and Whittingham.

**Treecreeper** *Certhia familiaris*

Six were singing in the East Linton-Paxton Dene area on 27th (NFO) and three likewise in the Harthope Valley on 26th. There were two at Derwent Reservoir, Ellington, Holystone, Holywell Pond and Spindlestone and singles at Corbridge, Hebron, Leazes Park, Letah Wood (Hexham), Linden Hall, Rothbury, Spartylea, Tyne Green (Hexham), Valley Park (Cramlington) and Widehope.



A Treecreeper by Tim Dene in the Harthope Valley on 26th February

**Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris*

A large 'murmuration' of 5,000 over Fawdon on 8th were obviously preparing to roost, but the site is unknown (LAR). Other large gatherings included peak counts of 1,800 at Plenmeller Common and 1,200 at Low Acton Farm (Allendale) on 24th and 1,000 at Coanwood Common and at Kingston Park on 25th. A flock of 500 flew E over Newcastle Airport on 21st, 500 were at Hollin Green Farm on 24th and 300 Colt Crag Reservoir on 18th. Elsewhere, 100-250 were noted at Catcherside (Kirkwhelpington), Druridge Pools, Hemscott Hill, High Knock Shield Farm (Allendale) and Long Nanny and 60-83 at Shoreston, Spartylea and Widdrington.

**Blackbird** *Turdus merula*

30 were found within a 1km radius of Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 26th (TBr) and during snowy conditions 15-20 were at Belford Hall on 2nd and 11 in a Corbridge garden on 1st. Four were at Spartylea, three at Jesmond Dene and one to two were reported from a further six localities.



A blackbird in a snowy Tynemouth garden by Colin Bradshaw on 3rd February



**Fieldfare** *Turdus pilaris*

By far the largest gathering was 160 at Plenmeller Common on 21st (SJH), while at nearby Coanwood Common there were 67 on 11th. Counts of 50-60 came from Colt Crag Reservoir, Heighleygate, Howick and New Bewick, 30-40 were at East Linden, Linden Hall, Longframlington Common and Low Cocklaw, 27 at Prestwick Carr and one to 14 at a further eight localities.

**Redwing** *Turdus iliacus*

Relatively small numbers were noted this month, with 65 in a 1km radius of Low Cocklaw on 26th the highest count submitted (TBr). Elsewhere, 30 were at Budle Bay on 3rd, 20-26 at Billylaw (Berwick), Caistron and Linton and 12-16 at Howick, Tynemouth and Valley Park (Cramlington). One to two were noted at a further four localities.

A Redwing in a Woolsington garden

by John Littleton on 11th February

**Song Thrush** *Turdus philomelos*

Eight were noted at Jesmond Dene (six sites) on 24th (MJCo), six at Castle Island on 17th and five within a 1km radius of Low Cocklaw on 26th. Up to four were at Spartylea and three (including birds in song) at Druridge Pools, Longhorsley Moor, Whittle Dene Reservoirs and Winter's Gibbet. One to two at a further 18 localities included singing birds at Coanwood Common, Exhibition Park, Fulbeck (Morpeth), Harbottle, Holy Island, Gosforth, Grindon Lough, Newbiggin, Shoreston, Swinhope Shield (Allendale) and Valley Park (Cramlington).

**Mistle Thrush** *Turdus viscivorus*

Eight at Leazes Park on 6th was the highest count (KWY). Four were at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 19th and three at Coanwood Common on 11th and Whitley Bay Cemetery on 3rd. Singing birds were noted widely and included three territories identified at Colt Crag Reservoir, two singing at Coanwood Common, High Knock Shield and Low Acton Farms (both Allendale), Jesmond Dene and Swinhope Shield (Spartylea) and singles singing at Barns Park (Cramlington), Benton, Catcherside (Kirkwhelpington), Leazes Park and West Sleekburn. One to two were also noted at Alexandra Park (Cramlington), Boghouses (Cramlington) Exhibition Park and Gosforth.

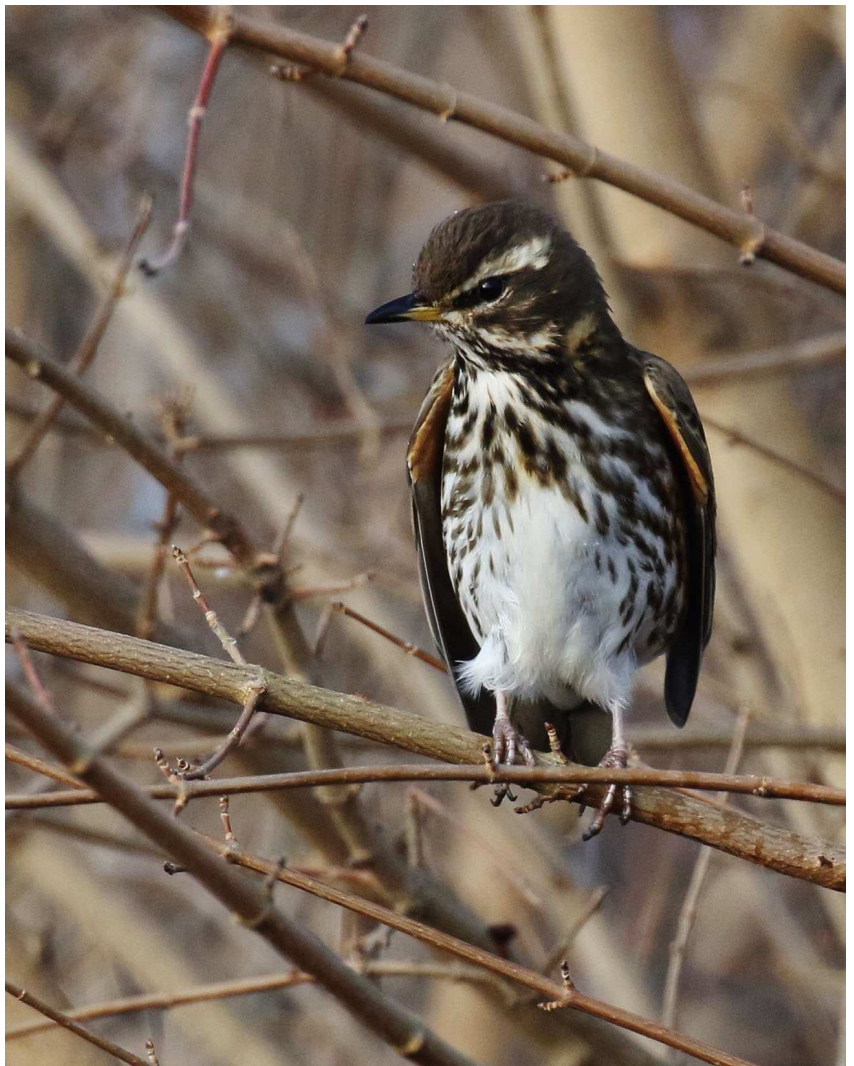
**Robin** *Erithacus rubecula*

There was a good count of 18 within a 1km radius of Low Cocklaw on 26th (TBr). Four were at Jesmond Dene and Spartylea and one to two at a further five localities.

Robin at Hipsburn

by Mike Carr

11th February





**Black Redstart** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

The wintering bird present at Tynemouth since December 2018 was last seen on 25th (DRW/ASJ).



The popular wintering Black Redstart at Tynemouth  
by Alan Jack 15th February

**Stonechat** *Saxicola rubicola*

Five (two pairs and a young male) were at Harwood Forest on 22nd (STE) and three at Druridge Pools NR on the same day. Elsewhere, two were at St Mary's Wetland and a pair at Quarry House Moor, while singles were noted at Birling Carrs, Buston links, Cheswick, Cocklawburn, Cresswell Pond, Dunstanburgh, East Chevington, Elwick, Harthope Valley, Longframlington Common and Widehope.

**Dipper** *Cinclus cinclus*

Three were seen at Allenbanks on 2nd with two there on 10th, including a singing male. (AJH/RB/MB). Two also at College Valley on 28th (RPo). Singles were reported at four further sites.

**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*

60 at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) was the peak count from birds present all month (RS). 35 plus were at Seaton Sluice on 28th and 30 at High Chibburn Farm on 2nd (LJM/IDR). 20 to 22 were at gardens at Marden and Corbridge and a Newcastle beer garden. One to 11 noted at five other sites.

**Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus*

A large count of 150+ was in a crop at Widdrington Lane on 4th (MSH). 30 were at nearby Druridge Pools on 2nd and 25 plus at Newton Red House during the month. 21 remained at Crow Hall Farm (Holywell) on 12th (IDR/PG/ASJ). 20 were in a Linden Hall garden on 1st (NFO). One to 15 were noted at a further 19 sites this month, including at garden feeders at Tynemouth, Cullercoats and Longbenton.

Tree Sparrows in a Whitley  
Bay garden

by Iain Johnstone

2nd February





**Dunnoek** *Prunella modularis*

17 were counted within a 1km radius of Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 26th (TBr). 11 singing birds were counted at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 14th (DM) and four singing of the six seen at Whittle Dene on 22nd (MR). Three were seen at Benton on 28th (MP). One to two were at 11 further sites during the month.



A Dunnoek at Howdon by Colin Bradshaw on 3rd February

**Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*

Two were in Jesmond Dene on 24th (MJCo). Otherwise only singles were seen at a further 16 sites.

**Pied Wagtail** *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

Poorly reported this month. Four frequented the St. Mary's area all month (ASJ). One to two were noted at only three other locations.

**Meadow Pipit** *Anthus pratensis*

Two groups were noted on the 2nd, 20 at Tynemouth and 15 plus at St. Mary's heading S. (DRW/MSH). The first Spring arrivals on Holy Island involved 10 birds on 10th, with further birds noted from 11th (IK). Eight were seen at Todd Crag on 25th (AB/LB). Five at St. Mary's on 12th and at Holy Island on 17th (ASJ/DLo). Four were at Druridge Pools on 2nd and at Colt Crag on 21st (IDR/MR). One to three at six other sites.

**Rock Pipit** *Anthus petrosus*

Six were at Ross Back Sands on 17th (MJC). Four were noted at St. Mary's on 18th and three at Cullercoats the following day. A pair at Tynemouth Pier on 24th where the male was song -flying (ASJ). Up to three seen at Spital Burn (Newbiggin) during the month (RS).

**Rock Pipit** *Anthus petrosus littoralis*

24 at Boulmer on 24th were thought to be mainly of this ssp. (BS). Two were at Budle Bay on 3rd and one there on 10th and 23rd, the latter ringed in 2018 in Norway, a movement of some 960 km (MJC/CGK/RA).

**Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelebs*

67 were counted at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 26th (TBr). 60 were at Crooked Oak on 4th (IFo). 35 at Druridge Pools on 2nd and 30 there on 22nd (IDR). 25 were seen at Colt Crag on 21st (MR). Around 25 spent the month at Spartylea (CT). 20 at Druridge Lane on 24th (IDR). One to 15 noted at a further 15 sites during the month.



A Chaffinch at Howdon by Colin Bradshaw on 3rd February

**Brambling** *Fringilla montifringilla*

At least 50 were at Crooked Oak on 4th (IFo). Sparse elsewhere with one to five seen at five other sites.

**Bullfinch** *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Eight were found at Duke's Wood (Hexham) on 3rd and at Etal churchyard on 19th (AJR/DLo). Six were at Holystone on 4th and Hepburn Woods on 16th (DRo/MJC). Five seen at Low Cocklaw on 26th (TBr). One to three were watched at 30 further sites this month.



A Bullfinch at Howdon  
by Colin Bradshaw  
3rd February

**Greenfinch** *Chloris chloris*

There was an impressive pre-roost gathering at Linden Hall this month, with 140 on 7th, increasing to around 175 by 18th (NFO). 62 also gathered before roosting at an East Ord garden on 3rd (CH). One to 15 noted at 18 other sites.

**Twite** *Carduelis flavirostris*

80 were counted at Chibburn mouth on 12th (TRD/JD). 50 at Druridge Links/Pools 10th, with 40 here on 22nd (RS/IDR). 46 at Cocklawburn on 19th (MHu). 30 were at Holy Island on 14th (SVM/AJM). 20 were at Beal on 6th (TRD/JD).

**Linnet** *Carduelis cannabina*

A large flock of 250 was at Crooked Oak on 4th (IFo). 120 were at Beal on 6th (TRD/JD). 25 at Boulmer on 15th increased to 53 on 22nd (RB/MB/BS). One to 20 plus were at seven other sites. Singing birds were heard at Linden Hall and St. Mary's.

**Lesser Redpoll** *Carduelis caberet*

150 were at Cragside on 20th (TRD/JD). 70 were at Colt Crag on 11th, with 30 there on 25th (MR). A minimum of 60 were feeding at Witton Hillhead on 27th (PC). A distant group of 20 at Howdon on 3rd, was thought to be of this species (CB). 20 plus were seen at Rising Sun C.P. on 5th and 12th. 17+ were seen at Winter's Gibbet on 25th (MSH). Ten to 20 were at Spartylea all month (CT). One to five were seen at five other sites.

**Common Redpoll** *Carduelis flammea*

Five were found among a Lesser Redpoll flock at Colt Crag on 11th (MR). Two were seen at Gosforth G.C. on 7th (LAR). A single was at Cragside on 20th.

**Crossbill** *Loxia curvirostra*

50 were found at Longframlington Moor on 14th and 47 at Kyloe Woods on 27th (MJC). Three hours' observation at Harwood Forest on 22nd revealed 43 birds, with 25+ there at Harwood Burn on two visits on 14th and 25th and 24 on 6th including three singing males (STE/MSH/MJC). 28 flew W. at Dilston on 7th (IFO). 20 were at Thrunton Woods on 11th with 17 on 5th (NFO/IRD). Elsewhere one to ten were seen at a further 30 widespread sites. These included birds moving at the coast near Whitley Bay G.C., Ross, Newbiggin, Howick Dene, Budle Bay and Warkworth.





A Crossbill on 18th February  
Harwood by Mike Carr

**Goldfinch** *Carduelis carduelis*

Flocks of 50 to 56 were seen at Druridge Bay, North Sunderland and Fiveacres (Berwick) during the month, the latter at feeders (MHu/JPL/IDR). 30 noted at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 3rd and at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 11th (DM). 20 to 25 frequented Spartylea all month (CT). On 3rd, 14 birds were unusually obtaining moisture from rooftop snow at Chapel Park (MH). One to 18 were also at ten other sites this month.

**Siskin** *Carduelis spinus*

A flock of 80 birds was at Linden Hall on 28th (NFO). 50 at Cragside on 20th (TRD/JD). Around 40 flew over the observer's house at Belford on 1st (DF). One to 20 were noted at a further 20 sites.

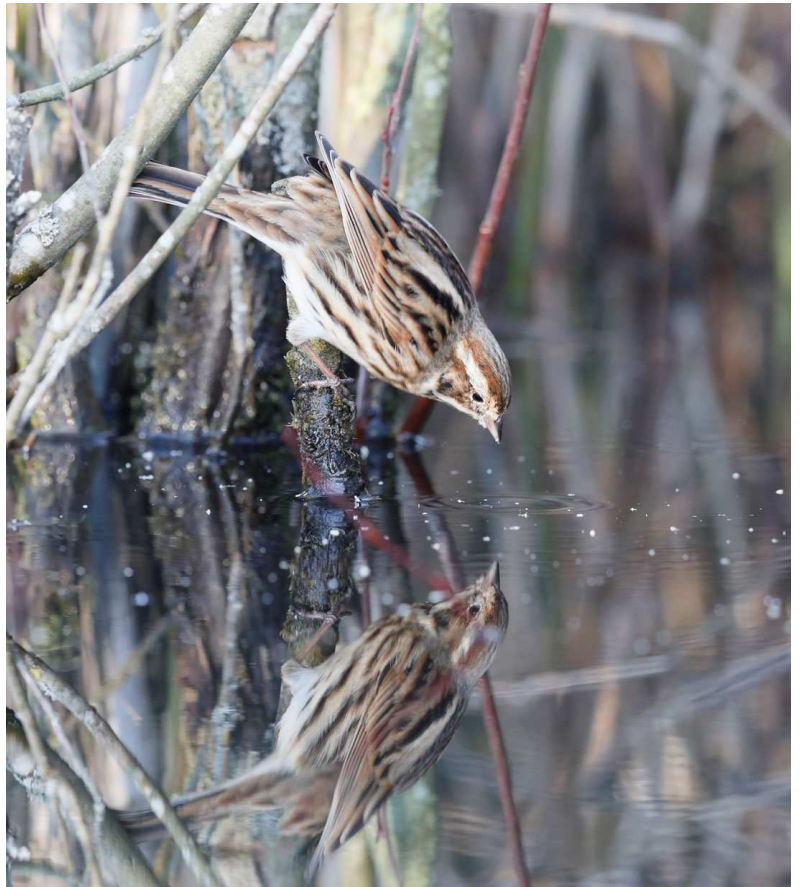
**Yellowhammer** *Emberiza citrinella*

A good count of 80+ from a bird-crop at Widdrington Lane on 4th, where 25 remained on 19th and 15 on 24th (MSH/ASJ/IDR). Around 28 were at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 26th (TBr). 25 also at Glanton Pyke on 27th (AJR). 19 fed in a game strip at Lesbury on 7th (MKi). 15 seen at Ellington on 17th (TB). 14 came in to a Corbridge garden on 1st (MR). 14 also at Crow Hall Farm (Holywell Dene) on the same date, at West Ord on 10th and Beaconhill (Cramlington) on 21st (MNC/MHU/STH). 12 were at Longhorsely Moor on 17th (AB/LB). One to eight were at 15 other sites this month. Singing males were at Holywell on 15th, Beaconhill on 21st and East Linden on 27th.

**Reed Bunting** *Emberiza schoeniclus*

20+ fed in a bird crop at Widdrington Lane on 4th and 20 there on 24th. 20 also at nearby Druridge Pools on 22nd (MSH/IDR). 15 at Shoreston on 15th and at Crowhall Farm (Holywell) on 22nd (IDR/ASJ). Seven was a good garden feeder count at Beaconhill (Cramlington) on 1st (STH). Seven males were at St. Mary's on 22nd, three singing (ASJ). One to six were at 11 further sites during the month.

A Reed Bunting checks itself out at Howdon  
by Colin Bradshaw on 13th February





**Lapland Bunting** *Calcarius lapponicus*

A single record this month of one at Beal Point / South Low on 6th and 16th (TRD/JD/ASJ).

**Snow Bunting** *Plectrophenax nivalis*

A good flock of 24 birds fed along the tide line at Holy Island's north shore on 16th. Seven were males, one of which sang in the fine weather (ASJ). The wintering trio at St. Mary's Island, declining to two birds in the second week, were last seen on 26th, after a four-month stay, following a mild spell of weather. The male bird was singing from a fence that day and the previous day (ASJ/STH).

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

One was seen at QE II CP at Ashington on 17th (CDH).

**Harris's Hawk** *Parabuteo unicinctus*

The known falconer's bird was at large at Woodhorn Flash on 27th (TRD/JD) preventing any possible views of the Cetti's Warbler! The falconer arrived to collect it leading to it trotting after him quite contentedly.



A Harris Hawk posing nicely for Tim Dean

Woodhorn

27th February

**Hybrids****Mallard x Pintail** *Anas platyrhynchos* x *Anas acuta*

The male hybrid seen last month at Colt Crag Reservoir was again present there on 4th (MR).

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

Two were seen at Swallow Pond all month (GPK) with two at Killingworth Lake on 2nd (CDB) and one there on 3rd (GB).





The hybrid Tufted x Pochard at Killingworth Lake

by Chris Barlow in February

#### **Birds of Unknown Origin**

No sightings

#### **LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS**

R.Ahmed, A.Allen, A.H.Banks, C.D.Barlow, S Barrett, R.J. & M. Bentley (RB / MB), T.Blake, J.S.Booth, G.Bowman, C.Bradshaw, S.Bray (SBr), T.Brewis (TBr), A. & L.Brunts, J.Bucknall (JBu), M.J.Carr, P.Charleton, M.N.Coates, M.J.Cook (MJCo), A.Curry, T.Daley, I.B. & K.Davison (IBDa / KDa), T.R. & J.Dean, I.R.Douglas, S.T.Elliott, T. & J.Farooqi (TF / JFa), P.C.Fletcher, D.F.Forshaw, I.Forsyth (IFo), M.P.Frankis, P.Gilbert, A.Hall, C.D.Hampton, A. & P.H.Hanmer (AHa / PHa), A.S.Hart, C.Hartley, M.Henry, M.Hepple (MHp), A.J.Hewitt, S.J.Hingston, M.S.Hodgson, S.T.Holliday, R.M.Holmes, M.Hutcheson (MHu), A.S.Jack, A.Janes, I.Johnson, I.Kerr, M.Kirby (MKi), C.G.Knox, G.P.Knox, R.F.Lee, D.Lovatt (DLo), J.P.Lumby, P.R.Massey, M.H.Mayfield, A.J. & S.V.McCormick, L.J.McDougall, M.McNeely (MMCN), D.Mckeown, A.D.Mclevy (ADM), A.D.Mould, N.F.Osborne, M.Potts, R.Poyer (RPo), A.J.Richards, M.Richardson, S.Rippon, D.Robinson (DRo), I.D.Robson, J.A.Roper, C.Saunders (CSa), M.R.Smith, F.Southern (FSO), B.Steel, R.Stevens, P.Stewart, P.A.Tapsell, A.L.Todd, C.Tudge, D.R.Watson, K.W.York.

Bamburgh Ringing Station, Berwick Wildlife Group, 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).

Proof reading was by Mike Smith.

Mail distribution by Paul Stewart.

Tom Brewis is Data Manager.

Edited by Steve Barrett [NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com](mailto:NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com)

## RECORD SUBMISSION

Please email records for the month to [ntbc.records@googlemail.com](mailto: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](mailto: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. 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 [ntbcorg@gmail.com](mailto:ntbcorg@gmail.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 [ntbcorg@jobentleyplus.com](mailto:ntbcorg@jobentleyplus.com) or [ntbcorg@gmail.com](mailto:ntbcorg@gmail.com)

Finally, if you know anyone who might like to join NTBC please pass on the club information - new members are always welcome.

The Treasurer's address is 80 Western Avenue not 89 as stated in BIN.

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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://www.ntbc.org.uk)

## Martin Davison's email address

Emails intended for the Chairman are still going to the wrong Martin Davison. Could all members please check their email listing for our Chairman is correct and is [martindavison3@gmail.com](mailto:martindavison3@gmail.com)

## RARITIES 2017, 2018 and 2019

The new spreadsheets showing county rarities in 2017, 2018 and 2019 have now been updated as a result of the County Records Committee meeting on March 2nd. They are viewable on the NTBC website <http://www.ntbc.org.uk> under the Members Resources tab and then the Recording section. Links to the pdfs are on the top right of the web page. The CRC would welcome documentation on any of the sightings showing as 'Awaiting Description'. All finders where known have already been emailed to ask for a report. Report forms can be downloaded from the Recording web page.

Thanks Tim



**BREEDING BIRD SURVEY  
VACANT SQUARES 2019**

**BBS 2019 Vacant Squares**

<b>1km Square</b>	<b>Approx Location</b>	<b>OS Map</b>
NT7108	Deerlee Knowe	80
NT7307	Leithope Forest, nth of Catcleugh	80
NT9134	West Flodden	74
NU0247	NE of Cheswick	75
NY6080	Sighty Crag, Cumbria	80
NY6081	Bewcastle Fell, Cumbria	80
NY6263	Hill Head, Thirwell Common	86
NY6781	Whickhope Nick, Kielder	80
NY7072	Black Fell, Wark Forest	87
NY7398	Blakehope Nick East, Kielder	80
NY7885	nth Tyne nr Bellingham	80
NZ2177	Blagdon	88

The above squares are available for the BBS Survey 2019. Please contact Muriel or Tom at [tomandmurielcadwallender@hotmail.com](mailto:tomandmurielcadwallender@hotmail.com)



A Moorhen walks on the ice at Gosforth Park lake

Colin Bradshaw on 4th February NR



Above: a Bittern at Gosforth Park NR by Colin Bradshaw on 4th February  
and below: a Whooper from East Chevington by Tim Dean on 27th February





# Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2019 No 3

MONTHLY SUMMARY MARCH 2019

3rd May 2019



## CONTENTS

### CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS HIGHLIGHTS

Bewick's Swan	One with Whooper flock at Druridge from 28th to 31st.
Egyptian Goose	One was at Woodhorn from 2nd to 12th & relocated to Linton from 24th to 27th.
Green-winged Teal	Male remained at Druridge Pools until 19th.
Ring-necked Duck	Drake still at Grindon Lough until 2nd.
Smew	The redhead remained at Widdrington Moor Lake all month.
Sooty Shearwater	Unusually one at Tynemouth on 9th lingered for 16 minutes following fishing boats.
Red-necked Grebe	Two off Holy Island at end of month.
Spoonbill	Earliest county record with one at Hauxley on 19th.
Great White Egret	One at Druridge Pools on 30th.
Whimbrel	Another early sighting with one south at Boulmer on 11th.
Spotted Redshank	Wintering individual still at Budle Bay on 9th.
Greenshank	Another early sighting with one at Coanwood Pond on 17th.
Glaucous Gull	Several sightings with a popular 1st Winter at North Shields Fish Quay.
Iceland Gull	Singles at Big Waters, Budle Bay & Castle Island.
Waxwing	Three at Cramlington on 7th. Few sightings this winter.
Firecrest	One still wintering at Northumberland Park, North Shields up to 10th.
Starling	Large roosts of 40,000 to 50,000 at Fawdon in Newcastle and Coanwood Common.
Water Pipit	Wintering bird remained all month at Seaton Point, Boulmer.

### 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 is in September. See you there;

### FIELD TRIPS

Contact Steve Anderson

Sunday **28th April** 2019

Sunday **26th May** 2019

Saturday **22nd June** 2019

[seaswan@btinternet.com](mailto:seaswan@btinternet.com)

Langholm Harriers

Geltsdale RSPB Reserve

Winnows Hill (Nightjars)



It looks fishy. One of the sights of the winter. Starlings go to roost in Fawdon. By Chris Barlow on 13th March

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

Two, of the dark-bellied *bernicla* race, flew N at Druridge Pools on 21st (BS). Reports of un-raced birds involved 500 at Harper's Heugh (near Budle Bay) on 6th (DF) dropping to 130 by 9th, 62 by 19th and 40 by 20th (DF/CGK/GPK).

**Canada Goose** *Branta canadensis*

Peak counts were 190 at Low Hauxley on 8th (TB), 175 at Grindon Lough on 18th (SJH), 110 at Hartburn Reservoir on 14th (RPo), 51-71 at Big Waters and Plenmeller Common, and 20-47 at Coanwood and Linton Ponds, Colt Crag Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Newcastle Leazes Park and West Sleekburn. Groups of ten to 16 were also at Bothal Pond, Castle Island, Grindon Lough, Rayburn Lake, the Tweed Estuary and West Ord, and two to eight at seven further sites.

**Barnacle Goose** *Branta leucopsis*

At Harper's Heugh (near Budle Bay), 405-670 were noted between 4th-15th, with an estimated 700 on 16th (DF), dropping to 203 by 20th (MSH) and 200 on 26th (*per* NNBC). A flock of 85 in a field near Beal on 25th (NFO) may have been part of the above group. Elsewhere, 12 were well inland at Derwent Reservoir on 21st (AJ/IK/AJN/TW) and singles at Boulmer and QEII CP.

**Greylag Goose** *Anser anser*

180 flew N at Branton GP on 11th (TRD/JD). Large gatherings included 450 at Coanwood Burn House farm on 5th (SJH), 420 at Airy Holm Reservoir on 2nd (IFo), 278 at Budle Bay on 9th (CGK/GPK), 209 at Earsdon on 5th (MSH), 130-176 at Coanwood and Holywell Ponds and Low Hauxley, and 41-78 at/over Cocklawburn, Grindon Lough, Linton Ponds, Milkwell and Woodhorn Flashes. Groups of 15-19 were at Druridge Pools and Ellington, and one to nine at 14 further, widespread sites.

**Taiga Bean Goose** *Anser fabalis*

A group of 22 were at Bradford Kaims on 15th (JPL).

**Pink-footed Goose** *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Light northerly movement involved 95 at Seaton Sluice during the month, including 85 N on 24th (SSWT), 74 N at Tynemouth on 18th (CB), and 60 N at Howdon on 23rd (CB). 3,000 at Cresswell on 8th increased to 10,000 on 12th (TB), 2,500 were at Bell's Farm on 25th (MSH), 2,335 at Harper's Heugh (Budle Bay) on 18th (DF), 1,600 at Wooler on 11th (DF), 1,000 at High Hauxley on 8th (TB) and 1,000 at Widdrington Moor Lake on 25th (TB). Counts of 100-300 came from Doddington, Druridge Pools and Earsdon, and 17 were at Grindon Lough.



Above: Pinkfeet take to flight at  
Druridge Pools  
Chris Barlow on 3rd March

Right: A Pinkfoot at Killingworth  
Lake on 24th March  
by Jack Bucknall





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

Three Eurasian *albifrons* race birds were on saltmarsh near Beal on 24th (NFO), and an adult and a juvenile of this race were at Druridge on 1st (ADMc). An un-raced bird was at Cresswell on 12th (TB).

**Mute Swan** *Cygnus olor*

Peak counts were 74 at QEII CP Lake on 24th (CDH), 45 at Killingworth Lake on 13th (LJM), 35 at the Tweed Estuary on 18th (TBr/MMcN), and 22-25 at Bothal Pond and Druridge Pools. Counts of five to 12 came from Budle Bay, Ellington, Warkworth Lane Ponds and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Pairs were reported from nine further sites.

**Bewick's Swan** *Cygnus columbianus*

One was in the Druridge Pools area between 28th-31st (IDR/TF/JFa).

**Whooper Swan** *Cygnus cygnus*

Strong movement through the county resulted in a total of 399 N at Seaton Sluice between 18th-31st, including 141 N on 30th (SSWT), totals of 318 N at St Mary's between 19th-23rd (JBu/ASJ), 110 N at Cullercoats on 18th (ASJ), 47-75 N at Amble (GB) and Tynemouth on 30th (DRW), and 25-42 N at Ashington, Boulmer, Cresswell Pond, Howick and Tynemouth between 21st-23rd. Passage also occurred inland, with 148 N at Wark on 21st (PRM), 80 NW at Rothbury on 31st (TRD/JD), 72 N at Hexham on 19th (AJH), and 60-70 N at Newbiggin (BS) and Swallow Pond on 23rd (GPK). A total of 232 was recorded at five different sites on 20th (TRD/JD). A 'herd' of 135 was at Shield on the Wall on 21st (SW), numbers at Druridge peaked at 129 on 20th (ADMc), 70 were offshore at East Chevington on 23rd (MN), 58 at Cresswell Pond (TRD/JD), and 55 were on the sea at Cullercoats-St Mary's on 30th (JBu/ASJ). Counts of 20-48 were at Airy Holm Reservoir, Bothal Pond, Branton GP, Budle Bay (Harper's Heugh), Caistron, Colt Crag Reservoir, Grindon Lough, Hedgeley GP, and Rayburn and Widdrington Moor Lakes, ten to 18 at/over Beal, Coanwood Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Low Cocklaw, QEII CP Lake and Rothbury, and seven to eight at Arcot Pond and Branton GP. One to two were also at the Blyth Estuary, Broomlee Lough, Park Dam and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Birds were heard flying N at Linden Hall and Tynemouth (after dark) on 21st.



Whoopers fly past St. Mary's on 20th March by Jack Bucknall

**Egyptian Goose** *Alopechen aegyptiaca*

One was noted regularly at Woodhorn Flashes between 2nd-12th (TB/MSH). It, or another, was at Linton Ponds on 24th (CDH/TF/JFa *et al.*).

An Egyptian Goose

by Dan Downer

23rd March

Big Waters



**Shelduck** *Tadorna tadorna*

At Seaton Sluice, 20 flew N and three S during the month, including 14 N and two S between 18th-21st (SSWT), nine flew N at Stag Rocks on 20th (BRS), and four moved N and three S at Tynemouth on 30th (DRW). Peak site counts were 170 at Budle Bay on 20th (MSH), 70 at the Blyth Estuary on 24th (LJM), 26 at Howdon on 31st (CB), and 12-17 at Castle Island and Lynemouth Flash. Six to nine were at Boulmer, Cresswell Pond and Druridge Pools, and one to four at the Aln Estuary, Arcot and Bothal Ponds, Branton GP, Hauxley Reserve, Holywell Pond, Longhirst Flash, Monks' House Pool and the Tweed Estuary. Inland, two were at Holystone on 14th (DRO), and singles at Derwent Reservoir on 1st (IFo) and Wark on 12th (PRM).



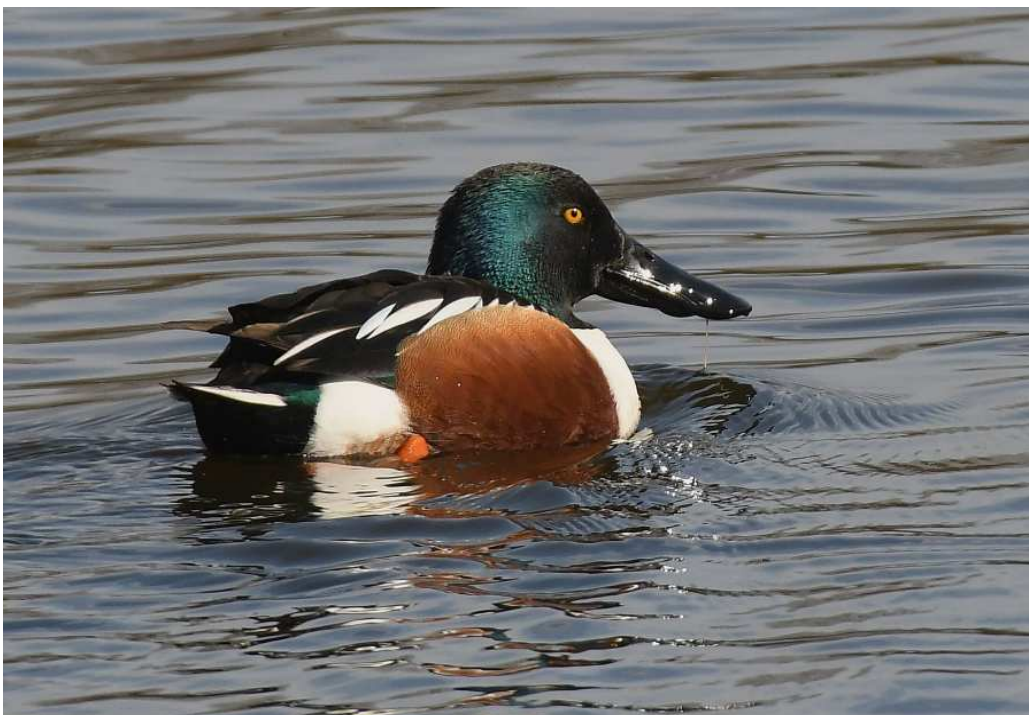
Courting Shelduck at Castle Island by Tim Dean on 28th March

**Mandarin** *Aix galericulata*

Two pairs were on the River North Tyne at Tasset on 26th (MH/AA), and single pairs were at Chirdon (JR/NA), Holystone (DRO), and on the River Wansbeck at Low Angerton on 9th (IRD) and near Mitford castle on 25th (ADMc). Singles were also at Blakehopeburnhaugh (Kielder) (TRD/JD) and Newcastle Leazes Park on 8th (DM).

**Shoveler** *Spatula clypeata*

Two flew N at St Mary's on 19th (JBu) and one N at Seaton Sluice and Tynemouth on 30th (SSWT/DRW). At Druridge Pools, numbers peaked at 47 on 24th (IDR), a count of 32 on 1st included 30 drakes (AA) and display was noted on 28th (IDR). Elsewhere, peak counts involved 21 at Monks' House Pool on 31st (JPL), 18 at Swallow Pond on 1st (GPK), and eight at Arcot Pond (DM) and Warkworth Lane Ponds (IDR). Three to four were also at Arcot and Bothal Ponds, Big Waters, Grindon Lough, Killingworth Lake, and Longhirst, Lynemouth and Woodhorn Flashes.



A Drake Shoveler at Swallow Ponds by Tim Dean on 28th March



**Gadwall** *Mareca strepera*

Peak counts were 46 at Bothal Pond on 12th (TF/JFa), 35 at Marden Quarry on 17th (KWY), 30 at Druridge Pools on 30th (IDR), 30 at Hauxley Reserve on 2nd (SRB), 20-24 at Cresswell Pond, Lynemouth Flash and Woodhorn Flashes, and ten to 19 at Arcot Pond, Big Waters, the Blyth Estuary, Castle Island, Howdon and Longhirst Flash. Four to eight were also at Caistrion, Ladyburn Lake, Linton, Swallow and West Allotment Ponds. Reports of one to two came from Branton GP, Colt Crag Reservoir, East Chevington, Ellington and Warkworth Lane Ponds, Grindon Lough, Holystone, the Tweed Estuary and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

**Wigeon** *Mareca penelope*

Four flew N at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). Peak site counts were 382 at Grindon Lough on 7th (PRM), 380 at Derwent Reservoir on 1st (IFo), 370 at Cresswell Pond on 19th (CH), 277 at Budle Bay on 9th (CGK), 276 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 4th (MR), and 219 at Hauxley Reserve (HRS). Counts of 100-166 came from Bell's Pond, Druridge Pools and Longhirst Flash, and 51-76 at Bothal Pond, Warkworth and Woodhorn Flashes. Groups of 12-44 were also at Boulmer, Coanwood Pond, Colt Crag Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Lynemouth Flash and Plenmeller.

**Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*

Four flew S at Seaton Sluice on 29th-30th (SSWT). Moderate gatherings involved peaks of 105 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 4th (MR), 73 at Newcastle Leazes Park on 8th (DM), 63 at the Tweed Estuary on 18th (TBr/MMcN), 56 at Grindon Lough on 18th (SJH), and 20-43 at Castle Island, Coanwood and Middle Ord Ponds, Colt Crag Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Hauxley Reserve, Ladyburn and QEII CP Lakes, Northumberland Park (North Shields), and Whiteadder Water. Ten to 18 were also at Bothal and Warkworth Lane Ponds, Boulmer, Lynemouth Flash, Spartylea and Wansbeck Business Park.

**Pintail** *Anas acuta*

11 (two drakes) were at Fenham Flats on 5th (MH/AA). Few were noted elsewhere, with one to two regularly at Druridge Pools all month, two at Grindon Lough on 20th, and one at Warkworth weir. Singles also visited the less usual sites of the Aln Estuary, Branton GP and Castle Island on occasional dates.

**Teal** *Anas crecca*

At Seaton Sluice, six flew N and two S during the month (SSWT). 300 were at Budle Bay on 9th (CGK), 280 at Howdon on 6th (CB), 165 at Grindon Lough on 20th (PRM), 130 at Holy Island 'rocket fields' (IK), 100 at Druridge Pools on 26th (IDR), and 59-75 at Castle Island (DM/PJA) and Colt Crag Reservoir (MR). Counts of 20-40 came from Arcot and Bothal Ponds, Big Waters, the Blyth and Tweed Estuaries, Longhirst and Lynemouth Flashes, St Mary's Wetland and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

**Green-winged Teal** *Anas carolinensis*

A drake frequented Druridge Pools regularly between 1st-19th (AA/MSH/ADM<sub>c</sub> *et al.*) and appeared to be paired with a female Teal on 3rd (CDB).



The popular Green-winged Teal at Druridge Pools on 2nd March by Chris Barlow

**Pochard** *Aythya ferina*

Killingworth Lake held a peak of 27 on 5th (BS), 18 were at Swallow Pond on 23rd (GPK), 11 at Linton Ponds on 24th (CDH), six to seven at Arcot Pond (STH) and Big Waters (GB), and three at Woodhorn Flashes. One was also at Grindon Lough.

**Ring-necked Duck** *Aythya collaris*

A drake was at Grindon Lough on 1st (EC/JSB/TRD/JD).

**Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula*

Largest gatherings were 75 at Killingworth Lake on 5th (BS), 45 at Grindon Lough on 21st (PRM), 42 at Caistron on 23rd (JD), 40 at Greenlee Lough on 24th (MRS), and 20-32 at Bothal, Coanwood, Linton and Swallow Ponds, Gosforth Park NR, Hauxley Reserve, and Ladyburn and QEII CP Lakes. Counts of ten to 19 came from Arcot, Warkworth Lane and West Allotment Ponds, Broomlee Lough, Druridge Pools and Newcastle Exhibition Park, and five to nine at Big Waters, Castle Island, Coanwood Pond, Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough, Howdon and Northumberland Park (North Shields).

**Scaup** *Aythya marila*

Three were offshore at Druridge Pools on 26th (IDR) and three frequented Widdrington Moor Lake between 18th-31st (NFO/TF/JFa *et al.*). Singles were at Big Waters between 2nd-24th (GB), Castle Island-Stakeford bridge on 24th (DM/PJA) and 28th (TRD/JD) and Cresswell Pond on 5th (IRD).

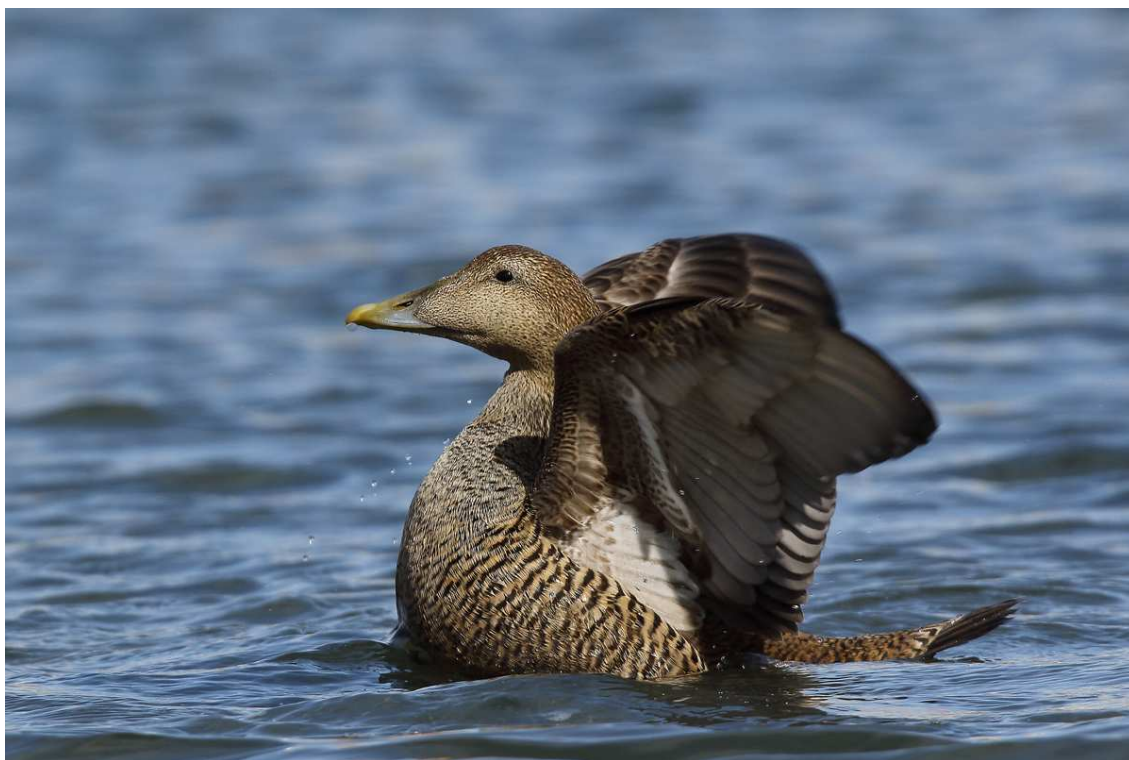
**Eider** *Somateria mollissima*

A total of 111 flew N and 50 S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). Offshore, 50 were at Holy Island on 17th (MJC), 40 at Boulmer on 4th (MKi), 33 at Tynemouth on 28th (DRW), and 20-29 at Longhoughton Steel and Spittal-Cocklawburn. Eight to nine were also at Boulmer and Cocklawburn, and two in Druridge Bay.

An Eider duck  
stretches in  
Seahouses harbour

23rd March

Chris Barlow

**Velvet Scoter** *Melanitta fusca*

One flew N at Seaton Sluice on 7th (SSWT). Singles were off Druridge Pools on 30th (TF/JFa) and at Holy Island on 17th (IK).

**Common Scoter** *Melanitta nigra*

A total of 150 flew N and 94 S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), while 56 were on the sea there on 24th, with smaller numbers throughout. Elsewhere, only small numbers involved 28 at Holy Island (MJC/ATC), 16 at Spittal-Cocklawburn (TBr/MMcN), and two to seven off East Chevington, Newbiggin and Stag Rocks.

**Long-tailed Duck** *Clangula hyemalis*

The only reports involved two pairs at Fenham Flats on 5th (MH/AA) and a drake N at Seaton Sluice on 2nd (SSWT).

**Goldeneye** *Bucephala clangula*

Two flew N at Spittal Bay on 7th (MHu) and singles flew N at Seaton Sluice on 24th and 30th (SSWT), and at Tynemouth on the latter date (DRW). Peak counts were 52 at the Tweed Estuary on 18th (TBr/MMcN), 30 at East Chevington on 17th (TF), and ten to 16 at Branton GP, Castle Island, Colt Crag Reservoir, Grindon Lough, Killingworth and QEII CP Lakes, and New Water Haugh. Five to nine were also at Big Waters, Boulmer, Broomlee Lough, Druridge Pools and Hauxley Reserve, and three to four at the Blyth Estuary and Dilston. One to two were also at Cresswell and Swallow Ponds, Derwent Reservoir, Ladyburn Lake, Meadow Haven, Monks' House Pool and Spittal Bay. Display was noted at Cresswell Pond on 25th (TB).

**Smew** *Mergellus albellus*

A 'redhead' remained at Widdrington Moor Lake all month (AA/TF/JFa *et al.*).



**Goosander** *Mergus merganser*

A total of seven flew N at Tynemouth on 30th (DRW). A total of 18 N at Seaton Sluice was a new March record for the site (SSWT). The only double-figure count received was of 25 (three drakes) on the River Tweed between Gainslaw House-Horncliffe on 28th (CH). Six to nine were at Branton GP (JD), New Water Haugh (MHu) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs (MR), and three to four at Derwent Reservoir, Dilston, Killingworth Lake\*, Warkworth and Windyhaugh. One to two were also at Airy Holm Reservoir, Broomlee Lough, Caistron, Holystone, Ladyburn and QEII CP Lakes, Newcastle Exhibition Park, Snab Point, Wark and West Ord.

\* one appeared to have a piece of green plastic entangled in its tongue/bill (MSH).

**Red-breasted Merganser** *Mergus serrator*

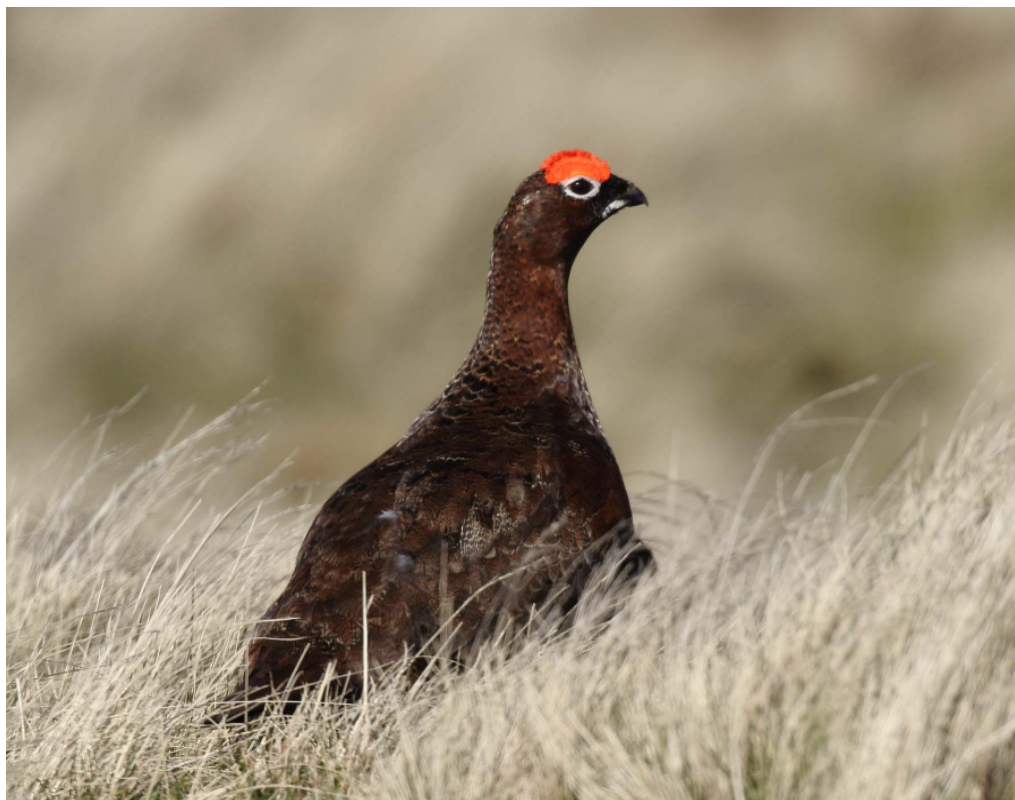
Three flew N at Seaton Sluice between 18th-20th (SSWT), two S at Tynemouth on 31st (DRW) and one N at St Mary's on 17th (JBu). Six were on Druridge Pools on 30th when 15 were also offshore (IDR/AJH), 12 were at Budle Bay on 23rd (DF), eight at East Chevington north pool on 27th (TB), and three to five at the Blyth and Tweed Estuaries, Castle Island-Wansbeck Riverside Park (display noted on 24th; DM/PJA), Holy Island and off Monks' House Pool. One to two were also at Cocklawburn and Holy Island.

**Black Grouse** *Tetrao tetrix*

A total of 12 birds were at Westburnhope on 31st with ten males moving between two leks and two females feeding in a larch tree (STE). High Knock Shield Farm (Spartylea) peaked at nine – seven females and two males – on 17th (SJH) whilst nearby Paxhill Farm (Allenheads) held up to six – five males and one female – on 17th (SJH). Three males were seen at Swinhope Shield (Spartylea) and a single greyhen at Ridley Common.

**Red Grouse** *Lagopus lagopus*

The Cheviots produced some decent counts with 50 at Broadstruther and 40 at Hawsen Burn on 23rd (MJC). Smaller totals came from the Pennines with 20 at Westburnhope on 17th (AJH), 12 displaying males at Paxhill Farm (Allenheads) on 17th (SJH) and seven at High Knockshield Farm on 17th and Plenmeller Common on 7th. Finally, six were at Darden Lough on 28th.



A Red Grouse at Blanchland on 28th March by Alan Jack

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

Only pairs or single birds seen this month at Caistron, Coanwood, Grindon Lough, Harwood Burn, Longhoughton, Thrunton Woods and Westburnhope. One at The Ouze (Holy Island) on 18th was the first island record since 1999. Unfortunately this individual was found freshly dead, presumably a stray from a shooting area on the mainland (IK).

**Grey Partridge** *Perdix perdix*

Up to eight were at Spartylea throughout the month (CT), three was the peak count within a two km radius of Low Cocklaw (Berwick) (TBr) and pairs were at Boulmer, Bygate, Cocklawburn, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Ilderton, Newbiggin GC, Prestwick Carr (flushed by a Short-eared Owl), St Mary's, Westburnhope and Wooler Common. A single was at West Moor.

**Pheasant** *Phasianus colchicus*

Numbers continued to swell at Druridge Pools NR with several double-figure counts on various dates peaking at 40 present on 24th (IDR). Elsewhere, seven were at Spartylea throughout, six were at Warkworth Lane Ponds on 24th, five at Castle Island, three at Arcot Pond and one or two were seen at Ellington Dene, on the main street at Hazlerigg, Linton Burn/Ponds and Lynemouth Dene.

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

Well above average numbers for March were recorded past Seaton Sluice with a total of 123 (58N and 65S) in 57 hours of watching (SSWT). 27 were in Druridge Bay on 30th (IDR/AJH), 11 were at Cocklawburn on 14th and 11 on the sea at Seaton Sluice on 24th. One to seven were at many other coastal sites.

**Great Northern Diver** *Gavia immer*

Singles were at Holy Island and Stag Rocks.

**Fulmar** *Fulmarus glacialis*

At Coves Haven (Holy Island) 82, mostly pairs, were at this regular breeding site on 9th (IK). Howick Bay Cliffs held at least 35 pairs, and possibly more hidden in crevices, on 19th (RPo) and one to four birds were at several other localities.

**Sooty Shearwater** *Puffinus griseus*

Another unseasonal shearwater sighting, following on from last month's Manx Shearwater, was one following fishing boats off Tynemouth during the morning of 9th. It was watched for 15 minutes before flying south (DRW).

**Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Birds were back on breeding sites with the peak counts being 14 present at Swallow Pond on 22nd (GPK), six at Howick Hall Pool on 20th and also six at Whiteadder Water (Berwick) on 26th (TBr). One to five were at Arcot Pond, Big Waters, Blyth GC, Bothal Pond, Branton GP, Broomlee Lough, Castron, Coanwood Pond, Dinnington, Druridge Bay CP, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Hauxley NWT, Killingworth Lake, Linden Hall, Linton Ponds, Marden Quarry, Northumberlandia (Cramlington), Park Dam and Warkworth Lane Ponds.

**Red-necked Grebe** *Podiceps grisegena*

The pair regularly seen just off the Heugh at Holy Island were showing signs of moulting into breeding plumage by 30th (IK).

**Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus*

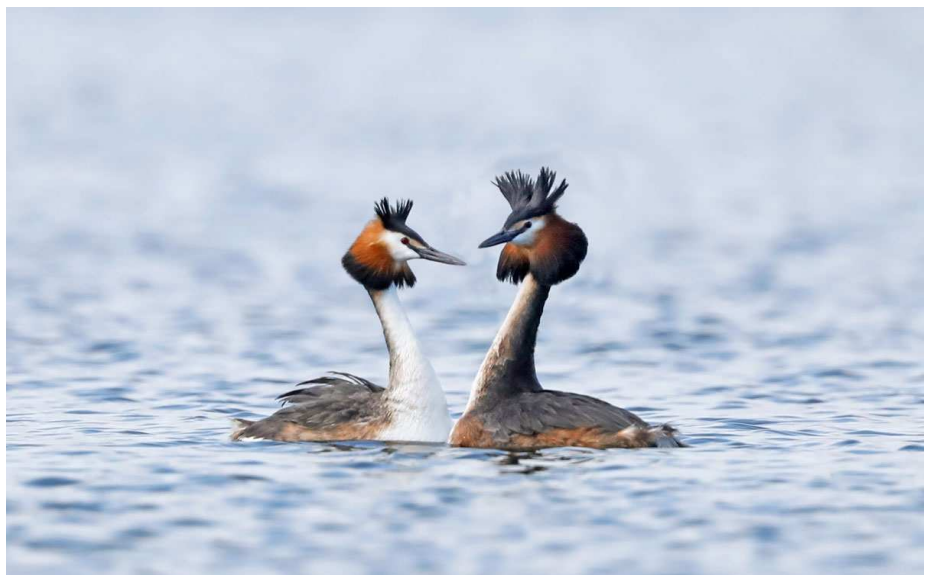
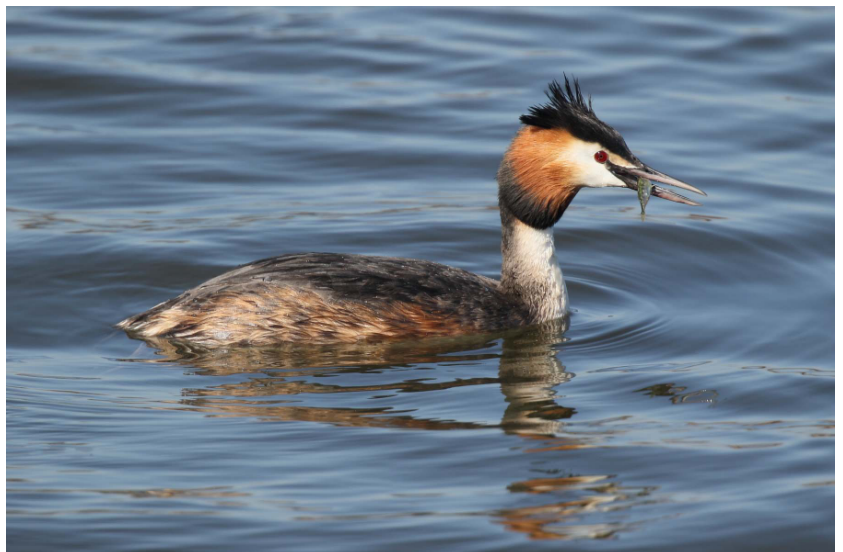
Numbers at Big Waters grew to 12 by the end of the month (GB/AJJ/ISD), five were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 4th (LJM) with the same number at East Chevington North Pool on 27th (TB). Two pairs were at Killingworth Lake and single pairs were noted at Airy Holm Reservoir, Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Broomlee Lough, Colt Crag Reservoir, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools NR, Holywell Pond NR, Linton Ponds. Singletons were seen at Branton GP, Castron, Grindon Lough, QE11 CP and on the sea at Seaton Sluice.

Great-crested Grebes at  
Killingworth Lake.

Right: Fishing by Alan Jack  
29th March

Below:- Getting together

Colin Bradshaw  
25th March





**Slavonian Grebe** *Podiceps auritus*

Up to nine were still at Stag Rocks on 5th and starting to moult into red on the neck (MH/AA). One of the two at St. Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) was coming into breeding plumage on 30th (IK) and a single bird was seen in Spittal Bay (Berwick) on 4th (MHu).

**Black-necked Grebe** *Podiceps nigrocollis*

A pair arrived back at the regular breeding site in SE Northumberland by 21st and remained until the month's end (GPK/ASJ/TRD/JD).

**Spoonbill** *Platalea leucorodia*

An adult was at Hauxley NWT on 19th (CH).

**Bittern** *Botaurus stellaris*

One was seen at Chevington North Pool on 24th (ADMc).

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

Some movement was recorded this month at Seaton Sluice with totals of seven N and seven S (SSWT). 11 were at Druridge Pools on 11th (SRB), eight were at Hauxley NWT on 2nd (SRB) and around the heronry at Howick Hall Pool/Woods on 2nd (PHa/Aha) and six were in the Tweed Estuary on 18th (TRr/MMcN). Singles were reported from Arcot Pond, Broomlee Lough, Castle Island, Derwent Reservoir, Leazes Park, QE11 CP Lake and Warkworth Lane Ponds,

**Great White Egret** *Ardea alba*

On the late afternoon of 30th one flew in from the west to land on the main pool at Druridge Pools NR (TF/JFa/IDR).

**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*

Three at Caistron during a WeBS visit on 23rd was the highest count of the month (JD). One to two were seen at Beal, Branton GP, Castle Island, Furnace Bank (R. Blyth), Holystone, Swallow Pond, the R. Wansbeck at North Seaton, Sleaf Burn and Whiteadder Water (Berwick)

**Gannet** *Morus bassanus*

The largest movements were noted during the morning of 4th when up to 180 per hour were heading S past Berwick Pier (MHu) whilst Seaton Sluice had 60N and 20S in two hours on the same day (SSWT). A further visit to Berwick Pier on 15th found 60 per hour heading S into a strong SW wind (MHu). At Annstead (Seahouses) 148 were watched heading N in 45 mins on 19th (DF). Groups observed feeding on fish shoals included 50 at Blyth on 7th, 30+ at Church Point (Newbiggin) on 4th and up to 25 at Seaton Sluice on 4th and 5th. Up to 14 were sighted from other locations.

**Shag** *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Although 50 (33N and 17S) were recorded at Seaton Sluice there was no indication of movement. Nine were on the sea there on 10th (SSWT). Records from other sites included eight at the Meadow Haven (Berwick) roost on 3rd (MHu), four in Spittal Bay (Berwick) on 7th and one to two at five other sites.

**Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

No significant movements were recorded at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). The regular congregation at Howdon staithes peaked at 88 on 2nd (CB), whilst 66 were at North Shields Fish Quay on 18th and at least 30 were feeding close inshore at Church Point (Newbiggin) on 4th (LJM). 25 were at Colt Crag Reservoir on 1st and one to 17 were reported from Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Castle Island, Chevington North Pool, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools NR, Kielder Water, Linden Hall (up to three continental *sinensis* race birds), Meadow Haven (Berwick), Prestwick Carr and the Tweed Estuary.

**Osprey** *Pandion haliaetetus*

One was at Colt Crag reservoir on 27th (MR) and another bird was at Derwent Reservoir on 31st (IFo).

**Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus*

Two birds were noted displaying at Harwood Forest on 20th (STE) and two separate birds were seen at Falstone (N Tyne) on 26th (MH/AA). Single birds were noted throughout the month at Holy Island village, Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin by the Sea) and at Rothbury. Other single birds were at 25 sites throughout the month

A Sparrowhawk  
Eachwick  
Chris Barlow

23rd March



**Goshawk** *Accipiter gentilis*

Three females were noted soaring together for 10 minutes at Harwood Forest on 27th (ADMc) and a male and a female were at a confidential site on 19th (MH/AA). Single birds were also seen at Harwood Forest on 11th & 18th (DRo/ADMc) and from four other sites.



An impressive Goshawk passes Chris Barlow  
An upland site  
17th March

**Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*

An adult male was noted at East Chevington on 23rd (MN)) followed by a female there on 29th & 30th (MN/AJH/TF/JFa) and a female was also noted at Widdrington Moor Lake on 30th (GB). A female flew N at St Mary's Island on 31st (ASJ).

**Hen Harrier** *Circus cyaneus*

A female/ ringtail was seen quartering for 40 minutes at a confidential site on 17th (AJH).

**Red Kite** *Milvus Milvus*

Three birds were at South Snods on 3rd (IFo) and at Carterway Heads on 26th (IFo). Two birds were noted at Snods Edge on 2nd (IFo), North Tyne Valley on 12th (AH *per* MH) and at Derwent Reservoir on 30th (IFo). Single birds were at Derwent Reservoir on 5th (IFo), Morpeth A1 bypass and Longhoughton on 13th (PG/JAR), Gosforth Park on 14th (MSH), Alnwick on 18th (*per* IK), Wallsend Swallow Pond on 21st (GDK), East Chevington and Howick on 23rd (MN/BS), Spindleston (JSo/FSO) and St Cuthbert's Cave (PG) on 24th, Snods Edge on 27th & 28th (IFo), and on the 29th birds were seen near Derwent Reservoir (PG), Eachwick (MNC), Harthope Valley (ADMc) and at Prestwick Carr (AA). On 31st a single bird was seen at Carterway Heads (RMH).

**Common Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*

From a viewpoint at Lyham Hill the observer noted 14 birds over a 10km radius (DF). Eight birds were at Dilston (Corbridge) on 5th (RB/MB) and at Lyham Hill on 19th (DF); six birds were recorded at Bellasis Bridge (Blagdon) on 18th (MH) and at Colt Crag Reservoir on 25th (MR). Four birds were also seen at the following sites: Holystone, Howick Hall, Westburnhope, West Hartford and Widdrington Moor Lake. One – three birds were seen at over 30 sites during the month.

**Water Rail** *Rallus aquaticus*

Three were at East Chevington Pools on 24th (ADMc) and on 26th (TRD/JD). Two were at Gosforth Park NR on 11th (AJ). Single birds were either seen or heard at Arcot Pond, Backworth Pond, Druridge Pools and East Chevington.

**Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*

Woodhorn Church Flash had 19 birds present on 4th (LJM), 12 were at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 22nd (GB) and 10 were at Lynemouth Flash on 5th (TB). One – nine birds were at Arcot Pond, Castle Island, Druridge Pools NR, Hauxley NWT, Jesmond Dene, Leazes Park (Newcastle), Linton Ponds, Lynemouth Flash, Monkseaton, QEII CP Lake, Spartylea and Wark (N Tyne).



**Coot** *Fulica atra*

The highest counts were 37 at Killingworth Lake on 13th (LJM), 26 at QEII CP Lake on 24th (CDH), 23 at Linton Ponds on 24th (CDH) and 21 at Bothal Pond on 24th (TD), followed by 15+ at Rayburn lake on 25th (MSH), 12 at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 8th (DM), 12 at Big Waters NWT on 24th (GB) and at Druridge Pools NR on 30th (IDR). One – eight were noted at Arcot Pond, Broomlee Lough, Coanwood Pond, Druridge Pools NR, Ellington Pond, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Hauxley NWT, Howick Hall, Park Dam and at Warkworth Lane Ponds (Ellington).



A Coot at Killingworth Lake by Colin Bradshaw on 25th March

**Oystercatcher** *Haematopus ostralegus*

A count of 100 was made on 2nd at Hauxley NWT (SRB), 84 were at Coanwood Burn House Farm on 18th (SJH) and 82 at Budle Bay on 20th (CGK). Roosting in a field at high tide near Howdiemont Sands on 21st were 74 (MKi), 72 were seen at Cocklawburn on 11th (MHu), 53 were at Derwent Reservoir on 4th (IFo) and 53 were counted at Caistron during a WeBS on 23rd (JD). Counts of 21-48 were reported from Coanwood Pond, Holy Island, Lambley, Little Beach (Berwick) and Spartylea and counts of 10-19 came from Bamburgh (Stag Rocks), Stocksfield (Merryshield Gravel Pits), Whiteadder Water (Berwick) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Counts of seven or fewer were made at a number of sites with reports of displaying birds from Castle Island (R Wansbeck), Cramlington, Harthope Valley, Morpeth (County Hall) and West Hartford.

**Avocet** *Recurvirostra avosetta*

Records came from three sites: four were at Castle Island (R Wansbeck), counts of 11-12 in the Blyth Estuary were made on 25th (LJM, AJ) and a peak count of nine came from Cresswell Pond NWT on 27th (MJH).

**Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus*

All the larger counts were made at inland locations, nearly all of which were in the south west of the county. Many of these reports were from Plenmeller Common and might have involved counts of the same birds. Plenmeller Fellhouse Farm had a count of 510-610 on 11th (SJH), ca. 500 were seen flocking with Golden Plovers on Plenmeller Common on 1st (EC/JSB), 360-380 were at Coanwood Coldshield Farm on 8th (SJH), 340-360 at Ridley Common on 6th (SJH) and 320 at Coanwood Wolf Hills Farm on 11th (SJH). Further east, in East Allendale, there were counts of 270-330 at Hammersfield on 17th (SJH) and 283 also on 17th at Low Acton (SJH). Further east again, at Westburnhope (Hexhamshire Common), a count of 110-130 was made, again, on 17th (AJH). Away from the south west, 56 were reported from Elsdon on 9th (JR/NA), at the coast, 50 birds were seen on 24th at Ellington, Warkworth Lane Ponds (IDR) and 46 were at Druridge Pools NR on 23rd (IDR). A count of 43 was made at Grindon Lough on 18th (SJH), 39 were at Holystone (Coquetdale) on 14th (JR) and 29 were reported from Blyth on 11th (JR). Smaller counts came from Arcot Lane (Cramlington), Bearl (Ovington), Big Waters NWT, Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Cramlington, Darden Lough (Harwood Forest), Druridge Pools NR, Hauxley NWT, High Carrick (Elsdon), Holy Island, Howdon, Humshaugh, Lambley and Longframlington (Weldon). Many of these records involved birds displaying on territory.

**Golden Plover** *Pluvialis apricaria*

Approximately 2,000 birds were seen flying in two flocks over the "plover field" on Plenmeller Common on 1st (EC/JSB) with a number of other reports also coming from this site and its immediate vicinity. To the east, at Hammersfield, near Allenheads, an estimated 1,000 were seen on 17th (SJH), while towards the coast, 640 were counted on 8th (TF/JFa) and a minimum of 400 were at Budle Bay on 2nd (SRB). 330 - 370 were reported from Westburnhope (Hexhamshire Common) on 30th (AJH) and Low Acton in Allendale had a count of 166 on 17th (SJH). On 4th Greenhaugh Waterhead had a count of 90 (SW), 80 were seen at Prestwick Carr on 29th (PCF) and ca. 50 were at Howdiemont Sands (Boulmer) on 4th (MKi). Counts of 13-38 came from Blyth Links, Belford, Lyham Hill watch point and Middlehope (Allenheads).

**Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola*

Two records were received. On 21st, seven were reported from Boulmer Seaton Point (MJC) and on 20th six were seen at Hauxley NWT (MKi).

**Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula*

The largest counts were of 39 at Budle Bay on 9th (CGK), 28 on 31st at The Ouze (Holy Island) (IK), considered a good count for this site, and 19 on 10th at Blyth Estuary (MSH). On 2nd a count of 16 was made at Amble Links (JR) and on 10th 12 were seen at Boulmer (BS). Counts of seven or fewer came from Cocklawburn, Colt Crag Reservoir, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools NR, Holywell Pond NR and Newbiggin Beacon Point

**Little Ringed Plover** *Charadrius dubius*

The first, and only report of the spring was on 21st when a single bird was reported from a coastal location in the south east of the county (BS).

**Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus*

A single bird was seen flying north at Boulmer Seaton Point on 11th (CB).

**Curlew** *Numenius arquata*

A high tide roost on 21st at Longhoughton Steel (Boulmer) held 372 birds (MJC, MKi). Further up the coast, at Budle Bay, 254 were counted on 4th (DF) while elsewhere, Druridge Pools had a peak count of 178 on 11th (CB) and, inland, Coanwood Burn House had 147 on 5th (SJH). On 9th Branton GP reported 109 (IBDa/KDa), 101 were by Straight Lonnen on Holy Island on 17th (MJC) and near Knockburn (Spartylea) a count of 96 was made on 17th (SJH). A count of 74 was made at Cocklawburn on 5th (MHu). In fields to the north of Hauxley there were 71 on 13th (HRS) and Holystone had a maximum of 70 on 15th (DRo). Ridley Common had a count of 68 on 11th (SJH), while a little further east, Westburnhope, Hexhamshire Common reported 55-65 on 17th (AJH), numbers had reduced to 60 on Holy Island by 31st (IK) while Prestwick Carr held 48 birds throughout much of the month up to 28th (PCF). Counts of 46 or fewer came from Allendale, Aln Estuary, Amble Links, Ashington (North Seaton Colliery), Blyth Links, Boulmer (Seaton Point), Brocolitia (Simonburn), Catton, Derwent Reservoir, Ellington (Warkworth Lane Ponds), Elsdon (nr), Greenhaugh (Waterhead), Grindon Lough, Keenley (Hollingreen Farm), Longhorsley (nr), Morpeth (Heighley Gate), Newbiggin (Beacon Point), Old Hartley, Plenmeller Common, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower, St Mary's Wetland, Tweed Estuary, Wansbeck (Castle Island), Warkworth (Old Waters) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

**Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica*

Only nine records were submitted with counts well below those of March and with no birds reported from Lindisfarne. The highest counts were of 20-28 birds at Boulmer which were reported up to 21st (BS, MKi, MJC). Berwick Little Beach held four birds on 2nd and 10th (MHu), a number which had reduced to two by 27th (TRD/JD). Two birds were seen at Creswell Pond on 5th (IRD).

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

There was a suggestion of increased passage as records and counts increased from last month. Druridge Pools recorded 23 birds on 24th (TF/JFa), the Coquet Estuary held 20 on 25th (CSa) and 18 were counted at Holy Island Rocket Field pools on 17th (IK). Lindisfarne NNR, Fenham Flats reported 15 on 3rd (BS), seven were at R Blyth Estuary on 26th, two of which had summer plumage (LJM) and Hauxley NWT reported six on 13th (HRS). Five birds were at Howdon on 9th (CB), three at Budle Bay on 2nd (CRB) and three on Castle Island (R Wansbeck) on 26th and 27th (PG, NFO). Seaton Sluice Watch Tower recorded three flying N on 30th which was the first recorded sighting in March for the Tower.



A Black-tailed Godwit on 28th March at Castle Island by Tim Dean



**Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*

Higher numbers were reported this month, mainly from northerly stretches of coast and none were reported from St Mary's Island where February's peak count was made. At Monks' House, 82 were noted on 8th (SW) and at Boulmer counts fluctuated with 75 on 4th, five on 7th and 49 on 21st (MKi/TRD/JD/MJC) when 68 were also noted at nearby Longhoughton Steel (MJC). Other counts were 29 along the Spital-Cocklawburn coast on 19th (TBr/MMcN), 28 at Holy Island north shore on 17th (MJC), 27 at Hauxley NWT on 20th (MKi), 24 at Berwick Little Beach on 2nd (MHu), 14 at the River Blyth Estuary on 26th (LJM) and a maximum of ten at Cresswell Pond during the month (TRD/JD). Five were in the River Tweed Estuary on 18th.



A Turnstone at St. Mary's on 10th March by Jack Bucknall

**Knot** *Calidris canutus*

No reports were received from Lindisfarne this month where a large flock has wintered and numbers were reduced elsewhere. The River Coquet Estuary attracted the highest numbers with the peak count being 22 on 12th (MH/AA). The Boulmer-Longhoughton Steel area held three on 1st increasing to 19 by 21st (MJC/MKi/BS). The only other report was two on the rocks at Seaton Sluice on 18th and 21st (SSWT).

**Ruff** *Calidris pugnax*

A light influx was apparent at Druridge pools with seven on 22nd (IDR/ADMc) reducing to two on 23rd (MN).

**Sanderling** *Calidris alba*

Well reported this month with 170 being counted at Boulmer on 25th (IF) with 18-95 present on other dates. The maximum number seen in the Druridge Bay area was 117 at Chevington Burn, with many bathing in the freshwater outflow on 25th (MH). At Cocklawburn, there were 116 on 5th reducing during the month to 28 by 28th (MHu/SW). Reports were received from three locations at Lindisfarne NNR possibly involving some of the same birds moving between feeding areas, with 102 at Holy Island on 17th (MJC), 62 at Goswick Sands on 24th (CH) and 60 at Budle Bay on 2nd (SRB). Other counts were 60 at Monks' House on 8th (SW), 46 at Berwick Little Beach on 10th (MHu), 40 at East Chevington (TRD/JD), 31 at Newbiggin on 1st (STH), 25 at Tynemouth on 10th (DRW), 23 at Berwick on 14th (SW), 16 at Druridge beach on 26th (IDR) and 14 at Snab Point (Cresswell) on 5th (TB).



A ringed Sanderling at Seaton Point by Chris Barlow on 30th March

**Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*

The high numbers from earlier in the winter had moved on with the peak count coming from Budle Bay with 85 on 2nd (DF). The River Coquet Estuary attracted 48 on 12th (MH/AA) and 39 were at Boulmer on 4th (MKi). Five were seen at Cresswell Pond, three were at Hauxley NWT on 20th, three also at Druridge Pools on 22nd and two were at Cocklawburn on 21st.

**Purple Sandpiper** *Calidris maritima*

The regular Stag Rocks flock reached a peak of ca.200 on 2nd (DF) with other reports received between 140 on 8th and six on 27th (SW/BRS/MH/AA *et al.*). Much smaller numbers were noted at other sites with 35 at Low Newton on 5th (MH/AA), 27 at Newbiggin on 19th (BS) and 25 at Boulmer on 9th reducing to eight by 21st (BS/JAR/MJC/MKi). Twelve were at Cresswell on 12th (JAR) and also at Cocklawburn on 14th (SW), with 11 at both Tynemouth on 28th (DRW) and Holy Island on 29th (MJC). Elsewhere, ten were on the Spital-Cocklawburn coast, nine at Seaton Sluice and five at Howick.



A Purple Sandpiper at St.Mary's on 10th March by Jack Bucknall

**Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola*

Five were found at Widdrington Moor on 9th (TF/JFa), two were flushed from a conifer wood at Corbridge Common on 2nd (DLe) and two were roding at Westburnhope on 31st (STE). Singles, including some roding birds were at Alnmouth, Borough Woods (Morpeth), East Cramlington LNR, Heighlygate (Morpeth), Longhorsley, Rosebrough Moor (Lucker), Slaley Hall and Spartylea.

**Jack Snipe** *Lymnocyptes minimus*

A single remaining at Big Waters was reported on 24th (GB).

**Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago*

The first 'drumming' birds were noted this month with a minimum of ten at Westburnhope on 31st (STE), two at both Coldshield farm (Coanwood) on 18th and Spartylea on 29th (SJH/CT) and one at Plenmeller Common on 20th (PRM). Winter gatherings were still evident with 19 at Newcastle Great Park on 8th (LAR), ten at Big Waters on 24th (GB), nine at Arcot Lane flash on 11th (DM) and five at Howdon on 3rd (CB). One-three were seen at Elsdon, Grindon Lough, Hauxley NWT and Longhorsley.

**Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*

Birds remained in winter quarters from last month, with two at Hedgeley GP on 31st (IBDa/KDa) and one at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 4th (MR). Another single was found at Benbridge (Morpeth) on 17th (TD).

**Redshank** *Tringa totanus*

Some high numbers were maintained at the coast while birds became more visible in inland breeding areas. The peak count was 247 at Howdon on 23rd (CB) while at the River Tweed Estuary 185 were counted on 18th (TBr/MMcN) with 108 reported from Berwick (SW) on 14th probably involving some of the same birds. The maximum at Budle Bay was 140 on 9th (CGK) and another triple figure count was 100+ at the River Blyth Estuary on 10th (MSH). Boulmer attracted 70 on 4th (MKi) and 50 were at nearby Seaton Point on 21st with 47 at Longhoughton Steel on the same day (MJC). A high-tide roost at St Mary's Wetland held 70 on 18th (MSH) and 69 were at Calot Shad (River Tweed) on 31st (MHu). Other gatherings at or near the coast were 44 at Holy island north shore on 17th, 44 at Castle Island on 24th and 34 at Hauxley NWT on 20th. 13-17 were at Amble, Berwick Little Beach and Spital-Cocklawburn. The return to inland haunts saw two at Grindon Lough on 12th increase to 14 by 27th (SJH/PRM/MRS). Twelve were at Coldshield Farm (Coanwood) on 18th (SJH), eight at Allenheads on 17th (SJH), seven at Coanwood Pond on 18th and six at Spartylea on 17th (SJH). Two-four were at Allendale, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Lynemouth Flash, Plenmeller Common, Ridley Common, Warkworth and Westburnhope.



**Spotted Redshank** *Tringa erythropus*

The regular adult was reported from Budle Bay on 9th (CGK).

**Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*

A single was seen at Coanwood Pond on 17th (SJH).

**Kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla*

No movements of any size were recorded at Seaton Sluice but by 8th early birds had returned to their Newcastle inner-city breeding ledges in good numbers with 62+ on the Tyne Bridge, ten at the Guildhall and six on the Dean St. railway bridge (DM). At Howick, at least 60 were on the cliffs and sea on 19th, three to six were seen at Cullernose Point and off Holy Island and a more unusual sighting was a single at Swallow Pond on 31st (GPK).

**Black-headed Gull** *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

At the Plenmeller Common breeding colony, 500+ were present on 17th (SJH) and elsewhere, gatherings of 300-400 were recorded at Berwick (West Ord), Druridge Bay CP, Grindon Lough, Longhoughton Steel and the Widdrington wind farm site (RPo/MKi/MHu/SJH/DM) and 100-200 at Allendale, the River Blyth Estuary, Castle Island, Coanwood, the River Coquet Estuary, Druridge Pools and Killingworth Lake (LJM/SJH/IDR/MKi). Smaller groups of up to 20-50 were at Bothal Pond, Greenlee Lough, Jesmond Dene, Newbiggin, the River Tweed Estuary and Warkworth Lane ponds with up to 20 at seven other localities.



A Black-headed Gull at Warkworth  
Colin Bradshaw  
11th March

**Mediterranean Gull** *Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus*

As wintering birds moved from the area to their summer quarters, mostly on the continent, the numbers at the favoured Newbiggin village bay dwindled to 11 on 1st (STH) and thereafter only one or two remained by the month end. A pair at Warkworth weir on 26th may have been one of the breeding pairs from Coquet Island (TRD/JD) and one or two were seen elsewhere at Boulmer, Holy Island, Seaton Sluice, Swallow Pond, Widdrington Moor Lake and Woodhorn Pond; a single adult in summer plumage was recorded inland at Derwent Reservoir (AJ/IK/AJN/TW)

**Common Gull** *Larus canus*

Well-reported as migratory flocks passed through en-route to their more northerly breeding grounds. Six counts of 80-400+ came from Grindon Lough on dates throughout (SJH) with 200-250 at Druridge Pools NR and Elsdon (IDR/JR.NA) and up to 100 at 15 other coastal and inland sites.

**Great Black-backed Gull** *Larus marinus*

Very few reports comprising 15 at Derwent Reservoir on 27th (IFo), eight in the River Tweed Estuary (MHu) and one to five elsewhere at Brocolitia, Castle Island, Colt Crag Reservoir and Grindon Lough (MR/PR/DM).

**Glaucous Gull** *Larus hyperboreus*

A 1st-winter bird was at the North Shields Fish Quay from 9th-12th (DRW/MSH/JBu) and 28th (TRD/JD) and possibly the same individual was recorded from Seaton Sluice on 16th (SSWT) and Druridge Pools and Warkworth Weir on 24th (TF/JFa/CSa); a 1st-winter seen in the River Tweed Estuary on 18th was probably a different bird (TBbr/MMcN).



A popular subject from North Shields Fish Quay - a first-winter Glaucous Gull.

Above: on 12th March by Jack Bucknall

Below: Flying by Iain Johnson

**Iceland Gull** *Larus glaucoides*

The wintering 2nd-winter bird again visited Big Waters NWT regularly throughout (GB *et al.*) and was possibly the same individual which was seen at Castle Island on 26th (PG). An adult was in Budle Bay on 15th (B.S).

**Herring Gull** *Larus argentatus argenteus*

The maximum movement recorded at Seaton Sluice was 310 N in two hours on 18th (SSWT). The the largest gathering was 578 in the gull roost at Berwick (West Ord) on 3rd (MHu) with smaller flocks containing 80-300 seen at Castle Island, Colt Crag Reservoir, Lyham Hill, Rivers Blyth and Tweed Estuaries, Seahouses, Whiteadder Water (Berwick) and Widdrington Moor Lake (RPo/LJM/TBr/MMcN/MR/DF). Up to 20 were at another six localities including a colour-ringed bird, yellow Y:775, ringed in North Yorkshire in late 2016 (TF/JFa).





A Herring Gull love-in at Seahouses  
23rd March by Chris Barlow

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

An adult, with Herring and LB-b gulls, was at Colt Crag Reservoir on 8th (MR).

**Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus fuscus graelsii*

The spring influx brought in good numbers and many reports were received. A monthly total of 47 passed N at Seaton Sluice (SSWT) and gatherings of 65 were recorded at Budle Bay on 28th (TRD/JD), 22 at West Hartford (LJM) and nine on Holy island (MJC). At inland sites, ten were in Upper Coquetdale and two to six at Allendale (Low Acton farm), Coanwood Pond, Colt Crag Reservoir, Darden (Grasslees), Derwent Reservoir, Edlingham, Grindon Lough and Spartylea; at coastal and suburban localities up to eight were at Annstead, Gosforth, Howdon, Jesmond Dene, QEII CP, River Tweed Estuary and West Hartford. Single birds were seen at a further ten localities.

**Sandwich Tern** *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

The first returning single birds were seen at Seahouses on 27th (TRD/JD), Ross (Lindisfarne) on 28th (IK) and Druridge Pools on 30th (TF/JFa).

**Auk** *sp*

Large numbers, mainly Guillemots, passed Seaton Sluice during the first nine days, with peaks of 1,950 S in two hours on 7th and 900 N in one hour on 1st (SSWT); very few were recorded thereafter. At St Mary's Island on 11th at least 40 were on the sea, mainly Razorbills with some Guillemots (MSH).

**Common Guillemot** *Uria aalge*

'Thousands', visible from the mainland, were back on the breeding ledges and on the sea at the Farne Islands/Inner Sound on 20th (MSH). Two to three were recorded at Cocklawburn, Cullernose Point, and Druridge Pools (TRD/JD/MSH/IDR).

**Puffin** *Fratercula arctica*

At Coquet Island, 400 gathered offshore on the sea on 26th (TRD/JD) and on the Farne islands ca.300 were seen distantly from the mainland flying over the nesting burrows (TRD/JD).

**Rock Dove** *Columba livia*

There were high counts of 202 at Old Eldon Square on 8th, 117 at Stakeford Railway Bridge on 24th, 78 at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 8th (DM) and present at Jesmond Dene throughout the month

**Stock Dove** *Columba oenas*

46 was the peak at Howdon on 31st (CB), 24 in a field at Big Waters NR on 24th (GB) with nine at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 4th, six at Windmill Lane Cramlington on 25th and Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 27th. One to five were at 13 other widespread localities.

**Woodpigeon** *Columba palumbus*

A slurry sprayed field at Whittingham attracted around 600 on 30th (CW), 200 at Dilston on 4th (IFo), 180 at Arcot Pond on 5th around 160 in 2km radius at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) during the month (TBr), 150 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 4th and Holystone on 14th with 100 near Shilbottle on 13th. 18 to 80 were at seven locations and one to 12 at a further 12 including one to three in off sea at Seaton Sluice on 24th and 30th.

**Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto*

Up to 14 were at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) during the month (RS) with birds displaying and pairing, 12 at Berwick Hill on 6th (AHB), five at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) and two to three at Eachwick and Spartylea.

**Barn Owl** *Tyto alba*

Three hunted around Whittingham on 10th (CW), two at Spartylea during the month (CT) and at Humshaugh from 5th to 7th (TWi). A pair were at a nestbox at Slaley Village and two at Loudside Farm (Eachwick) (RMH/MNC) with singles at 20 other widespread localities and two road casualty reports from the A1 at Alnwick.

A Barn Owl hunts

Sunset at Woolsington

John Littleton

**Tawny Owl** *Strix aluco*

Generally calling birds with three at Westburnhope on 31st (STE), two at Rothbury and Spartylea during the month (TRD/JD/CT), two at Slaley Hall on 4th and Humshaugh on 7th (RMH/SW). Singles were at nine other locations.

**Little Owl** *Athene noctua*

A male sang at Shiremoor all month (CGK) and one at Berwick Hill on 31st (AHB) a location where the observer first saw a bird at in 1987 and were recorded there in 1942.

**Long-eared Owl** *Asio otus*

One hunted at Albermarle (near Whittle Dene) at 3pm on 6th (SRB) and a male was singing at Wark at 21.20 on 27th (PRM).

**Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus*

On 1st between 2.30-3.00pm at least five hunted at Prestwick Carr (MH) one of which was identified as the overwintering individual seen on three other dates during the month (PCF). Three were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 25th with two there on 1st and at Holy Island on 25th (ADM/RP) with singles at all these locations regularly and at West Hartford on 24th.

**Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis*

All sightings were of single birds at Ponteland Park on 3rd, Rothbury on 4th, Jesmond Dene on 17th, Castron on 23rd and Sheepwash Bridge (Choppington) on 26th.

Great Spotted Woodpecker  
Colin Bradshaw  
Tynemouth  
13th March

**Great Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos major*

Four at Harwood Forest on 20th (STE) with three the peak count at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) and Spartylea (TBr/CT) and three at Holystone on 4th and Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 24th (DRo/KWY). One to two were at 19 widely spread localities.

**Green Woodpecker** *Picus viridis*

All reports were of single birds often yaffling at Broomley Wood on 1st, Slaley Hall on 18th, Prestwick Carr on 18th and 24th, Simonside on 19th, Wark Common on 20th, Heddon on the Wall on 27th Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 29th and Gosforth Park on 31st.

**Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*

Three birds was the peak count from Low Cocklaw (Berwick) during the month (TBR) and two birds were at West Hartford throughout the Month (TB). Two were also noted at Bellasis Bridge (Blagdon), Harwood Forest, Holy Island and Ray Estate, while single birds were seen at 19 sites.

**Merlin** *Falco columbarius*

Single birds were noted at long Nanny (Low Newton) on 1st (PA), Fenham Flats (MH/AA) and near Great Whittington (ALT) on 5th, Seaton Point (Boulmer) on 10th (NFO), Holy Island on 17th and 29th (MJC) and at Whiteadder Water (Berwick) on 29th (TBr).





**Peregrine** *Falco peregrinus*

Two birds were seen at a confidential site on 28th (DLo) and single birds were noted at Seaton Sluice Watch Tower on 11th (SSWT), Widdrington Moor Lake on 12th (MSH), Grindon Lough on 15th (PRM), Druridge Pools NR on 17th (TF), Budle Bay on 20th (CGK/GPK), St Mary's Island on 22nd (JBu), Tynemouth on 30th (DRW) and at Bellasis Bridge (Blagdon) on 31st (AHB).

**Ring-necked Parakeet** *Psittacula krameri*

Three were at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 14th (BS), two at Heaton Park Bowling Green on 10th (MJCo) and one over Gosforth Park near Wideopen on 18th (GB).

**Jay** *Garrulus glandarius*

No gatherings were noted as birds paired to breed with two at Eshott on 1st, Dipton Wood on 8th, Bardon Mill on 13th, Grasslees Burn on 14th and three locations at Ellington on four dates from 23rd to 29th. Singles were at Ellington often and a further nine locations.

**Magpie** *Pica pica*

A loose flock of 12 was at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd (IFo) and the same number left a roost at Craggside School (Cramlington) on 8th (DM). Seven were at Benton on 22nd, six at Jesmond Dene on 3rd and Preston Cemetery on 10th with one to five at Druridge Pools regularly and nine other locations including a prospecting pair in a garden on Holy Island where they are scarce.

**Jackdaw** *Corvus monedula*

Around 120 fed on recently mown grass at Newbiggin Old Colliery on 1st (RS), a pre-roost gathering of 96 on shingle at Calot Shad (Tweed Estuary) on 15th (MHu), 66 at Howdon on 9th (CB), 35 at Lynemouth Dene on 31st (IDR), 34 the peak count at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) and 26 at Spartylea during the month (TBr/CT). Four to 20 were at eight further locations.

**Rook** *Corvus frugilegus*

The peak count was at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) of 36 (TBr) with up to 16 at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) during the month (RS), 15 at Catton on 9th and eight at Spartylea Cramlington Hall and Derwent Reservoir (CT/IFo). Singles were at Druridge Pools NR and Eachwick with 16 AON at Cramlington Village on 27th and 13 AON at Cantys Brig (Whiteadder Water) (DM/TBr).

**Carrion Crow** *Corvus corone*

A record monthly movement of 126N and 3S from 19th with a record day count of 31 on 30th most moving N but some 'in off' (SSWT). 70 were at Colt Crag Reservoir on 5th (MR), 40 the peak at Druridge Pools on 26th with counts over ten on four further dates in the month (IDR), 37 the peak count in a 2km radius at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) and 28 at Howdon on 9th (CB). One to 10 were at ten other locations.

**Raven** *Corvus corax*

Four were at Tower Knowe (Kielder Water) on 17th (PRM) with three at Plenmeller Common on 1st and 7th, display noted on the latter date (TRD/JD/PRM). Two at west Plenmeller on 5th, Coanwood Common on 11th, Lyham Hill watch point on 5th and Westburnhope on 31st. Singles were also at five other upland locations and New Moor (Ashington) on 17th where it flew towards the coast from landfill at 16.15h (TB).

**Waxwing** *Bombycilla garrulus*

Three were found by GMi at Horton Drive, Northburn (Cramlington) on 7th (STH/TB).

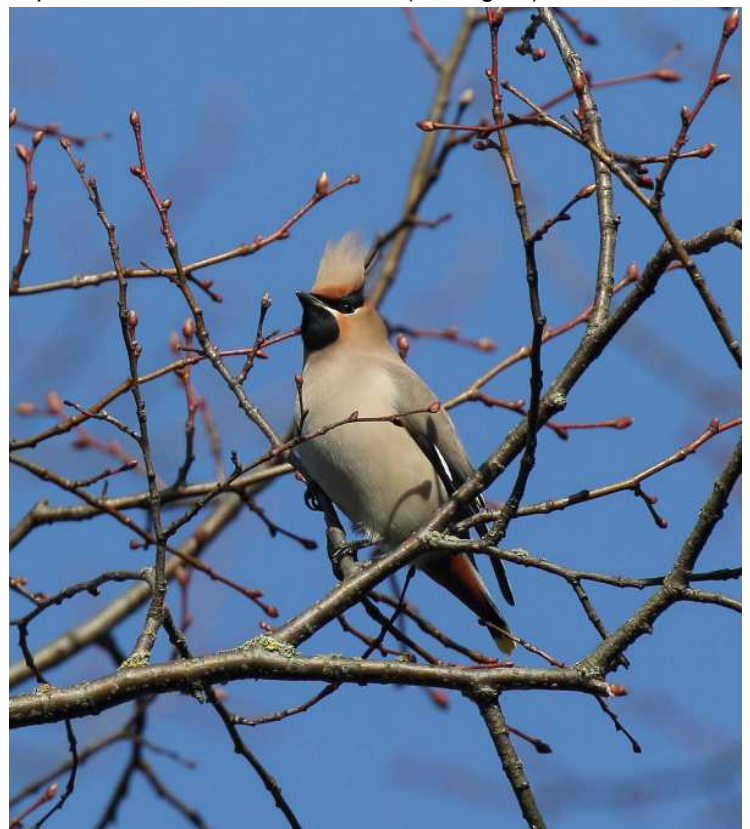
A Waxwing at a favourite tree in Benton  
Alan Jack  
31st March

**Coal Tit** *Periparus ater*

12 was the peak count in a 2km radius at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) during the month (TBr) and eight the peak at Spartylea (CT), six at High Ridge Pond (Monkseaton) on 25th (IJ), 5+ at Gosforth Park on 10th (PRM) and one to three at nine other locations.

**Marsh Tit** *Poecile palustris*

Two were at Benridge (Morpeth) on 17th, Brainshaugh (near Guisance) on 18th Heighleygate (Morpeth) on the same date and Haredene (Longhorsley) on 28th. Singles were at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) regularly, came to feeders at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) during the month and were also at Fulbeck (Morpeth), Hazon and Rothbury.



**Willow Tit** *Poecile montanus*

On 28th two pairs were excavating nest holes at Holywell Dene (ASJ), three at Widdrington Moor on 9th, Prestwick Carr on 24th and Ellington Dene on 30th. One to two were at 16 widespread localities

A Willow Tit  
Alan Jack  
Holywell Dene  
30th March

**Blue Tit** *Cyanistes caeruleus*

During the month the peak count in a 2km radius at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) was 44 (TBr) and 14 at Spartylea (CT), ten at Chugdon Woods / Cresswell Home Farm on 30th (IDR) with six at Preston Cemetery on 10th, Ellington Dene on 30th and Lynemouth Dene on 31st. One to three were at nine other locations.

**Great Tit** *Parus major*

33 was the peak count in a 2km radius at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) (TBr), 12 at Chugdon Woods / Cresswell Home Farm on 30th (IDR), 10 at Spartylea (CT) and at Ellington Dene on 30th (IDR). Nine were at Jesmond Dene on 17th, eight at Lynemouth Dene on 31st and one to five at ten other locations.

**Skylark** *Alauda arvensis*

Peak counts were 20 at St Mary's Island on 20th (eight in song), 17 in a 2km radius at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) (TBr), 16 at Holy Island on 25th (RPo) with 13 there on 17th and at Longhoughton Steel on 21st (MJC) with 11 at Spittal / Cocklawburn on 19th (TBr/MMcN). One to nine were at 15 widespread localities.

**Sand Martin** *Riparia riparia*

The earliest county record was of one at Branton GP heading N forced down by weather (MJC) then one feeding along the dunes at Low Hauxley on 3rd (HT) with one present at East Chevington on four dates from 10th - 17th (ADMc). Multiple counts from 23rd with the peak 60 at Druridge Bay CP on 30th, 13 at Branton GP on 27th and 11 at Derwent Reservoir on 31st (IFo). Two to six were at ten other locations.

**Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

One early bird was noted flying N on the east shore of Holy Island on 29th and another at Wark (N.Tyne) on 31st (MJC/PRM).

**Cetti's Warbler** *Cettia cetti*

A singing bird was at East Chevington (South Pool) on 29th-30th (MN/AJH).

**Long-tailed Tit** *Aegithalos caudatus*

Eight at Lynemouth Dene on 31st was the highest count (IDR). Three pairs were collecting nest material at Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 21st, with nest building also noted at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) and Muckley (Longhorsley). Counts of five came from Darden Lough and Ellington, while four were at Dilston, Harwood Forest, Humshaugh, Jesmond Dene, Preston Cemetery, Spartylea, Tynemouth and Valley Park (Cramlington); one to two were reported from a further eight localities.

**Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita*

There were 143 records this month from 94 localities. A scattering of reports from 1st-19th was followed by a more widespread influx from 21st. Seven sites in the Cramlington Study Area held a total of 15 singing males by 25th (LJM), while 15+ were in song at Swallow Pond on 31st and 14 were singing at both Holywell Dene and Woolsington CP on 28th-29th. Further reports of singing birds at the end of the month included ten at Ellington Dene, nine at Howick Dene, eight at Heddon-on-the-Wall and Valley Park (Cramlington) and seven at Jesmond Dene and around the outskirts of West Newcastle. Seven passage birds were on Holy Island on 29th, while six (most in song) were noted at Branton GP, Castle Island, Chugdon Wood-Cresswell Home Farm, Cresswell-Hadston, Plessey Woods CP and Whiteadder Water (Berwick). Further counts, of four to five birds came from the Alcan area (Lynemouth), Arcot Pond, Bedlington, Derwent Reservoir, Dipton Woods, Havannah NR, Lemmington Hall, Longhorsley and Longhorsley Moor.





A Chiffchaff sings in Holywell Dene

Alan Jack  
25th March

**Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla*

Three were in song at Swallow Pond on 31st (CGK) and a pair were in Ellington Dene on 30th. A male was in a Gosforth garden on 12th-13th and another at Marden Estate (Tynemouth) on 19th. Singles were at Jesmond Dene on 29th and in song at Hexham on 30th and Lynemouth Dene on 31st.

**Firecrest** *Regulus ignicapilla*

The wintering bird at Northumberland Park (North Shields) was noted again on 10th (DRW).

**Goldcrest** *Regulus regulus*

Four+ were at Housesteads on 7th and three were singing at Eshott on 1st. One to two were also noted at Allen Banks, Bamburgh, Broomlee Lough, Chugdon Wood, Cramlington village, Ellington, Grindon Lough, Jesmond Dene, Leazes Park, Prestwick Carr and Valley Park (Cramlington).

A Goldcrest on 30th March  
Holywell Dene  
Alan Jack



**Wren** *Troglodytes troglodyte*

There was an excellent count of 33 singing along the length of Holywell Dene on 28th (ASJ), while 19 were noted within a 2km radius of Low Cocklaw. Eight were counted from Chugdon Wood-Cresswell Home Farm on 30th, and in the Cheviots six were at Broadstruther and five in the Harthope Valley on 23rd. Elsewhere four were in Jesmond Dene, three at Druridge Pools and at Warkworth Lane and one to two at a further six localities.

**Nuthatch** *Sitta europaea*

There was an excellent count of ten singing males at Holystone Woods on 28th (DRo), while five were singing at Plessey Woods CP on 25th. Singles were reported from four localities in Jesmond Dene, three were at Chugdon Woods-Cresswell Home Farm and Ellington Dene, two+ at Dilston, two at Gosforth Park NR, Northumberland Park (North Shields) and Stamfordham and singles at Cramlington (Seven Oaks Park and Valley Park), Derwent Reservoir, East Ord, Ellington Colliery, Humshaugh, Preston Cemetery, Rothbury and Wallington Hall.

**Treecreeper** *Certhia familiaris*

Four pairs were found in Holywell Dene on 28th (ASJ) and two or pairs at Branton GP, Colt Crag Reservoir, Corbridge Common, Eshott, Humshaugh, Linden Hall (singing on 10th) and Woolsington. Singles at a further 21 localities included a bird in cliff top bushes at Boulmer on 2nd, another investigating a possible nest site at Northumberlandia on 25th and one feeding on decking below feeders in a Stamfordham garden on 27th.

**Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris*

Huge numbers were videoed and counted from photographs in the Fawdon area during the month, beginning with 8,000 on 2nd (the normal number for this time of year), increasing to 20,000 by 5th and still further to 40,000 on 8th. Numbers peaked at 50,000 on 9th and remained high until 19th, before declining to 30,000 on 20th and to a relatively modest, although still impressive 10,000 on 21st, with only 50 remaining by 23rd (CDB). Another murmuration at Coanwood Common peaked at around 40,000 on 17th-18th (SJH), while up to 2,000+ were at Grindon Lough from 18th-21st. Other large gatherings included 1,000 moving E over Prestwick Carr on 19th, 700 at Todhillwood Farm (Plenmeller) on 12th, 500 near Allenheads and at Derwent Reservoir, 450 at Colt Crag Reservoir and 400 at Ridley Common. There were gatherings of 200-300 in the Allendale area at High Studdon and Low Acton Farm, Laingshill (Billsmoor), Spartylea and at Yearle and 100-180 were noted at Boulmer, Catton, Cocklawburn, Druridge Pools, Elsdon, High Carrick, Holystone, Low Carritheth and Warkworth Lane Ponds.

**Ring Ouzel** *Turdus torquatus*

In the Harthope Valley on 23rd, two singing males and a female were at Hawsen Burn and another singing male at Carey Burn (MJC). Two males were again at Hawsen Burn on 29th (ADMc).

**Blackbird** *Turdus merula*

The largest gathering was 27 at Whitelea Chase (Cramlington) on 11th (DM). A total of 20 were counted within a 2km radius of Low Cocklaw (Berwick) and 11 were in the Chugdon Wood / Cresswell Home Farm area on 30th. Six were at Ellington Dene on 30th and four were noted at Eachwick, Monkseaton, Preston Cemetery and Spartylea. Counts of three came from Ellington Colliery, Lynemouth Dene and Warkworth Lane Ponds, two were at Alcan, Ellington Pond and Jesmond Dene and singles at Druridge Pools, Kenton (collecting nest material on 18th) and Linton Burn.

**Fieldfare** *Turdus pilaris*

The largest gathering was at least 500 at Kiln Pit Hill on 27th (IFo), while 200 were at Humshaugh on 10th. Flocks of 70-96 were noted at Colt Crag Reservoir, Elsdon and Holystone and 40-54 at Linden Hall, Longhorsley and Whittingham. Elsewhere, 30-37 were noted at Beanley, Grindon Lough, Hedgeley Hall, Longdyke, Low Carritheth, Lyham Hill (Belford Moor), Rochester and Shipley (Alnwick) and 20-27 at Harwood Forest, Housesteads and Spartylea. Four to 18 were noted at a further eight localities.

**Redwing** *Turdus iliacus*

Relatively small numbers were noted this month, with the largest gatherings a modest 50 at Holystone on 29th (DRo) and 40 at Low Cocklaw. Counts of 20 were reported from Hedgeley Hall and Rochester, while 18 were at High Carrick, 12 at Humshaugh and ten at Elsdon. One to eight at a further ten localities included three in off the sea at St Mary's Island on 22nd.

**Song Thrush** *Turdus philomelos*

Five were at Humshaugh, Low Cocklaw and Spartylea during the month (SW/TBr/CT) and singles at four Jesmond Dene localities on 17th. Three were at Lynemouth Dene on 31st and Whitelea Chase (Cramlington) on 11th; two were in song at East Cramlington LNR on 1st and two at Hawsen Burn on 23rd, while singles were reported from Alcan (Lynemouth), Dilston, Ellington Dene and Valley Park (Cramlington).

**Mistle Thrush** *Turdus viscivorus*

12 at Howick on 5th was the highest count (JAR). Nine were in the Harthope Valley on 23rd, five (three territories) at Colt Crag Reservoir on 5th and at South Snods Farm on 3rd and one to three at a further 12 localities.

**Robin** *Erithacus rubecula*

There was a good peak count of 23 within a 2km radius of Low Cocklaw (Berwick) during the month (TBr). Six were noted at Ellington Dene on 30th and five at Jesmond Dene on 3rd, while four were at Eachwick and Spartylea, three at Alcan (Lynemouth), Benton, Lynemouth Dene and Monkseaton and one to two at a further five localities.

**Black Redstart** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

The wintering bird at Tynemouth was seen again 9th and 15th (DRW/ASJ).

**Stonechat** *Saxicola rubicola*

Peak counts were two pairs at Broadstruther (Cheviots) and Hawsen Burn on 23rd (MJC) and at Rumbling Kern (Howick) on 26th (AB/LB), three at Druridge Pools on 23rd, two at Boulmer, Darden Lough, Holy Island and Howick and singles at Bygate, Corby's Craggs, Lucker, Lynemouth Flash, Plenmeller Common, Stag Rocks, Warkworth and Woodhorn Pond.

**Wheatear** *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Two males at Boulmer and a male at Druridge Pools on 22nd were the first of the year (BS/IDR). Three were near Shillmoor on 23rd, when two were also at Newbiggin and a single at Hawsen Burn. From 25th-30th one to two were reported from Alkeld Hill (Cheviots), the Alwin Valley, Boulmer, Cocklawburn, Derwent Reservoir and Swallow Pond.



**Dipper** *Cinclus cinclus*

13 pairs were counted in Coquetdale during the month, with two having young in nests by 30th and three birds were seen along the Usway Burn (Upper Coquetdale) on 1st (JR/NA/IDR). One to two were at eight other sites.

**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*

30 was the peak count this month at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin). 23 were counted over 2km at Low Cocklaw (RS/TBr). One to twenty were seen at five other sites.

**Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus*

25 were at Newton Red house and 23 at Low Cocklaw during the month. 20 at High Ridge Pond (Monkseaton) on 25th (IJ). 18 at Chugdon on 24th (IJ/TB). One to nine were at 15 further sites.

**Duncock** *Prunella modularis*

Eight pairs were counted in Holywell Dene on 28th (ASJ). 15 were at Low Cocklaw (Tbr) and one to four at seven other sites.

**Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*

Four flew N at Seaton Sluice on 20th and four were at both Jesmond and Holywell Denes during the month (MJCo/ASJ). One to two were at 19 further sites this month.

**Pied Wagtail** *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

34 flew N at Seaton Sluice this month (ssp mixed or undetermined). 27 were observed moving through Holy Island on 17th and 26 there on 29th (MJC). One to 12 were seen at a further 20 locations.

Ssp *alba alba*, one to five at 11 sites with the first at Branton on 10th.



A White Wagtail on Holy Island  
29th March by Mike Carr

**Meadow Pipit** *Anthus pratensis*

Passage N at Seaton Sluice involved 245 birds from 15th. 118 were counted across Holy island on 29th, 51 here on 17th including 32 moving NW and 50 plus on 19th (MJC/AJ). Inland, 30 were braving sleet at College Valley on 8th (MJC). 25 at Holystone on 31st (DRo). 24 flew N. at Snab point on 21st and 22 arrived at St. Mary's from the S on 20th with smaller numbers at several other coastal sites during the last week (MJC/ASJ *et al.*). 12 to 20 were seen at several sites in the Simonsides and Cheviots from 19th. One to seven were at 21 further sites, with display noted at some.



**Water Pipit** *Anthus spinoletta*

One was noted throughout the month at Boulmer (MJC/BS *et al.*).



A Water Pipit at Boulmer  
11th March by Colin Bradshaw



A Water Pipit at Seaton Point  
18th March by Neil Osborne



**Rock Pipit** *Anthus petrosus*

34 were counted on Holy Island on 17th, with 13 along the N. shore on 31st (MJC). One to eight were at eight other locations this month.

**Rock Pipit** *Anthus petrosus littoralis*

14 were seen at Holy Island on 17th, with seven there on 31st (MJC/ATC). 13 birds at Boulmer on 10th were thought to be mainly of this spp. (BS).

**Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelebs*

Around 80 was a good count at Quickening Cote on 9th (JR/NA). 41 was the peak count around Low Cocklaw this month and 30 likewise at Spartylea (TBr/CT). 27 were at Big Waters on 24th (GB). One to six seen at nine other sites.

**Brambling** *Fringilla montifringilla*

At least 40 remained at Crooked Oak on 3rd (IFo). Ten were near Holburn on 7th (CH). One to three were at a further ten sites.

**Bullfinch** *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Ten came to garden feeders all month at Rothbury (TRD/JD). Five were at Hexham on 20th. One to four were seen at 21 other sites during the month.

**Greenfinch** *Chloris chloris*

About 14 spent all month at Spartylea (CT). One to eight were seen at ten more sites.

**Twite** *Carduelis flavirostris*

72 were at Cocklawburn on 5th (MHu). A flock all month at Druridge Pools was variously counted as 18 to 59 birds. 15 remained at East Chevington burn mouth on 17th(TF).

**Linnet** *Carduelis cannabina*

110 were at Whittle Dene on 4th and 100 at Longhoughton on 21st (MR/BS). 48 at Boulmer on 8th increased to 70 plus on 18th (BS/AB/LB). 46 at Cocklawburn on 5th and 42 at Holywell Dene on 29th (MHu/ASJ). One to 18 were noted at nine other sites.



A Linnet on Holy Island on 29th March by Mike Carr

**Lesser Redpoll** *Carduelis caberet*

Flocks of 50 to 60 + were noted at Longhorsely Moor and Colt Crag. One to 15 seen at twelve further sites, including at garden feeders in Hexham, Morpeth and Holystone. 11 were ringed this month at Corbridge.

**Common Redpoll** *Carduelis flammea*

One to eight were found at Ponteland (one ringed), Colt Crag, Heppburn and Slaley during the month.

**Crossbill** *Loxia curvirostra*

44 were counted at Simonside on 19th and 15 at Harwood on 11th (MJC/NFO). 13 were at Beanley on 3rd. One to 12 were noted at a further 20 sites during the month.



Crossbills in Harwood Forest. Above: a male on 11th March by Alan Davis  
and below: a female on 17th March by Chris Barlow





**Goldfinch** *Carduelis carduelis*

25 were at East Cramlington Pond on 18th (LJM). 20 + were at Spartylea all month (CT). One to 18 were seen at ten further locations this month.

**Siskin** *Carduelis spinus*

Flocks of 30 to 40 were seen at Slaley, Humshaugh and Holystone during this month. 18 to 25 were at East Cramlington, Lemington Hall and Hexham. One to 12 at 16 other places, including 11 in two small flocks seen to head N at Holy Island on 29th and at garden feeders in Morpeth all month (MJC/TD).

**Yellowhammer** *Emberiza citrinella*

12 to 26 were watched at several sites including Stourton Grange, Walbottle, Beanley, Howick, Holywell and Ellington. One to seven were at seven further sites during the month, with singing males at Holywell and two Cheviot sites.

**Reed Bunting** *Emberiza schoeniclus*

24 were at Brier Dene Farm on 4th, with 18 at nearby Crowhall Farm (Holywell) (MNC). At St. Mary's/Old Hartley, 14 singing males and two females were present on 20th (ASJ). 12 were at Druridge Pools on 23rd (IDR). Six attended feeders at Prestwick Carr on 24th (PCF). One to four were seen at 24 other locations.

**Snow Bunting** *Plectrophenax nivalis*

13 to 15 remained at the north shore of Holy Island on 10th to 17th (MJC/IK). Seven were on the beach near Monks' House on 2nd (SRB). A pair flew S at Stag Rocks on 5th (MH/AA). A single was seen at Beadnell on 1st (PA).



Snow Buntings on the Holy Island shore  
Mike Carr on 17th March

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

Two were seen at QE II CP at Ashington on 24th (CDB) with one there on 7th (PG).

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

A single hybrid was seen at Big Waters on 24th (GB).

**Mallard x Pintail** *Anas platyrhynchos x Anas acuta*

The male hybrid seen last month at Colt Crag Reservoir appeared to have moved to Cresswell Pond as seen on 20th (CP / TRD).

**Gyrfalcon x Saker** *Falco Rusticolus x Falco Cherrug*

The regular escapee was again seen, this time at the Coquet Estuary on 26th (Csa).

**Birds of Unknown Origin**

No sightings.

**LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS**

A.Allen, N.Anderson, A.H.Banks, C.D.Barlow, S.R.Barrett, R.J. & 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), A.Curry, T.Daley, I.B. & K.Davison (IBDa / KDa), 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. & P.H.Hanmer (AHa / PHa), E.Harrison (EHa), C.Hartley, M.Henry, M.Hepple (MHp), A.J.Hewitt, S.J.Hingston, M.S.Hodgson, S.T.Holliday, R.M.Holmes, M.Hutcheson (MHu), A.S.Jack, A.Janes, I.Johnson, I.Kerr, M.Kirby (MKi), C.G.Knox, G.P.Knox, D.Leat, D.Lovatt (DLo), J.P.Lumby, P.R.Massey, L.J.McDougall, M.McNeely (MMCn), D.Mckeown, A.D.Mclevy (ADMc), A.J.Newson, N.F.Osborne, C.Potter, M.Potts, R.Poyer (RPo), J.Richardson, M.Richardson, D.Robinson (DRo), I.D.Robson, L.A.Robson, J.A.Roper, C.Saunders (CSa), M.R.Smith, F.Southern (FSO), B.Steel, R.Stevens, H.Tindle, A.L.Todd, C.Tudge, D.R.Watson, T.Watson, S.Westerberg, T.Wiffen (TWi), C.Wright, K.W.York.

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).

North Northumberland Bird Club (R Poyer and J Lumby), Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

**Apologies for any accidental omissions**

Proof reading was by Mike Smith.

Mail distribution by Paul Stewart.

Tom Brewis is Data Manager.

Edited by Steve Barrett [NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com](mailto:NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com)

**RECORD SUBMISSION**

Please email records for the month to [ntbc.records@googlemail.com](mailto: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](mailto: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. 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 [ntbcorg@gmail.com](mailto:ntbcorg@gmail.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 [ntbcorg@jobentleyplus.com](mailto:ntbcorg@jobentleyplus.com) or [ntbcorg@gmail.com](mailto:ntbcorg@gmail.com)

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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://www.ntbc.org.uk)



A Pied Wagtail

Holy Island

29th March

Mike Carr

# Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2019 No 4

MONTHLY SUMMARY 2019

1st June 2019



## CONTENTS

The bulletin requires a writer for Avocets to Godwits.

The bulletin needs a data manager.

Please contact any committee member. **The Bulletin needs you!**

## CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Garganey	Single drakes at Alnmouth and East Chevington from 20th.
Green-winged Teal	Drake at Budle Bay from 6th until end of month.
Smew	The redhead remained at Widdrington Moor Lake until 13th.
Manx Shearwater	Two north at Seaton Sluice and single north off Annstead on 8th.
Red-necked Grebe	Two off Holy Island on 8th with one in full breeding plumage.
Slavonian Grebe	Up to seven off Bamburgh and Budle Pt in full breeding plumage.
Bittern	One at east side of East Chevington N Pool on 8th.
Great White Egret	One at Hedgeley GP from 2nd to 21st.
White-tailed Eagle	Immature over the Cheviot on 13th.
Avocet	Maximum count of 23 at Cresswell Pond.
Whimbrel	Maximum count of 48 at Widdrington Moor Lake on 22nd.
Curlew Sandpiper	Early migrant with one at Cresswell Pond from 22nd to 27th.
Jack Snipe	Singles at Woodhorn, Holy Island and Cresswell Pond.
Wood Sandpiper	Singles from 23rd at Druridge, Hedgeley GP and Newton.
Spotted Redshank	Wintering individual still at Budle Bay all month plus one at Hedgeley on 27th.
Little Gull	Only a single sighting with a 2nd-summer at Boulmer on 21st.
Glaucous Gull	Single first-winter at North Shields on 1st and a juvenile at Big Waters on 17th.
Iceland Gull	Singles at Tynemouth, Arcot and Big Waters until 14th.
Caspian Gull	Second winter at Colt Crag Res. on 9th.
Ring-necked Parakeet	One at East Ord near Berwick on 2nd shows spread now in county.
Hooded Crow	Notable influx in county during month.
Bearded Tit	Two at Holy Island Lough on 6th.
Waxwing	Three at Cramlington on 7th. Few sightings this winter.
Firecrest	Single at East Ord near Berwick on 11th.
Black Redstart	Singles at Boulmer, Holy Island and Mootlaw Quarry and Coanwood Common.
Water Pipit	Wintering bird remained until 4th at Seaton Pt, Boulmer.
Brambling	Enormous flock of up to 500 at Longframlington until 16th.
Mealy Redpoll	Two seen at Colt Crag Reservoir on 1st and two at Rothbury on 17th and 20th.

A male Pied Flycatcher

Dipton

28th April

Colin Bradshaw





## 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 is in September. See you there!

## FIELD TRIPS

Contact Steve Anderson [seaswan@btinternet.com](mailto:seaswan@btinternet.com)

**Saturday 22nd June 2019**

**Winnows Hill (Nightjars)**

Contact: Steve Anderson Email: [seaswan@btinternet.com](mailto:seaswan@btinternet.com)

**Sunday 18th August**

**Waders at Alnmouth (am) and Boulmer (pm)**

Leader: Tim Dean, meet at Alnmouth Dunes Car Park 9.00am.

## CLASSIFIED LIST

**Brent Goose** *Branta bernicla*

Two un-raced birds were at Holy Island on 29th (SJH).

**Canada Goose** *Branta canadensis*

A total of 14 flew N at Seaton Sluice between 9th-21st (SSWT). Peak counts were 89 at Hauxley Reserve on 14th (HRS), 80+ at Grindon Lough on 4th (MSH), 39 at Linton Ponds on 21st (CDH), 24-28 at Druridge Pools and West Stobswood Pool, and 13 at Big Waters. Two to nine were also at Arcot, Bothal and Cresswell Ponds, Castle Island, Hebron, Silverlink CP, St Mary's Wetland and West Stobswood. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Date	Observer
Dinnington	1	8	28th	PCF

**Barnacle Goose** *Branta leucopsis*

At Budle Bay-Harper's Heugh, 60 were noted on 2nd and ten+ on 14th (DF) and on 29th, 150 flew NE at dusk, and many more small flocks were heard moving after dark (GPK). One was also at Linton Ponds on 6th.

**Greylag Goose** *Anser anser*

Two flew S at Needles Eye on 5th (MHu), 198 were at Holywell Pond on 3rd (MSH), 40+ at Grindon Lough on 4th (MSH), 36 at Hauxley Reserve on 14th (HRS), 20-22 at Milkhope Lake (DM) and Spartylea (CT), and ten to 18 at Cocklawburn and Linton Ponds, Druridge Pools and Snabdaugh. One to four were also at Arcot and Bothal Ponds, Castle Island, East Chevington and Howick Hall. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Date	Observer
Derwent Reservoir	6	53 (12,10,10,9,7,5)	First brood (9 young) on 23rd	IFo.
Middle Ord Pond	1	10	28th	MHu

**Pink-footed Goose** *Anser brachyrhynchus*

1,250 at Harper's Heugh (Budle Bay) on 2nd (DF) fell to 450 by 10th (TRD/JD) and 19 by 19th (CGK/GPK), and 20 at Grindon Lough on 4th (MSH) dropped to five by 25th (SJH). One to five were also at Bell's Pond, Derwent Reservoir, East Chevington, Hauxley Reserve, Killingworth and Widdrington Moor Lakes, Silverlink CP, and Woodhorn Flashes.

**Mute Swan** *Cygnus olor*

Three flew N at Seaton Sluice on 20th (SSWT), 69 were at QEII CP on 6th (DM *et al.*), 68 at the Tweed Estuary on 21st (MHu), 53 at Howdon on 6th (CB), 34 at Killingworth Lake on 21st (LJM), 31 at Druridge Pools on 2nd (STH), and 17-28 at Bothal Pond and Hartburn Reservoir. Five to nine were also in the Castle Island area, Howick Hall and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Nesting pairs were noted at Howick Hall, West Allotment Pond and Woodhorn Flashes.

**Whooper Swan** *Cygnus cygnus*

On 2nd, 65-70 were on the sea off East Chevington before flying N (TRD/JD/NFO), 20 were in fields near Druridge Pools (STH), ten flew E over East Chevington north pool (TRD/JD) and four were at Hartburn Reservoir (JR). On 6th, 26 flew N at Whittle Dene Reservoirs (CB) and eight flew N/NE from QEII CP Lake (GB/DM/LAR). One was at Druridge Pools on 8th and three were nearby on 19th-20th (TD/DM *et al.*). The last of the month were singles at Low Buston on 20th (CSa) and Haughton Strother GP on 23rd (ALT).

**Shelduck** *Tadorna tadorna*

A total of eight moved N and 17 S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). Peak counts were at Budle Bay on 15th (DF), 80 at the Blyth Estuary on 13th (LJM), 38 at Boulmer on 19th (BS), 20-24 at the Castle Island area (CDH), Druridge Pools (DLo *et al.*) and Howdon (CB), and 11 at Boulmer. Five to eight were also at Castron, Hauxley Reserve, Holywell Pond, Spital (Newbiggin) and the Tweed Estuary, three to four at New Water Haugh and Warkworth Lane Ponds, and one to two at Arcot, Bell's and Cresswell Ponds, Big Waters, East Chevington, Holystone, Monks' House and West Stobswood Pools, Sharperton, St Mary's Wetland and Stag Rocks.

**Mandarin** *Aix galericulata*

Four (three drakes) were at Ridley Stokoe on 10th (TB) and three displayed there on 7th (CGK/GPK/PS). Also on the River North Tyne, three (two drakes) were at Bellingham on 6th (JR/NA), and single pairs at Chollerford on 23rd (ALT), Smalesmouth on 6th (JR/NA), and Redmire bridge/Tarset on 2nd and 30th (JR). A pair was on the River Coquet at Holystone on 9th (DRo). One flew from out of a tree hole by the roadside near Cambo on 6th (JR/NA).

**Garganey** *Anas querquedula*

A drake was at the Aln Estuary on 20th (MKi) and a drake was at East Chevington north pool on 22nd (NFO).

**Shoveler** *Spatula clypeata*

Two flew N at Seaton Sluice on 23rd (SSWT). Druridge Pools held a peak of 40+ on 9th (MSH), with ten still present on 28th (IDR/JF), and a count of 29 on 2nd included 27 drakes (AA). Elsewhere, 13 were at Monks' House Pool on 8th (DF), ten were at Longhirst Flash on 5th (TF/JFa), and eight at Holywell Pond and Low Newton scrape. Four were at Arcot and Linton Ponds, and one to two at Big Waters, Bothal, Cresswell, Linton and Middle Ord Ponds, Castle Island and Holy Island Lough. Display was noted at Druridge on 26th (DLo).

**Gadwall** *Mareca strepera*

Peak counts were 36 at Druridge Pools on 7th (IDR), 28 at Longhirst Flashes on 5th (NFO), 26 at Bell's Pond on 27th (GB), and 11-18 at Arcot Pond (LJM), the Blyth Estuary (LJM), Bothal Pond (TD), Castron (JD), Castle Island area (CDH), Hauxley Reserve (HRS), Linton Ponds (CDH) and Lynemouth Flash (JR). Five to eight were also at Big Waters, Howdon, Marden Quarry and Woodhorn Flashes, and four at Capheaton Lake, Dinnington, East Chevington, Hedgeley GP, Lynemouth Flash, the Wansbeck Estuary, Warkworth Lane and West Allotment Ponds, and West Sleekburn. One to two were also at Branton GP, Colt Crag Reservoirs, Holystone, Whittle Dene Reservoirs and Widdrington Moor Lake. More unusual was a drake flying along the river Breamish at Beanley on 28th (TRD/JD).



A Gadwall  
Alan Jack  
Rising Sun CP  
11th April

**Wigeon** *Mareca penelope*

One flew N at Seaton Sluice on 12th (SSWT), 126 at Derwent Reservoir on 6th fell to 11 by 22nd, the latter potential breeders (IFo), 70+ at Grindon Lough on 4th dropped to two by 25th (SJH), 38 were at Longhirst Flash on 5th (TF/JFa), 20-22 at Druridge Pools (IDR) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs (MR), and ten to 14 at Budle Bay, the Coquet Estuary and Linton Ponds. Eight were at Colt Crag Reservoir and Holy Island, and one to four at Big Waters, Castron, East Chevington, Harbottle and Warkworth Lane Ponds.



**Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*

Six flew S at Seaton Sluice between 1st-19th (SSWT). Peak counts were meagre, with 45 at Castle Island on 20th (DM/PJA), 30 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 1st (MR), 25 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 11th (MR), 21 at Druridge Pools on 28th (IDR/JF), and ten to 19 at Bothal Pond, Grindon Lough, Hauxley Reserve and Spartylea. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Date	Observer
Woodhorn Flashes	1	6	27th	GB
Big Waters	1	1	28th	GB

**Pintail** *Anas acuta*

At Seaton Sluice, eight flew N on 8th and one N on 13th (SSWT). Single pairs were at Budle Bay (CGK/GPK) and Castle Island (NFO) on 19th, and East Chevington on 15th (CDH/NFO). Two ducks were at Druridge Pools on 15th (NFO). A drake was at Budle Bay on 11th-12th (MSH/GPK), and single ducks at Cresswell Pond on 20th and 27th (GB/MSH) and, more unusually, at Hedgeley GP on 3rd-4th (TRD/JD/NFO).

**Teal** *Anas crecca*

A total of 17 flew N and six S at Seaton Sluice between 8th-14th (SSWT), 104 were still at Budle Bay on 15th (DF), 64 at Howdon on 6th dropped to four by 21st (CB), 63 were at Big Waters on 12th (AJJ per GB), 59 at Arcot Pond on 12th (STH), 24-43 at Castle Island, Colt Crag Reservoir, Druridge Pools and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, and 12-18 at Bothal Pond, the Coquet and Tweed Estuaries, Derwent Reservoir, Grindon Lough and St Mary's Wetland. Two to five were also at Bell's, Linton and Warkworth Lane Ponds, Capheaton Lake, Cragside and Hauxley Reserve.

**Green-winged Teal** *Anas carolinensis*

A drake was at Budle Bay regularly between 6th-18th (CGK/GPK *et al.*) and was often noted displaying to a female Teal.

**Pochard** *Aythya ferina*

15 were at Holywell Pond on 29th (MSH), five to seven at Big Waters, and Holywell and Linton Ponds, four at East Chevington, and one to two at Bothal Pond, and Killingworth and Widdrington Moor Lakes.

**Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula*

Peak concentrations were 40 at Caistron on 19th (JD), 32 at Linton Ponds on 21st (CDH), 20-29 at East Chevington, Hauxley Reserve, Killingworth Lake and Marden Quarry, and 12-19 at Arcot and Bothal Ponds, Castle Island, Druridge Pools, Newcastle Exhibition Park, Tynemouth boating lake and Woodhorn Flashes. Six to nine were also at Cocklawburn Pond, Derwent and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, Grindon Lough, and Widdrington Moor Lake, and one to four at Derwent Reservoir, Howick, Middle Ord Pond, Monks' House Pool, New Water Haugh and Spartylea



A drake Tufted Duck at Newton Pool  
Tim Dean on 10th April

**Scaup** *Aythya marila*

On 8th, eight flew N at Seaton Sluice on 8th (SSWT) and four N at St Mary's (JBU). One was at Widdrington Moor Lake on 5th and 15th, and two on 6th and 8th (GB/NFO). A pair was photographed at Big Waters on 9th, with the drake remaining until 16th (GB/AJJ).

**Eider** *Somateria mollissima*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 64 N and 34 S (SSWT). A group of 174 at Holy Island consisted mostly of drakes, some displaying (IK), 50 were at the Blyth Estuary on 13th (LJM), 32 at Cocklawburn (MHu) and North Shields Fish Quay (DRW), and 20-23 at Alnmouth Bay and Newbiggin. Four to eight were at Brown's Bay, Cambois, Craster, St Mary's and Stag Rocks.

**Velvet Scoter** *Melanitta fusca*

Three were off Druridge Pools on 10th (IDR).

**Common Scoter** *Melanitta nigra*

At Seaton Sluice, 87 moved N and 52 during the month (SSWT), and 35+ flew S at St Mary's on 2nd (MSH). Peak counts were 86 at Cocklawburn on 22nd (MHu), 48 offshore at Seaton Sluice on 2nd (SSWT), 42 at Meadow Haven, Berwick on 28th (MHu), and 15-24 at Alnmouth Bay, Newbiggin and Snab Point. One to six were also off Cocklawburn, Druridge, Low Newton, North Blyth, Spittal Bay and Stag Rocks.

**Long-tailed Duck** *Clangula hyemalis*

A pair were at Stag Rocks between 3rd-10th (DF/BS *et al.*).

**Goldeneye** *Bucephala clangula*

17 were on the River Tweed at New Water Haugh on 7th (MHu), 15 were at East Chevington on 19th (TF/JFa), 11 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 9th (MR), six at QEII CP Lake on 6th (GB/LAR), and three to five at Big Waters, Castron, Capheaton Lake, Castle Island, Hauxley Reserve and Warkworth Lane Ponds. One to two were also at Arcot, Cocklawburn and Cresswell Ponds, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Killingworth and Widdrington Moor Lakes, and West Ord. Eight nesting females were noted in the north of the county on 20th (PHa/AHa) and one to two drakes were at two potential breeding sites (TRD/JD).

**Smew** *Mergellus albellus*

The over-wintering 'redhead' remained at Widdrington Moor Lake until 10th (MJC/AJ/TW *et al.*).

**Goosander** *Mergus merganser*

A total of 11 flew N at Seaton Sluice during the month, including six N between 9th-11th (SSWT). A gathering of 124 birds was at West Ord on 30th (MHu). Three were at Branton GP (JD) and Beanley (TRD/JD), and one to two at Airy Holm Reservoir, Allen Banks, Castron, Castle Island, Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir, East Chevington, Elswick, Hedgeley GP, Holystone, Low Alwinton, Low Angerton, Newcastle Exhibition Park, Newbiggin (breakwater), Pauperhaugh, QEII CP Lake, Sharperton and Wark.

**Red-breasted Merganser** *Mergus serrator*

Nine flew N and two S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), and one moved N at St Mary's on 8th (MSH). Largest groups involved 13 at East Chevington on 5th (JR/ASH), ten at Holy Island on 8th (IK), nine at the Blyth Estuary on 13th (LJM), eight at Castle Island on 20th (DM/PJA), and seven (including two displaying pairs) at Widdrington Moor Lake on 10th (MJC/AJ/TW). Three were at Budle Bay, and one to two at Castle Island, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Spittal Bay and the Wansbeck Estuary.

**Black Grouse** *Tetrao tetrix*

Only one record was received this month, a single male at Allenheads on 29th (CB).

A Black Grouse at Allenheads  
29th April by Colin Bradshaw

**Red Grouse** *Lagopus lagopus*

Ten were in the Harthope Valley on 11th and a single bird was at Hepple Whitfield on 22nd (TRD/JD).

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

Ten were in the Harthope Valley on 11th, eight at Hazletonrigg on 28th (TRD/JD), two at Mounces Viewpoint (Kielder) and singles at Big Waters NWT, Corby's Crag (Edlingham) and Pigdon. In the Budle Bay area the species was described as "commoner this year than most" (CGK).





**Grey Partridge** *Perdix perdix*

Well reported this month with records from at least 15 localities. Three pairs were at Longhoughton on 28th (BS), up to four birds were at Boulmer, Spartylea and St Mary's Wetland and two or pairs were at Arcot Pond, Big Waters NWT, Cresswell Pond, Drift Café (Cresswell), Druridge Pools NR, East Chevington, Ellington, Hadston T-junction, Hemscott Hill (Cresswell), Howick, Paxton Dene (Morpeth) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Single birds were at Lesbury and Seahouses.

**Pheasant** *Phasianus colchicus*

Numbers attracted to Druridge Pools NR were reduced this month, no doubt due to breeding dispersal, however a minimum of 12 were still present on 7th (IDR). Ten were at Spartylea all month (CT), four at Castle Island (R. Wansbeck) and one to three were seen at Howick, Linton Burn, Linton Flats and St Mary's Wetland. One male found dead at the entrance road to Howdon Wetland was the observer's first sighting there in 5 years (CB).

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

Following a good March for numbers at Seaton Sluice, the monthly total of 19 (12N and seven S) in 41 hours of watching was well below average for April (SSWT). Small numbers were seen elsewhere with five counted from Stag Rocks-Budle Point on 7th (MJC/ADM) and one to two seen at Brown's Bay (Whitley Bay), Calot Shad (Tweed Estuary), Cocklawburn, Druridge Pools, Dunstanburgh, Emmanuel Head (Holy Island), Snab Point (Cresswell), St Mary's and Tynemouth.

**Black-throated Diver** *Gavia arctica*

One flew N past Seaton Sluice on 9th (SSWT) and one headed S past St Mary's on 14th (ASJ).

**Great Northern Diver** *Gavia immer*

One was at Stag Rocks on 2nd and 3rd (DF) and a single flew S past St Mary's on 15th (MSH).

**Fulmar** *Fulmarus glacialis*

Passage was noted at Seaton Sluice with a peak of 50N in two hours on 10th (SSWT), at St Mary's with 29 N in one hour during the morning of 8th (MSH) - and lower numbers there on other dates - and at Annstead peaking at 16N on 8th (DF). Reports from breeding sites included 58 on cliffs at Howick on 15th (JAR), 24 pairs together on cliffs at Holy Island (TD), approx. 30 birds at Needles Eye (Berwick) on 5th (IDR/MHu), 12 birds using three ledges at Sandy Bay on 19th (CDH) and nearby ten reported on cliffs at Spittal Point (Newbiggin) on 6th which may have been an overlap (DM/GB/LAR). Elsewhere, six were at Stag Rocks, four were on cliffs at Marshall Meadows (Berwick), four also on cliffs at St Mary's and one to three were at several other locations.

**Manx Shearwater** *Puffinus puffinus*

The only sightings were of two heading N past Seaton Sluice on 8th (SSWT) and very likely one of these birds which was seen later during its journey past Annstead (Seahouses) on the same day (DF).

**Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

The peak count was six at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) (TF/JFa). Four were at Howick Hall, Swallow Pond and Woodhorn Flashes. One to three were at Arcot Pond, Bank's Pond, Branton GP, Castle Island, Colt Crag, East Chevington, Grindon Lough, Hauxley NWT, Linton Ponds, Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay), Middle Ord pond (Berwick) and Milkhope Lake.

**Red-necked Grebe** *Podiceps grisegena*

The pair regularly seen just off the Heugh at Holy Island were still present on 8th with one now in almost full breeding plumage (IK).

**Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus*

Widely reported this month. At least nine were at Big Waters NWT on 14th (GB), six were at East Chevington on 29th (TRD/JD), five were at both Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 11th (MR) and Derwent Reservoir on 19th (IFo) and one to four were at Airy Holm Reservoir, Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Branton GP, Castron, Colt Crag, Druridge Pools, Killingworth Lake, Linton Ponds, QE11 CP, Seaton Sluice (on sea) and Widdrington Moor Lake.

**Slavonian Grebe** *Podiceps auritus*

Up to seven were still in the Stag Rocks-Budle Point area on 7th and all in summer plumage (MJC/ADM). At least one was still there on 25th (GPK).

**Black-necked Grebe** *Podiceps nigrocollis*

The pair that arrived back at the regular breeding site in SE Northumberland last month were still present up to 14th (MN/GPK).

**Bittern** *Botaurus stellaris*

One was seen at East Chevington on 8th (TRD).

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

Five birds moved S past Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). Counts from heronries included eight birds nesting at Howick Hall (Pha/Aha), eight nests at Yarrow Heugh (Tweed Estuary) (MHu), an estimated six nests at Houxty (Bellingham) (AJ) and three birds standing on nests in trees above Warkworth Weir (MSH). Individual sightings of six or fewer birds came from Arcot Pond, Airy Holm Reservoir, Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Castle Island, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools NR, Northumbria University, the River Wansbeck, St Mary's Wetland, Wark, West Sleekburn Flash and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.



Herons in April . Above: at St. Mary's by Jack Bucknall on 23rd  
and below: at Holywell Dene on 10th by Alan Jack



**Great White Egret** *Ardea alba*

One was at Hedgeley GP, first seen on 2nd and remained until at least 21st (IBDa/KDa/NNBC). It proved elusive for one observer who only connected with it at the fourth attempt! (TRD).

**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*

Lindisfarne NNR held up to five birds in the Fenham Mill area on 28th, three were at Druridge Pools NR on 20th (DM/PJA) whilst one to two were at Big Waters NWT, Branton GP, Cresswell Pond, Ellington, Gosforth Park NR, Gosforth Subsidence Pond, Holy Island, Holystone, North Seaton Weir (R. Wansbeck), the R. Coquet at Sharperton and at Sleek Burn.

**Gannet** *Morus bassanus*

Significant movements were only observed during the first half of the month with only smaller numbers later. On 3rd, 90 flew N at Stag Rocks (DF), 253 flew N past Annstead on 8th (DF) with similar numbers N at Seaton Sluice then and on 9th (SSWT), 260 per hour passed Saltpan Rocks (Cocklawburn) also on 9th (MHu), on 16th 263 flew S past Cocklawburn in 25 minutes (DF) and on 17th Annstead recorded 187 N and 168 S (DF). Smaller totals were sighted from other coastal locations.



**Shag** *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

A very low monthly total reported from Seaton Sluice with only five N and 12S recorded all month (SSWT). At Berwick eight were at Needles Eye on 5th, including one bird sitting on a nest, whilst eight were also at the Meadow Haven roost on 28th (MHu). Six were seen at Stag Rocks, five at Saltpan Rocks (Cocklawburn), three at Craster and Blyth South Harbour, two at Spittal Bay (Berwick) and singles were at Calot Shad (Tweed Estuary) and East Chevington.

**Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

No significant movements were recorded at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). The roost at New Water Haugh (R. Tweed) peaked at 28 on 5th and included one continental *sinensis* race bird (MHu). 14 were at Drewent Reservoir on 6th, 13 at East Chevington North Pool on 20th and ten or fewer birds were at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Brown's Bay, Castle Island, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Hauxley NWT, Spittal Outflow (Newbiggin) and Woodhorn Flashes.

**Osprey** *Pandion haliaetuss*

Two birds were seen at distance at Elf Kirk (Kielder) on 14th (TRD/JD). Single birds were reported from Colt Crag Reservoir on 1st and 21st (MR), Blanchland on 4th (IK), Derwent Reservoir on 6th (EC/DWN/RMH) and 7th (IFo) and at Kielder Dam on 6th (JR/NR).

**Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus*

Two birds, a male at The Snook and a female at the Straight Lonnen, were on Holy Island on 10th (ADM) and two females were at Ellington on 28th (TB). Single birds were reported from 20 sites including birds S at Seaton Sluice Watch Tower on 5th and 20th (SSWT).

**Goshawk** *Accipiter gentilis*

Two birds were noted at three different sites on 9th (DRo), 12th (DRo) and 21st (CGK/GPK). Single birds were seen at Kielder on 7th (CGK/GPK/PS/PRC) and 18th (STH), Harwood Forest on 20th (GB) and a probable male was seen flying S over the observer's garden at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 25th (TD).

**Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*

Once again most of the sightings this month came from East Chevington with a male and two cream crowns there on 22nd (MN) and up to two females and a male seen on several dates (TF/JFa *et al.*). Away from the above site other single birds were at Druridge Pools NR on 7th (IDR), a male flew E along the north shore at Holy Island on 14th (MJC), a male was seen at Low Buston (Warkworth) and Warkworth on 17th and 20th (CSa). A brown bird flew S at Boulmer on 20th (BS), a female was at Druridge Pools NR on 23rd (TRD/JD) and a 1st-year bird circled the pond at West Hartford and soared away to the North on 27th (STH).

**Hen Harrier** *Circus cyaneus*

A female was seen flying N near Stamfordham on 13th (ALT) and ringtails were at two other sites (DF/IK).

**Red Kite** *Milvus Milvus*

Two birds were noted at Carterway Heads on 2nd and 5th (IFo), Derwent Reservoir on 18th (ASJ) and at Whitley Chapel on 25th (TW/AJ/AJN/ASH/IK). Single birds were at Kiln Pit Hill on 4th (IFo), Sleafy Forest on 9th (IFo), Derwent Reservoir and Kiln Pit Hill over the A68 on 10th (IFo), Riding Mill on 12th (EC/SJB), Carterway Heads on 16th (IFo), Derwent Reservoir on 17th (IFo), Flying S at Low Buston (Warkworth) on 20th (CSa) and on 22nd one flew S low over the road near Falstone (Kielder) (TW/AJ/AJN/ASH).

**White-tailed Eagle** *Haliaeetus albicilla*

On 13th an immature flew E over The Cheviot (MJC/KVB).

**Common Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*

Six birds were recorded at Derwent Reservoir on 5th (IFo), four were interacting in the air together near Stamfordham on 23rd (EC) while three birds were at Scremerston on 16th (DF) and at West Hartford on 25th (TB). One to two birds were seen at 26 sites including a bird in off the sea at Holy Island on 30th (SJH).

**Water Rail** *Rallus aquaticus*

Four birds were at East Chevington Pools on 3rd (IF), two there on 19th (TB) and 20th (DM/GB/LAR), and two were at Arcot Pond on 9th (STH). Single birds were either seen or heard at Arcot Pond, Big Waters NWT, East Chevington, Hedgeley GP, Holy Island and at Prestwick Carr.

**Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*

Silverlink Biodiversity Park (North Shields) had 11 birds on 21st (LJM). Nine were at Druridge Pools NR on 28th (IDR/JF) and eight were seen at Linton Ponds on 21st (CDH). One to six birds were at Castle Island, Druridge Pools NR, Hauxley NWT, Jesmond Dene (Newcastle), St Mary's Wetland, Spartylea, Tyneview Park (Benton) and West Sleekburn.

**Coot** *Fulica atra*

The highest count this month came from Linton Ponds with 19 birds present on 21st (CDH), Killingworth Lake had a peak count of 18 birds on also on 21st (LJM) and 13 were at Bothal Pond on 20th (TD). One to seven were noted at Arcot Pond, Budle Bay, Druridge Pools NR, Grindon Lough, Howick Hall, Hauxley NWT, Monks' House Pool and St Mary's Wetland.

**Oystercatcher** *Haematopus ostralegus*

Breeding records came from Redesmouth where, on 28th, a pair with three eggs was discovered (IRD, DM). Displaying birds were reported from West Hartford on 30th (TB), a pair were at West Stobswood Pool on 9th (MSH) and other pairs were reported from Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) on 11th (TD) and at Upper Coquetdale, Bygate on 23rd (AB/LB). The largest count reported was of 47 on 14th at Hauxley NWT (HRS) with 45 in the Alnmouth Estuary on 28th (RPo) and 31 at Derwent Reservoir on 8th (IFo). On 26th 20 were at Spartylea (CT), 17+ at Cresswell Pond on 26th (DLo), 15 at Craster on 2nd (IRD) and 10 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 11th (MR). Smaller counts were reported from a variety of sites.

**Avocet** *Recurvirostra avosetta*

Records were dominated by the now well-established breeding site at Cresswell Pond. Through the month counts at this site varied from as low as two to the peak of 23 on 23rd (IF). Other locations with reports were Kitty Brewster in Blyth (22 on 16th, TB), Blyth Estuary (20 on 23rd, LJM), East Chevington (two on 4th, STH), two flying south at Ellington, Warkworth Lane on 19th (TB), two in the Coquet Estuary on 21st (CSa), two at Castle island on 20th (DM) and one at Druridge Pools on 20th (DM).

**Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus*

Sixty birds (30 pairs) were noted at Blanchland Moor on 18th (ASJ), 26 were at Druridge Pools NR on 7th (IRD) and 17+, all in two recently tilled and planted (bean) fields, with 8-9 'sitting' birds, were reported from Big Waters NWT on 28th (GB). Druridge Pools NR had 14 birds on 28th (IDR/JF) and counts of ten were made on various dates at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Davysiel (Otterburn MoD range), Hauxley NWT and Spartylea. Counts of one to six came from Arcot Pond, Hebron (Morpeth), Holystone, Howdon, Milkhope Lake (Blagdon), Seaton Sluice Watch Tower and Southward Edge (Longhorsley).

**Golden Plover** *Pluvialis apricaria*

Spartylea (East Allendale) reported 750-850 "northern" birds on 5th (EC) while 700 were at Longhirst Flash on 7th (TF/JFa). Approximately 250 birds were seen at Sweethope Lough on 6th (JR/NA), the same number was reported from Newton Point on 10th (TRD/JD) and 100 were at Prestwick Carr on 10th (PCF). Boulmer had a count of 67 on 11th (BS) and 56 birds in full breeding plumage were seen at Holburn on 10th (SVM/AJM). Counts of nine or fewer came from Derwent Reservoir and Holy Island.

**Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola*

A single record of 80+ came from Budle Bay on 21st (CGK/GPK).

**Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula*

Records of breeding were limited to a pair near Low Newton on 14th with the female incubating four eggs (MJC) and a pair displaying at New Water Haugh (Berwick) on 21st (MHu). All other records were of no more than seven birds and came from Boulmer, Castle Island, Colt Crag Reservoir, Cramlington (Northumberlandia), Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools NR, East Chevington, Hedgeley GP, Holywell Pond NR and Widdrington Moor Lake.

**Little Ringed Plover** *Charadrius dubius*

Records were submitted for eight sites widely spread through the county. The largest count of eight came from the south east. Three pairs were reported from the south west and display was seen west of Alnwick.

**Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus*

Passage was underway throughout the month with the largest count of 48 reported from Widdrington Moor Lake on 22nd (NFO). Druridge Pool had a peak count of 14 on 23rd (IF), four birds were noted flying N from Seaton Sluice Watch Tower on 20th-28th, a low total for the month and counts of three came from Budle Bay on 22nd, St Mary's on 28th and East Chevington on 29th. Smaller counts were from Belford Moor, Branton GP, Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir, East Sleekburn, Holy Island, Howdon, Howick, Linden Hall (Longhorsley), Prestwick Carr, St Mary's, R. Tweed (New Water Haugh) and Tynemouth.

**Curlew** *Numenius arquata*

The largest count of 191 was from Boulmer on 8th (BS). East Cramlington LNR reported 133 on 19th (STH) and 108 were seen at Druridge Pools NR on 7th (IRD). On 3rd 97 birds in one field at Holywell Pond NR were observed (MSH), 90 were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 11th (IK) and the same number were seen in Alnmouth Estuary on 18th (RPo). Counts of 65-76 were made at Coquet Estuary (Amble), Druridge Pools NR, the Straight Lonnen on Holy Island and at Howick. Counts of 45 and less came from Allendale, Belford Moor, Blanchland Moor, Blyth Estuary, Buston Links (Allendale), Castle Island, Cocklawburn, Hauxley NWT, Holystone, Linton Flats, Longhorsley Moor, Monks' House Pool, Newbiggin, Paxton Dean (Longhorsley), Rothbury, near Shotleyfield (Airy Holm Reservoir), Spartylea, Thrunton Woods and Yarrow Slake (Tweed Estuary).

**Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica*

The Holy Island flock of 120 were all still in winter plumage on 8th (IK). Three were reported from Cresswell Pool with two in summer plumage and two were seen on Castle Island on 20th.

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

Druridge Pools had 15 on 10th (IRD) and counts of one to nine were made at Aln (Lesbury), Boulmer, Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond, Hedgeley GP, Holy Island, Howdon, R. Wansbeck (Castle Island) and Warkworth Gut.



**Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*

Significantly lower numbers were reported this month as birds departed for breeding areas. The maximum counts were 29 at Cresswell Pond on 22nd (TF/JFa), 24 at Howick on 21st (JAR), 14 at St Mary's wetland on 19th (IJ) and 11 at Snab Point (Cresswell) on 27th (GB). One-eight were seen at Cocklawburn, Hauxley NWT, Newbiggin and Stag Rocks.

**Knot** *Calidris canutus*

Only three reports were received this month with 14 at Boulmer on 8th, ten at Newbiggin on 2nd and one at Seaton Sluice on 1st (BS/SSWT).

**Curlew Sandpiper** *Calidris ferruginea*

An early spring migrant was at Cresswell Pond from 22nd-27th (NFO/MN/TB *et al.*).

**Sanderling** *Calidris alba*

A large group remained at Boulmer from last month with 139 being reported on 7th (BS). Birds were present in Druridge Bay with the highest count being 60 at Chevington Burn mouth on 19th (TD) There were reports of one-20 received from other locations in the Druridge Bay area during the month. Other counts were 50 at Budle Bay on 21st (CGK/GPK), 22 at Cocklawburn on 11th (MHu) and 21 at St Mary's wetland on 19th (IJ). Four were at both Sandham Bay (Holy Island) on 6th and Spittal on 3rd.

**Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*

There were few reports, as most wintering birds had moved on with the peak count being 50 at Budle Bay on 21st (CGK/GPK). Cresswell Pond attracted ten on 22nd reducing to one by 29th (TF/JFa/DLo *et al.*). The only other reports involved six at Boulmer on 24th, four at Hauxley NWT on 14th and two at Grindon Lough on 25th.

**Purple Sandpiper** *Calidris maritima*

Birds were present at Stag Rocks up to 13th with the highest number being 62 on 13th (TD). The maximum at Boulmer was 25 on 8th (BS). At Newbiggin 14 were seen on 2nd at Beacon Point and three at the breakwater on 27th (BS/GB). Elsewhere, 12 were at Cocklawburn on 11th, six at Seaton Sluice on 1st, five at Tynemouth on 12th and three at Howick on 29th.

**Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola*

There were five reports of singles at Colt Crag Reservoir on 1st (MR), roding at Arcot Hall Golf Course on 11th (STH), Arcot Pond on 12th (STH), roding at Sleafy Hall on 16th (RMH) and Spartylea on 20th (CT).

**Jack Snipe** *Lymnocyrtus minimus*

One was seen at Woodhorn pool on 2nd (BS) and a single was at the Snook on Holy Island on 17th (ADM). One was present at Cresswell Pond from 26th-27th (IRD/DLo/GB).

**Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago*

The highest count came from West Hartford with 18 on 14th (LJM). The peak number at Holy Island was seven on 18th including a 'drumming and chipping' bird at the Snook (MJC/ADM/SJH). St Mary's wetland attracted a maximum of four on 14th (IJ) and four were displaying at Allenheads on 29th (CB). Three were at Prestwick Carr (including display) on 7th (PCF), Cresswell Pond on 26th (TB) and Druridge Pools on 20th (DM). One-two were seen at Big Waters, Derwent Reservoir, Linton Pond, Rothbury (display) and Spartylea.

A Snipe  
Allenheads  
19th April  
Colin Bradshaw



**Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos*

The first arrival was at Hedgeley GP on 7th (IBDa/KDa) followed by singles at Rothbury on 12th (MKi), Colt Crag Reservoir on 15th (MR), Holystone on 17th (DRo) and two at Derwent Reservoir on 18th (ASJ). Birds then became more widespread both inland and at the coast with four at Hedgeley GP by 21st (IBDa/KDa) and three at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 26th (MR). At Seaton Sluice, four flew N between 21st-29th (SSWT). From 19th-30th two were reported from Caistron, Cocklawburn Pond, Cresswell Pond, Harthope Valley, Holywell Pond and Kielder Dam. Singles were noted at Bell's Pond (Cresswell), Big Waters, Budle Bay, Bygate Hall, East Chevington, Northumberlandia (Cramlington), Twizell, Upper Coquetdale and Wark.

**Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*

Single birds were present in regular winter haunts at Hedgeley GP from 3rd-21st (TRD/JD/IBDa/KDa) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 11th (MR). Other birds were at Newton Pool on 10th (TRD/JD) and Berwick Hill Bridge on 17th (AHB).

**Redshank** *Tringa totanus*

A high-tide roost at Coxon Tower (Berwick) contained 116 birds on 2nd (MHu) and the maximum at Budle Bay was 111 on 1st (DF). The River Blyth Estuary held 95 on 13th (LJM) and 52 were at Yarrow Slake (River Tweed Estuary) on 25th (MHu). The high-tide roost at St Mary's wetland attracted 50 on 7th (IJ), 44 were at the River Wansbeck on 19th (CDH), 26 at Hauxley NWT on 14th (HRS), 25 at Castle Island on 20th (DM) and 20 at Cresswell Pond on 15th (CDH). One-12 were at Big Waters (a scarce visitor at this site), Blanchland Moor (displaying), Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough, Holystone, Monks' House Pool, Prestwick Carr, Spartylea and Stag Rocks.

**Wood Sandpiper** *Tringa glareola*

A light spring passage was noted in the last week of the month involving singles at Druridge Pools from 23rd-29th (TRD/JD/IF *et al.*), Low Newton on 26th (BS) and Hedgeley GP on 27th (TRD/JD/KDa/IBDa).

**Spotted Redshank** *Tringa erythropus*

The regular adult was present at Budle Bay all month (CGK/GPK) and a first spring record for Hedgeley GP was on 27th (TRD/JD/KDa/IBDa).

**Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*

Spring passage increased with single birds at Druridge Pools on 7th (IDR) and Low Newton on 10th (MJC). Two were seen at Budle Bay from 19th-24th. Further singles appeared at Beal Pont (Lindisfarne NNR) on 22nd, Colt Crag Reservoir on 24th, Castle Island on 27th and Quarry House Cottage (Newbiggin) on 30th.

**Kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla*

In the River Tweed Estuary on 25th, 340 were in the gull roost and on 5th 300 were on the sea at Needles Eye (MHu). Elsewhere, 110 fed at Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) on 21st (IK) and smaller numbers of 35-50 were recorded at Brown's Bay, Howick and St Mary's Island. An unusual record was an adult at Colt Crag Reservoir on 3rd (MR).

**Black-headed Gull** *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

The largest count was 201 in the River Blyth Estuary on 12th (LJM) and counts of 100-150 came from Castle Island, Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough and Hauxley NWT (DM/SJH/IDR/HRS). Smaller groups of 10-45 were at seven other widespread localities.

**Little Gull** *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

An immature at Boulmer on 21st (BS) was the only record.

**Mediterranean Gull** *Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus*

Two adults were at Newbiggin on 8th (STH) and a single remained there on 30th (TB). A pair flew into Holywell Pond on 19th (ASJ) and an immature was at Boulmer on 21st (BS).

**Common Gull** *Larus canus*

Large flocks of 600-650 were noted at Bellingham and near Hexham racecourse on 5th-7th (CB/EC) and 500+, all immatures, fed offshore at Boulmer on 27th (BS). Smaller counts, all recorded during the first half of the month, were 200-300 at Bellingham and Shotleyfield, 190 moving S at Seaton Sluice, 140-170 at Colt Crag Reservoir and Newbiggin and 50 at Druridge Pools and Seahouses.

**Great Black-backed Gull** *Larus marinus*

The maximum counts were 16 in the River Tweed Estuary (MHu) and 12 at Colt Crag Reservoir (MR) with up to five at three other localities.

**Glaucous Gull** *Larus hyperboreus*

An immature bird first seen last month was again at the North Shields Fish Quay on 1st (MN/DRW). A 1st-summer bird on the island at Big Waters on 17th was a rare bird for this site being the first record since 1987 (AJJ/GB).

**Iceland Gull** *Larus glaucoides*

A 3rd-summer bird was on the Black Midden Rocks (Tynemouth) on 1st (DRW). The 2nd-summer bird was again at Big Waters sporadically until 28th (AJJ/GB) and was probably the same individual seen at Arcot Pond on 13th (LJM/STH).



**Herring Gull** *Larus argentatus argenteus*

The River Blyth Estuary held 208 on 13th (LJM) and regular counts at Colt Crag Reservoir recorded 4-165 on various dates throughout (MR). Counts of 10-40 came from Berwick (Needles Eye), Castle Island, Craster, Derwent Reservoir, Linton Flats, Newbiggin and St Mary's Wetland.,

**\*Caspian Gull** *Larus cachinnans*

A 2nd-winter bird was recorded at Colt Crag Reservoir on 9th (MR).

**Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus fuscus graelsii*

Double-figure counts of 15 and 11 came from Derwent Reservoir and Grindon Lough respectively (Fo/SJH) and four to six were recorded at Bellingham, Colt Crag Reservoir, Cramlington, Ellington, Jesmond Dene and Shotleyfield (Airy Holm Reservoir). One to three were at nine localities elsewhere.

**Sandwich Tern** *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

At Seaton Sluice the first birds were seen on the late date of 8th when eight flew N (SSWT) and on the same day at Seahouses, 37 flew N (DF). Earlier sightings were 16 at Holy Island (St Cuthbert's Island) on 7th (MJC/ADM), three at Seahouses on 5th (per NNBC), and singles on 3rd and 4th at Cresswell (Snab Point) (MJC) and St Mary's Island (JBu) respectively. Sightings at other localities from 8th onwards were ten-15 at Bamburgh, Berwick (Spital Bay), East Chevington and Low Newton with one to seven at Cambois, Cocklawburn, Cresswell Pond and Snab Point, Druridge Pools, Seahouses and Warkworth.

**Common Tern** *Sterna hirundo*

The first returning birds of the year were two at East Chevington on 15th (NFO) where the numbers increased to a maximum 39 on 23rd (IF *et al.*). At Seahouses one was present on 17th (DF) and one flew N at Gosforth Garden Village on 19th (MJC). Elsewhere, on dates 20th-30th, 12 were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs, ten at Killingworth Lake, eight at St Mary's Island and one to three at Big Waters, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools and Holywell Pond.

**Auk** *sp*

At Seaton Sluice, 40 N in three hours on 8th was the only movement of any note (SSWT) and at St Mary's Island 30+ moved S in half an hour on 15th (MSH).

**Common Guillemot** *Uria aalge*

Apart from 160 roosting on the sea on 5th at Needles Eye (Berwick) (Mhu/IDR), the only records were of one to four at nine other localities mainly on the Bamburgh-Berwick stretch of coastline.

**Razorbill** *Alca torda*

Up to 18 roosted on the sea at Needles Eye on 5th (MHu/IDR) and one or two were seen at Berwick (Spittal Bay) and Bamburgh on two other dates.

**Rock Dove** *Columba livia*

A peak of 43 at Stakeford Railway Bridge on 20th (DM/PJA), 25 at Magdelene Fields-Needles Eye (Berwick) on 5th (IDR), seven at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 6th and present at Jesmond Dene.

**Stock Dove** *Columba oenas*

On 7th 21 were at Longhoughton (BS), 13 at Old Hartley on 16th (MSH), eight at Big Waters on 7th & 16th (GB) and six at Spartylea during the month (CT). Five were at Bell's Farm (Cresswell) on 23rd, four at Cresswell Pond on 9th and at Jesmond Dene on 20th with one to three at 13 other widespread localities.

**Woodpigeon** *Columba palumbus*

High counts of 120 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 12th (MR), 82 at St Mary's wetland on 19th (IJ), 80 at Ridley Stokoe on 2nd (JR) and 50 at Paxton Dene (Longhorsley) (AB/LB). One to 20 were at ten other locations.

**Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto*

Poorly reported with a maximum of six at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) during the month (RS), two at Craster on 2nd and two at Spartylea (IDR/CT).

**Cuckoo** *Cuculus canorus*

The first calling at Harbottle Lake on 19th (DRo), Harthope on 21st (SVM/AJM) and at Spartylea from 27th (CT). On 28th single birds were at Beanley, Harbottle and Low Alwinton, one at Coe Crag (Thrunton) on 29th, North Yardhope (Hepple) and Derwent Reservoir on 30th with possibly two at Bewick Moor on the same date.

**Barn Owl** *Tyto alba*

Two at Spartylea was the only multiple report during the month (CT) with singles at Bell's Farm (Cresswell) and Carterway Heads on 2nd, at Derwent Reservoir on 4th and 19th, Alnwick on 9th, Low Newton and Howick on 10th, Widdrington on 21st and on three dates at Cresswell Pond from 21st to 26th. One found dead at Howick on 8th had been ringed at Shipley (JAR).

**Tawny Owl** *Strix aluco*

Again the only multiple report was of two at Spartylea during the month (CT) with one at Big Waters NWT on 7th, Crooked Oak (Carterway Heads) on 8th, Howick and Harbottle on 11th, Hauxley Ringing Station on 14th & 18th, Preston Cemetery (North Shields) on 19th, Derwent Reservoir, Kyloe and Holystone on 21st, near Berwick Hill (Ponteland) on 22nd and Longhorsley on 29th.

**Little Owl** *Athene noctua*

One of the regulars was at Druridge Pools on 19th and 29th (TD/TRD/JD) and one was heard on numerous evenings at Shiremoor during the month (CGK).

*Asio sp*

One was at Newcastle Airport on 30th (IF).

**Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus*

Two were regularly at Holy Island from 10th to 30th (RPo/IBDa/KDa/MJC/SJH) and at Prestwick Carr on 20th (PCF). Singles were at the aforementioned sites regularly and at Widdrington Moor Lake on 10th and 19th, north off Seaton Sluice mobbed by gulls on 21st (SSWT), at West Hartford on 24th and Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 28th.

**Swift** *Apus apus*

The only report of one was at Big Waters NWT on 29th (GB *per* AJJ).

**Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis*

A pair was on the river at Hedgeley GP on 19th (TRD) with singles on rocks at Seaton Sluice on 20th (SSWT) and Branton GP on 23rd (JD).

**Great Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos major*

There was a high count of seven at Dipton on 20th (MJC), four at Spartylea during the month (CT) with two at Humford Mill (Bedlington) on 3rd, Howick on 10th and Jesmond Dene on 20th. Singles were at nine other locations.

**Green Woodpecker** *Picus viridis*

Two called at Bakethin Dam on 2nd and 6th with singles reported from a further 13 locations, being Alnwick Moor, Arcot Hall GC, Houxty (Bellingham), Derwent Reservoir, Dilston, Gosforth Park, Harwood Forest, Letah Wood (Hexham), Kielder, Langleeford, Prestwick Carr, Rising Sun CP (Wallsend) and Wark.

**Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*

Up to three birds were seen at Needles Eye (Berwick) on 5th involving two males disputing territory and a pair (MHu/IDR). Two birds were also at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 11th (MR), a pair was also at the mouth of the Chevington Burn on 20th (DM/PJA) and two were on Holy Island on 22nd (ADM). Single birds were noted at 11 sites during the Month.



A Kestrel at Albermarle barracks on the Military road by Alan Worthington



**Merlin** *Falco columbarius*

Only two records this month with one unsexed bird flying N at St Mary's Island on 5th (AJ) and a female/juv at Beal Point (Lindisfarne NNR) on 23rd (NFO).

**Peregrine** *Falco peregrinus*

Only single birds were recorded with birds on Holy Island on 6th, 7th, 9th & 22nd involving a juvenile, an adult male and unsexed bird (MJC/ADM/SJH). On or near the coast birds were at Howdon (CB) and at Longhirst Flash (TF/JFa), both on 17th, while birds were seen inland at five suitable breeding sites.

**Ring-necked Parakeet** *Psittacula krameri*

One was at Ord House CP (Berwick) on 2nd and 5th (MHu).

**Jay** *Garrulus glandarius*

Seven were in Gosforth Park NR on 20th (MJC), six at Howick on 14th (JAR) with four at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 12th, East Sleekburn on 19th and Eshott on 22nd. Three were at Arcot Pond and West Hartford on two dates with one to two at 15 widespread localities.

**Magpie** *Pica pica*

On 19th six were at St Mary's Wetland (IJ) with three there on 14th, four at Druridge Pools NR on 7th (IDR) and three at Jesmond Dene. A pair nested in the observer's garden at Fulbeck (Morpeth) and singles were at Linton Burn and Spartylea.

**Jackdaw** *Corvus monedula*

Peak count of 40 was at Spartylea on 29th (CT), 12 at Howick on 2nd and 11 at Craster on the same date (IDR) with three at Jesmond Dene on 5th.

**Rook** *Corvus frugilegus*

Peak activity was around rookeries with 18 active nests at Cramlington Village and 17 at the Blackbird PH (Ponteland) (DM). 18 were at Craster on 2nd (IDR) and eight the high count at Spartylea (CT). Regarded as a rarity in Tynemouth, three north on 20th and two south on 22nd with one at Holy Island Village on 20th, also a rarity at that location (DRW/IK).

**Carrion Crow** *Corvus corone*

There were record movements at Seaton Sluice with monthly totals of 163N and 76S including 62N and 45 S on the 20th many of these birds coming in off the sea (SSWT). The peak count was of 42 at North Shields Fish Quay on 19th (CB), 12 at Toft House (Otterburn Ranges) on 6th and Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 7th (JR/NA/DM). Ten were at Druridge Pools NR on 7th and St Mary's Wetland on 14th and 19th with one to four at nine other locations, many nesting.



Close up to a Carrion Crow at Tynemouth on 19th April

Colin Bradshaw

**Hooded Crow** *Corvus cornix*

On 20th three were at St Mary's with two birds coming in off the sea and one already present in ploughed field since 16th (JBU/MNC/IJ). One was at Linton Ponds on 6th and Linton on 14th (GB/LAR/DM/STH) with more movement on 20th being one S at Boulmer and one N at Tynemouth with one W at Holy Island on 22nd (ADM).



A Hooded Crow at St. Mary's  
Duncan Watson on 19th April

**Raven** *Corvus corax*

Three pairs were at Makendon - Chew Green (Upper Coquetdale) on 19th (TD), three at Colt Crag Reservoir on 9th (MR) with two at Craster, Harbottle, Harthope Valley, Kyloe, Riddlees Cairn and Sweethope Lough. Singles were at a further six locations.

**Coal Tit** *Periparus ater*

Up to 8 at Spartylea during the month (CT), two at Jesmond Dene on 5th and Warkworth Lane Ponds (Ellington) on 6th with singles at Howick on 2nd and in full song at Spital Dene and Newbiggin on 17th.

**Marsh Tit** *Poecile palustris*

At least four territories were found at Tetard NZ19S East Linden on 13th and a pair plus one at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 8th (NFO). Two were at Rothbury old railway line on 25th and Fontburn area on 30th with singles at Linden Hall regularly and Newton Red House, Nunnykirk and Warkworth.

**Willow Tit** *Poecile montanus*

Six territories were noted in tetrad NZ19S East Linden – Paxton Dene on 13th with two additional pairs found on 15th (NFO). Two pairs at Big Waters on 7th (GB) and at Holywell Dene on 12th (ASJ) with three at Felton on 15th. Two were at three locations near Longhorsley and at Backworth, Derwent Reservoir, Big Waters and Prestwick Carr with singles at seven other locations.

**Blue Tit** *Cyanistes caeruleus*

The peak count at Spartylea during the month was ten (CT), four at Linton Flats & Warkworth Lane Ponds (Ellington) on 6th and Brierdene (Whitley Bay) on 14th. Two to three were at Sundaysight (Bellingham), Craster, Jesmond Dene and Linton Burn.

**Great Tit** *Parus major*

Ten was the high count at Spartylea (CT), nine at Jesmond Dene on 20th (MJCo), four at Craster on 2nd, Warkworth Lane Ponds (Ellington) on 6th and two at Linton Flats on the same date.

**Bearded Tit** *Panurus biarmicus*

Two migrants were seen at the Lough (Holy Island) on 6th but not subsequently (MLC).

**Skylark** *Alauda arvensis*

A 14mile cycle ride across Otterburn Ranges on 30th found a minimum 48 singing birds (MKi), 12 at Prestwick Carr on 28th (PCF) and ten at Colt Crag Reservoir on 3rd (MR). Eight were at St Mary's Wetland on 19th, Hebron (nr Morpeth) on 24th and Druridge Pools NR on 29th with one to four at seven other locations.



**Sand Martin** *Riparia riparia*

Large counts of around 200 at Caistron on 19th (JD), 150 at Big Waters NWT on 24th with 100 there on 14th (GB), more than 100 at Druridge Bay CP on 7th (TF/JFa) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 3rd (MP) with 100 at Hedgeley GP on 26th and 80 there on 27th (TRD/JD). More than 80 were at Bakethin Reservoir on 7th and Branton GP on 14th, 70+ at Killingworth Lake on 2nd and Derwent Reservoir on 16th with 30 to 60 at five further locations. One to 22 were at 23 other widespread localities.

**Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

Holy Island was the hot spot with high counts of 30 on 30th, 28 on 22nd, 17 on 19th and nine on 17th (SJH/ADM), more than ten were at Druridge Bay CP on 7th and at Bamburgh on 24th (TF/JFa/BRS). Eight at Hedgeley GP on 7th, six at Holywell Pond NR on 23rd with four at Bell's Farm (Cresswell), Monks' House, Sparty Lea and St Mary's Island. One to three were at a further 20 widespread localities.



A Swallow at Hepple Whitefield on 22nd April by Tim Dean

**House Martin** *Delichon urbica*

Early arrivals were singles at Hedgeley GP and Branton GP on 3rd (TRD/JD/IBDa/KDa), two were at Branton on 4th with one at Morpeth on 5th, Bakethin Reservoir on 7th and Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 8th. The peak count was ten at Howick Hall on 10th (PHa/AHa) with more than six at Bamburgh on 24th, five at Druridge Bay CP on 7th and Slaley Hall Hotel on 30th. One to four were at a further 12 localities.

**Cetti's Warbler** *Cettia cetti*

The singing bird at East Chevington (South Pool) noted in March, was still present and in song to at least 23rd (IF/MSH *et al.*). Another heard at Holywell Pond from 23rd-30th may also have been present on 22nd (RD/MSH/MN).

**Long-tailed Tit** *Aegithalos caudatus*

Counts of four came from Brierdene (Whitley Bay), Howick, Linton Lane, Spartylea, Tynemouth and Valley Park (Cramlington). Two were noted at Bakethin, Ellington, Jesmond Dene, Linton Flats, Longhorsley (visiting a nest site), Southfield Green (Cramlington) and Warkworth Lane, while a single was at Allen Banks.

**Willow Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochilus*

The first of the year were singles at Gosforth Park NR and Tynemouth on 6th (AJ/DRW), followed by further singles at Big Waters and Hemscott Hill on 7th, East Chevington on 8th and Holy Island on 9th. There was a notable influx from 19th, when 24 were at Holy Island. On the following day, 36 were noted over 2km of roadside trees and hedgerows from Abshiel-Beacon Hill, 27 over 3km from Beacon Hill-Haredene (Morpeth-ASJ), 25 were in song at Wandylaw Woods (Wingates) and 18 were at Branton GP. At least 26 were in song at Colt Crag Reservoir on 21st, with a further 22 singing at Longhorsley Moor and ten at Derwent Reservoir on the same day. Elsewhere, 17 were at Prestwick Carr on 28th, 13 at Fontburn Reservoir on 30th and ten at Berwick Hill (Ponteland) on 22nd and at Houxy (Wark-North Tyne) on 29th. Counts of seven to nine came from Arcot Pond, Druridge Pools, Harbottle, Hebron, Holystone, Sweethope Lough and Spartylea, with one to five reported from a further 35 widespread localities.

A Willow Warbler  
Holywell Dene  
Alan Jack  
19th April

**Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita*

Passage birds on Holy Island included counts of 16 on 7th, 11 on 9th and 12 on 17th. There were 17 at Branton GP on 20th (IBDa/KDa), 14 from Brockwell-Westwood Grange (Cramlington) on 19th, 14 singing birds at Howick Hall on 19th and ten in song at Craggside on 9th and at Longhorsley Moor on 21st. Nine were noted at Gosforth Park NR on 6th and eight at Jesmond Dene on 20th, while earlier in the month there were counts of six from coastal localities at Craster on 2nd, East Chevington on 3rd and Low Newton on 10th. One to five were noted at a further 41 widespread localities.

Birds showing characteristics of one of the **Eastern races** were noted at Holy Island on 7th and 9th (MJC/ADM).

**Sedge Warbler** *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

The first of the year was an early arrival at Holy Island Lough on 5th-6th (IK/MJC). Birds were more widespread by mid-month with peak counts of six at Prestwick Carr by 28th and five at Crowhall Farm (Holywell) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 25th and 26th respectively. Counts of three came from Arcot Pond, Cresswell Pond and East Chevington on 22nd-23rd, while two were noted at Branton GP on 20th, Druridge Pools NR on 28th-29th and Holywell Pond on 29th. Singles, mostly in song, were also reported from Berwick (Spittal), Big Waters, Budle Bay, Castron, Cocklawburn Pond, Howick, near Stamfordham, St Mary's Wetland and Woodhorn Flashes.

**Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

The first arrival was at East Chevington on 19th (TF/JFa). Three were at Gosforth Park NR on 20th (MJC), with further singles noted at Big Waters on 20th-21st, St Mary's Wetland on 20th, Newton Pool on 27th, Druridge Pools on 28th-29th and Holywell Pond on 29th.

**Grasshopper Warbler** *Locustella naevia*

An early arrival was noted at St Mary's Wetland from 6th-8th (JBu). More typical, from mid-month singles were noted widely, at Backworth on 15th, Bamburgh on 17th, Warkworth dunes on 18th and well inland in upland habitat near the Scottish Border at Kielder on 18th. Peak counts during the month included at least 20 territories in the Cramlington Study Area on 26th (11 at Arcot Pond and five at West Hartford-STH), eight at Prestwick Carr on 28th, seven in the Bamburgh area on 24th, at least five at St Mary's on 25th, four at East Chevington on 19th, three at Warkworth dunes by 25th and two at Castle Island on 20th and Cresswell Pond on 22nd. Singles were also noted at Big Waters, Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay), Crowhall Farm (Holywell), Druridge Pools and near Stamfordham.



A Grasshopper Warbler  
reeling at St. Mary's

Jack Bucknall

25th April





**Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla*

A high total of 21 were noted at Allen Banks on 29th (RB/MB), while 16 were in song at Howick Hall on 19th. There was a record count of 13 (eight males and five females) at Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 18th, 13 singing males were in the Castle Island area on 20th and ten (six males and four females) at Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 21st. Elsewhere, nine were noted at Branton GP on 20th, six males were at Rising Sun CP on 11th and Valley Park (Cramlington) on 21st, five+ at Bamburgh on 24th and five at Brockwell-Westwood Grange (Cramlington) and Stable Wood (Edlingham). One to four were noted at a further 40 localities.



A female Blackcap at Howdon reserve  
Colin Bradshaw on 14th April

**Garden Warbler** *Sylvia borin*

One at Middle Ord (Berwick) on 21st was the first of the year (MHu). There were no further reports until 25th when singles were at East Ord and Yarrow Haugh (Berwick and Tweed Estuary). Two were noted at Beanley on 28th and singles were reported from Budle Point, Derwent Reservoir, Holystone, St Mary's Island, Twizell and Wark (North Tyne).

**Lesser Whitethroat** *Sylvia curruca*

The first arrivals were on 20th at Arcot Pond, Bilton and Low Buston (STH/MKi/CSa). Peak counts were three at Holywell Dene and St Mary's Island on 21st (ASJ), while two were at Arcot Ponds on 28th, Longdyke (Shilbottle) on 22nd and Rising Sun CP on 21st. In addition, singles were noted at Big Waters on 27th, Budle Point on 24th, Druridge Pools from 23rd-28th, East Chevington on 26th, Holy Island on 29th-30th, Howdon and Howick on 21st, Plessey Checks (Cramlington) on 24th and Rothbury on 25th-26th.

**Whitethroat** *Sylvia communis*

Singles at Castle Island and East Sleekburn on 19th were the first of the year (CDH/JR). By far the highest count was 14 at Prestwick Carr on 28th (PCF), while three were noted at Druridge Pools on 28th, Holywell Pond on 29th and St Mary's Island on 30th. Three were at Church Wood (Longhorsley) on 22nd and nest building was noted here by 29th. Counts of two came from Arcot Pond, Aydon (Corbridge), Beanley, Chugdon Wood (Ellington) and Woodhorn Flashes, while singles were reported from Berwick Hill (Ponteland), Blagdon (Milkhope), East Chevington, East Ord (Berwick), Howdon, Longdyke (Shilbottle), Low Buston, Spindleston, Snab Point (Cresswell) and Whitley Bay.



A Whitethroat announces its arrival at St. Mary's. Jack Bucknall on 22nd April

**Firecrest** *Regulus ignicapilla*

A male was seen briefly at Mill Burn, East Ord (Berwick) on 11th (CH).

**Goldcrest** *Regulus regulus*

A light influx was noted at Holy Island, with counts of six on 6th, 7th, 9th-10th, 17th and 19th, while three were reported on 14th, 18th and 22nd (MJC/ADM). Elsewhere, a count of four came from Bamburgh on 18th, three were at St Mary's Island on 5th and two there on 19th and at Budle Point on 20th. Two were singing at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 14th and singles were reported from a further eight localities.



A Goldcrest has a bathe in a Tynemouth garden  
Colin Bradshaw on 19th April

**Wren** *Troglodytes troglodytes*

A total of 15 were singing from Brockwell-Westwood Grange (2km-Cramlington) on 19th (LJM) and 11 were in song at Longhorsley Moor on 21st. Elsewhere, seven were noted at Prestwick Carr on 28th and six at Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 18th. Counts of five came from Druridge Pools, Howick and Warkworth Lane, four were noted at Craster, Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) and Spartylea, three at Allen Banks and Jesmond Dene, two at Linton Flats and one at St Mary's Wetland.

**Nuthatch** *Sitta europaea*

Five at Howick Hall on 2nd was the highest count (PHa/AHa). Four were noted at Jesmond Dene and three at Humford Mill (Bedlington), while counts of two came from Allen Banks (including an early juvenile on 29th), Arcot Hall GC, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Craggside, Cramlington Hall, Derwent Reservoir, Ellington and Spartylea. Singles were reported from Crooked Oak (Carterway Heads), East Ord, Ellington, Ridley Stokoe, Rothbury, Spindlestone and Valley Park (Cramlington).

A Nuthatch in Holywell Dene

by Alan Jack

10th April

**Treecreeper** *Certhia familiaris*

Five at Dipton Woods on 20th included a copulating pair (MJC). One to two were also reported from Big Waters, Craggside, Gosforth Park NR, Harthope Valley, Howick, Netherwitton Common, Preston Cemetery (North Shields) and Weldon Bridge.



**Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris*

A murmuration of 600 was noted at Sweethope Lough on 6th (CB). There were 325 at Backworth Pond on 8th and 100 at Kiln Pit Hill on 6th, while elsewhere, 74 were noted at Big Waters on 7th and 40-45 at Spartylea and Derwent Reservoir on 3rd and 4th respectively. One on fat balls at Newton Red House was considered unusual for the site and another was at Jesmond Dene.

**Ring Ouzel** *Turdus torquatus*

The peak count from the Harthope Valley was six at Hawsen Burn on 18th (IBDa/KDa), while four (two males and two females) were found at Hepple Whitefield on 22nd. Two were noted at College Valley on 13th and at Corby's Crag (Edlingham) on 11th. Passage birds were on the coast at Amble and Craster on 11th, Holy Island (three on 14th and one on 22nd) and Budle Point on 24th, with another inland passage bird at Northumberlandia (Cramlington) on 26th.

**Blackbird** *Turdus merula*

Ten were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 11th (MR), up to six at Spartylea throughout and five at Jesmond Dene. A pair were feeding at least two young at Gosforth Garden Village on 14th, four were at Brierdene (Whitley Bay), two at Howick and St Mary's Wetland and singles at Druridge Pools and Spital (Newbiggin), the latter a very recently fledged juvenile on 27th.



A male Blackbird at Tynemouth  
Colin Bradshaw on 19th April

**Fieldfare** *Turdus pilaris*

Flocks of returning passage birds were noted at typically higher elevations. The largest gathering was 500 at Blanchland on 18th (ASJ), while at Kiln Pit Hill there were counts of 300 on 13th and 130 on 6th. At Colt Crag Reservoir birds passing through included flocks of 58 on 5th, 73 on 15th and a peak of 200 on 21st. Elsewhere, 120 were noted at East Linden (Longhorsley) on 13th, 105 were at Elsdon on 20th and 62 flew off NE from a garden in Stamfordham on 23rd. Flocks of 20-50 were inland at Aydon (Corbridge), Crooked Oak (Carterway Heads), Harelaw (Longhorsley) and High Carrick, while 47 were preparing to leave at Holy Island on 27th. One to five at a further six localities included the final bird of the month at Howdiemont Steads (Boulmer) on 24th.

**Redwing** *Turdus iliacus*

At least 40 were at Blanchland on 18th (ASJ), 32 at East Ord on 12th and 30 at Crooked Oak (Carterway Heads) on 2nd. Flocks of 11-17 were noted at Big Waters, Riding Mill and Spindleston mid-month and one to five at Holy Island on four dates to 19th. In the Longhorsley area five were at East Linden on 13th and three at Linden Hall on 12th. The final reports were coastal, with two flying NE at Warren Mill at dusk on 20th and one at Boulmer on 21st.

**Song Thrush** *Turdus philomelos*

There were counts of six to 21 at Holy Island from 17th-22nd, with a peak on 18th (ADM/MJC). Eight were noted at Jesmond Dene on 20th, five at Spartylea and three at Whittle Dene Reservoirs, with one to two at a further 12 localities. A nest with four eggs was found at Low Carritheth on 30th.

**Mistle Thrush** *Turdus viscivorus*

Counts of up to four were received from Howick on 20th and Spartylea (JAR/CT) and two at Ellington and Warkworth Lane. Singles were also reported from Allen Banks, Arcot Hall GC, Aydon (Corbridge), Colt Crag Reservoir (carrying food), Comb (carrying food), Cuddystone Hall (College Valley), Jesmond Dene, North Seaton, Paxton Dean (Longhorsley), Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin), Valley Park (Cramlington) and West Sleekburn.

**Robin** *Erithacus rubecula*

On Holy Island, four to seven were noted from 2nd-9th and 11-17 from 17th-19th (ADM/MJC). Four were reported from Howick on 2nd and at Jesmond Dene and Spartylea, while three were noted at Warkworth Lane, two at Gosforth Garden Village (where a nest was built and lined), Linton Flats and St Mary's Wetland and a single at Brierdene (Whitley Bay).

**Pied Flycatcher** *Ficedula hypoleuca*

The first of the year were noted at Dipton Wood and Letah Wood (Hexham) on 18th (ASJ/RMH), while five were at Derwent Gorge on 19th (a pair prospecting a nest box and three other males). Numbers at Dipton rose to nine singing males by 20th (MJC), two pairs were at Low Carritheth on 30th and a pair was prospecting nest sites at Holystone on 21st. Further males were noted at Derwent Reservoir on 22nd and Coe Crag (Thrunton) on 29th and much more unusual was a passage male in a garden at Gosforth Garden Village on 24th.



A pair of newly arrived Pied Flycatchers try a hole for size at Holystone.

Tim Dean on 21st April

**Black Redstart** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Singles were noted at Holy Island on 7th (MJC/ADM), Boulmer on 16th (CSa) and well inland at Mootlaw Quarry (Ryal) on 19th-20th (ALT).

**Redstart** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

The first of the year were singles at Arcot Pond on 12th and Derwent Reservoir on 13th (STH/IFo). One to two passage birds were noted at Holy Island on 17th-18th, East Chevington on 19th, Holy Island on 22nd, 26th and 30th and at Tynemouth on 28th. Peak counts from traditional breeding areas were nine at Houxty (Wark-North Tyne) on 29th (AJ), up to five singing males at Holystone and three at Hedgeley GP. Two (mostly singing males) were noted at Blackpool Farm (Longhorsley), Derwent Reservoir, Dipton Woods, Fontburn, Nunnykirk, Rothbury and Scots' Gap and singles, again mainly singing males, at Blanchland, Coe Crag (Thrunton), Derwent Gorge, Hartburn Reservoir, Juniper, Kyloe, Letah Wood (Hexhamshire), Newtown (Rothbury), Ordley, Thockrington and Stamfordham.





A male Redstart at Spartylea by Colin Bradshaw on 29th April

**Whinchat** *Saxicola rubetra*

There was an early report of a single at Seahouses on 3rd (*per* NNBC), while another was at Holy Island on 27th (SJH).

**Stonechat** *Saxicola rubicola*

A pair plus two males were at Low Newton on 10th (MJC). Three at Derwent Reservoir on 3rd were considered to be passage birds, while further reports of three came from Cocklawburn, Druridge Pools (a pair + a male) and Old Water (Coquet Estuary - two males + one female). Pairs were reported from Buston Links, Dunstanburgh, Hazeltonrigg, Longhoughton and Newbiggin (Sandy Bay), while two were at Holy Island and Howick and single males at Colt Crag Reservoir, East Chevington, Hawsen Burn (Harthope Valley) and Winter's Gibbet (Harwood). Another male was carrying food at Bygate Hall Cottages on 30th.

**Wheatear** *Oenanthe oenanthe*

There was a notable arrival mid-month, when 30+ were at Budle Bay on 20th (CGK/GPK), 28 at Holy Island on 17th, 14 inland at Belford Moor on 19th and 11 at Boulmer on 21st. A total of 15 at Holy Island on 20th included eight feeding from field boundaries at the Straight Lonnen, while eight were at Boulmer on 29th. Seven were in Upper Coquetdale by 19th and counts of five to six came from the College Valley, Colt Crag Reservoir, Hemscott Hill, Kiln Point (Budle), Old Water (Coquet Estuary) and St Mary's Wetland on various dates during the month. Three to four were reported from Bell's Farm (Cresswell), Brown's Bay, Hedgeley GP, Hepple Whitefield, Howick, Longhirst flash, Otterburn MoD and Seaton Sluice, with one to two at a further 25 widespread localities.



A Wheatear at St. Mary's by Duncan Watson on 22nd April

**Dipper** *Cinclus cinclus*

A pair were feeding three chicks in a nest at Elsdon on 20th (DLe). Up to four birds were seen at Spartylea during the month (CT). In the College Valley, a pair were taking food to a nest on 13th (RPo). An adult with a fledged juvenile was seen in Harthope Valley on 19th (BS). One to two were seen at nine further locations this month.

**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*

36 were near Wark on 7th (CB). 16 were at Spartylea and 14 at a Marden Estate garden all month (CT/ASJ).

**Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus*

Around 25 were at Newton Red House during the month (PG). 15 at two sites at Holywell all month (ASJ). 12 were at Warkworth Lane on 6th and at Crooked Oak on 16th (IDR/JF/IFo). One to eight were at 11 other sites.

**Dunnock** *Prunella modularis*

11 were seen in a 2km walk at Cramlington on 19th (LJM). Nine were singing in 2km of Holywell Dene on 15th (ASJ). One to four were at 11 further sites this month.



A Dunnock in a Tynemouth garden by Colin Bradshaw on 19th April

**Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava flavissima*

Two were seen at West Hartford, Hemscott Hill, Tynemouth and Druridge Pools during the month. Single birds seen at 15 sites, including coastal passage birds at St. Mary's, Holy Island and Tynemouth.

A "Channel Wagtail" Blue headed x Yellow was seen at Hemscott Hill on 19th (Tfa/JFa).

**Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*

Two pairs were in the Harthope Valley on 11th and at Holywell Dene on 16th (TRD/JD/STH/ASJ). Four also at Allenbanks on 29th (RB/MB). Three in Jesmond Dene on 1st (MJCo). One to two were noted at a further 16 sites this month.

**Pied Wagtail** *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

A good count of 36 was made at Derwent Reservoir on 8th with nine seen there on 1st (AJ/IFo). Nine were also at Colt Crag on 15th (MR). Five at St. Mary's Wetland on 12th (IF). One to four were seen at eight other sites.

**White Wagtail** *Motacilla alba alba*

Ten were seen at Goswick on 21st and six at Seaton point on 13th (NFO). One to two at ten further sites.

**Meadow Pipit** *Anthus pratensis*

85 were counted on Holy Island on 5th (MJC). A minimum of 62 fed at Colt Crag on 3rd (MR). 50 counted at Holystone on 2nd (DRo). 30 moved N past Holy Island Lough on 6th (MJC). 14 pairs were on territory in College Valley on 13th (RPo). 14 pairs were also on territory at St. Mary's/Old Hartley on 11th (ASJ). One to nine were at nine other sites. The species was thought to be present in much reduced numbers at Simonside and Allendale in the final week (ASJ).

**Tree Pipit** *Anthus trivialis*

The first arrivals of the year involved singing birds at Beanley on 17th and two at Dilston on 18th (TRD/JD/ASJ). 14 was an excellent count at Dipton on 20th (MJC). Four were displaying/singing at Beacon Hill and two at Wingates on same day (ASJ). Two were also displaying at Holystone North Wood on 29th (MKi). Three at Fontburn on 30th (TD). Two migrants were at Holy Island on 20th (IK). Singles were seen at a further six locations by the month's end.



**Rock Pipit** *Anthus petrosus*

Two displaying males were at Spital (Newbiggin) on 25th and one at Cullercoats all month (RS/ASJ).

**Water Pipit** *Anthus spinoletta*

The wintering individual at Boulmer was joined by a summer-plumaged bird on 4th (BS).

**Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelebs*

A large flock of 60 was at Redesdale on 2nd and 20 were at Bakethin (JR/NA). 15 were at Spartylea all month. One to ten were seen at seven other sites.

**Brambling** *Fringilla montifringilla*

An estimate of 400 feeding at Longframlington on 2nd increased to around 500 by 16th. 150 seen there on 9th (NFO/TRD). Another large flock involved 120 at Crooked Oak on 19th with lesser numbers there earlier in the month (IFo). Elsewhere 15 at Linden Hall on three dates (NFO). One to four seen at 17 other sites during the month.

**Bullfinch** *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

The month's high count was of seven at Bakethin on 6th (JR/NA). Six attended garden feeders at Rothbury all month. One to four birds were noted at a further 21 locations.

**Greenfinch** *Chloris chloris*

11 were noted singing at Barn's Park (Cramlington) on 13th (DM). Ten (five pairs) were at Rising Sun on 5th (ASJ). Eight were at Spartylea all month (CT). One to five were seen at eight other sites.

**Twite** *Carduelis flavrostris*

The wintering flocks at Chibburn Mouth (Chevington) remained, with 90 counted on 2nd (NFO). And at Holy Island, where 30 were at Snook on 7th and 16 on 18th (MJC/ADM). Five to six were seen in dunes at Cresswell on 6th and 14th (GB/LAR/DM/TB). Three were at Boulmer on 4th (BS).

**Linnet** *Carduelis cannabina*

Several large flocks were noted, at Crooked Oak (Carterway Heads) with 90 on 2nd increasing to 160 by 8th (IFo), at Howick where 120 fed in a freshly rolled field (JAR), and at Derwent Reservoir, where 50 were noted on 3rd (IFo). Groups of 30 were seen at Paxton Dene, Cresswell dunes and Derwent Reservoir later in the month (AB/LB/GB/ASJ). One to 25 birds were observed at a further 12 places, including seven nesting pairs at Holywell (ASJ).

**Common Redpoll** *Carduelis flammea*

Two were seen at Colt Crag on 1st and Rothbury on 17th (MR/TRD/JD).



A Mealy and a Lesser Redpoll in a Rothbury garden by Tim Dean on 17th April

**Lesser Redpoll** *Carduelis caberet*

Around 90 were in pines at Corbridge Common on (DLe). 22 were at both Colt Crag on 1st and Slaley on 7th, with 31 ringed at the latter site during the month (MR/RMH). 15 seen at Rothbury on 16th (TRD/JD). Ten, including several displaying males were at Beacon Hill, with eight at Lordenshaw that day on 20th (ASJ). Nine flew over Linden Hall on 9th (NFO). One to six were at ten further sites, including singles S. over Newbiggin on 6th and at Holy Island on 18th.

**Crossbill** *Loxia curvirostra*

A flock of 60 consisting of several family parties was at Cartington on 5th (TRD/JD). 40+ were at Kyloe on 20th (CGK/GPK). 30, including juveniles were at Dilston on 18th (ASJ). 25 at Beanley Wood on 14th (KBDa/IDa). 20 were watched feeding at Cragside on 8th (PHa/AHa). 18 were noted at Linden Hall on 14th (NFO). One to eight were seen at ten other locations. A pair was watched bathing at the River Wansbeck at High Ford (GB). One was found dead on a lawn at Holburn.

**Goldfinch** *Carduelis carduelis*

A large count of around 150 was made from gardens at Belford on 2nd (DF). 20 were at Spartylea and Northumberland Park (North Shields) during the month. One to seven were at seven other sites.

**Siskin** *Carduelis spinus*

30 fed at garden feeders in Holystone on 3rd (DRo). 28 were at Slaley on 1st, with 20 there on 7th (RMH). 15 AT Edlingham all month (PHa/AHa). 12 were on feeders at Rochester on 8th(JR). One to eight were seen at 16 other sites this month.



A Goldfinch at Tynemouth  
19th April  
Colin Bradshaw

**Yellowhammer** *Emberiza citronella*

Eight were at Howick on 18th and Ellington on 29th at Craster on 2nd (JAR/TB/IDR). Six were seen at Big Waters and Hebron on 16th and 24th respectively (GB/RPo). Five males were singing at Holywell and at Beacon Hill on 11th (ASJ). Five were also at Paxton Dene/ E.Linden (NFO) and one to four were noted at a further 12 sites.

**Reed Bunting** *Emberiza schoeniclus*

14 nesting pairs were located at St. Mary's / Old Hartley and were present all month (ASJ). Seven birds were at Prestwick Carr on 28th (PCF), six within St. Mary's Wetland on several dates and five were found at Arcot Pond on 19th (DM). Two to four were at eight other sites.





A male Reed Bunting on Holy Island  
18th April  
Duncan Watson

## ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN

### Escapes

#### **Bar-headed Goose** *Anser indicus*

Two were seen by East Chevington N Pool on 25th (Mki).

#### **Muscovy Duck** *Cairina moschata*

One was present at Queen Elizabeth CP on 6th (DM).

### Hybrids

No sightings.

### Birds of Unknown Origin

#### **Wood Duck** *Aix sponsa*

Interesting sighting of a male at Holywell Pond on 23rd and 25th (MSH). Rarely noted in the county.

#### **Ferruginous Duck** *Aythya nyroca*

Drake at Silverlink CP from 6th to 14th (CDH *et al.*). Presumed to be same drake as in 2017. This was deemed by the British Birds Rarities Committee to be of unknown origin and same individual as at Washington WWT in Durham.

## LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

A.Allen, N.Anderson, A.H.Banks, R.J. & M. Bentley (RB / MB), T.Blake, J.S.Booth, G.Bowman, C.Bradshaw, K.V.Brooks, A. & L.Brunst, J.Bucknall (JBu), M.J.Carr, P.R.Cassells, M.N.Coates, M.J.Cook (MJCo), T.Daley, I.B. & K.Davison (IBDa / KDa), J.C.Day, T.R. & J.Dean, I.R.Douglas, J.Fairclough, T. & J.Farooqi (TF / JFa), I.Fisher, P.C.Fletcher, D.F.Forshaw, I.Forsyth (IFo), P.Gilbert, C.D.Hampton, A. & P.H.Hanmer (AHa / PHa), E.Harrison (EHa), A.S.Hart, C.Hartley, M.Hepple (MHp), S.J.Hingston, M.S.Hodgson, S.T.Holliday, R.M.Holmes, M.Hutcheson (MHu), A.S.Jack, A.Janes, I.Johnson, I.Kerr, M.Kirby (MKi), C.G.Knox, G.P.Knox, D.Leat (DLe), D.Lovatt (DLo), A.J. & S.V.McCormick, L.J.McDougall, D.Mckeown, A.D.Mould, M.Nattrass, A.J.Newson, D.W.Nicol, N.F.Osborne, M.Potts, R.Poyer (RPo), K.Redgrave (KRed), J.Richardson, M.Richardson, D.Robinson (DRo), I.D.Robson, J.A.Roper, C.Saunders (CSa), F.Southern (FSO), B.Steel, R.Stevens, P.Stewart, A.L.Todd, C.Tudge, D.R.Watson, T.Watson, K.W.York.

Bamburgh Ringing Station, Hauxley Ringing Station, North Northumberland Bird Club, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.  
Thanks to David Sanders of NNBC for providing data.

**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).

Proof reading was by Mike Smith.

Mail distribution by Paul Stewart.

Tom Brewis is Data Manager.

Edited by Steve Barrett [NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com](mailto:NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com)

## RECORD SUBMISSION

Please email records for the month to [ntbc.records@googlemail.com](mailto: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](mailto: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. 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 [ntbcorg@gmail.com](mailto:ntbcorg@gmail.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 [ntbcorg@jobentleyplus.com](mailto:ntbcorg@jobentleyplus.com) or [ntbcorg@gmail.com](mailto:ntbcorg@gmail.com)

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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://www.ntbc.org.uk)



# Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2019 No 5

MONTHLY SUMMARY 2019

3rd July 2019



## CONTENTS

**HELP WANTED** - Data Manager and Avocets section writer. Please read the email.

## WINTER RECORD OF WILLOW WARBLER 1912

## CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTSHIGHLIGHTS

Ruddy Shelduck	Female seen on 1st and 5th at Airy Holm Reservoir
Garganey	Several sightings of passage birds between 11th and 22nd
Green-winged Teal	Drake at Budle Bay remained until 1st.
Long-tailed Duck	Late summer plumage records of a pair off Spittal, Newbiggin and one at Stag Rocks.
Red-breasted Merganser	Unusual sighting of a pair at Derwent Res on 26th.
Quail	Singles calling at Beal and Elford.
Black-throated Diver	Two N off Annstead on 6th and one on 22nd.
Great Northern Diver	Four past Seaton Sluice and one past Tynemouth.
Cattle Egret	Summer-plumaged adult at Druridge from 6th to 11th. Fourth county record.
Honey-buzzard	Probable briefly over Longhorsley on 31st
Dotterel	One heard calling over Longframlington Common on 20th.
Broad-billed Sandpiper	One off north shore of Holy Island on 18th. 7th county record.
Temminck's Stint	Single at Holywell flash from 15th to 17th and one to two at Low Newton from 24th to 26th.
Little Stint	One at Newton scrape on 21st and two there on 29th.
Jack Snipe	One on Holy Island on 11th.
Red-necked Phalarope	One at Newton scrape on 29th and the returning female at Grindon Lough from 31st.
Green Sandpiper	Single at Arcot Pond on 7th.
Wood Sandpiper	Single at Hedgeley GP and two at Druridge Pools.
Spotted Redshank	Wintering individual still at Budle Bay until 5th and one at Grindon Lough on 18th.
Little Gull	Only one to two at Berwick, Blyth Estuary and East Chevington during month.
Iceland Gull	Second-winter at Tynemouth on 3rd.
Great Skua	Singles off Annstead, St Mary's and Bamburgh.
Arctic Skua	Singles off Tynemouth and St Mary's on 4th.
Long-tailed Skua	Adult N at Seaton Sluice on 17th. 3rd earliest county record.
Wryneck	Unprecedented record of one singing at an upland site from 3rd to 21st.
Hooded Crow	One at Low Steads on 3rd.
Bearded Tit	Pair at East Chevington on 6th.
Cetti's Warbler	Singing birds at East Chevington and Holywell
Shorelark	One at Beacon Pt, Newbiggin on 11th and 12th.
Northern Willow Warbler	Acredula type on Holy Island on 31st.
Marsh Warbler	Probable (or eastern <i>fuscus</i> Reed) on Holy Island on 19th.
Icterine Warbler	One at Snook, Holy Island on 18th briefly.
Bluethroat	One to three at Holy Island and Newbiggin on 18th. Concentrated influx.
Black Redstart	Single at Middle Ord,
Berwick on 5th.	
'Channel' Wagtail	Pair at Broomhaugh on
7th and 21st.	
Blue-headed Wagtail	Male at Druridge Pools
on 27th	
Water Pipit	Summer-plumaged individual at
St Mary's on 9th.	
Ortolan Bunting	One briefly on Holy Island
on 18th.	

Red-spotted Bluethroat  
Holy Island  
by Jonathan Farooqi  
18th 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 meetings is in September. See you there;

## FIELD TRIPS

Contact Steve Anderson [seaswan@btinternet.com](mailto:seaswan@btinternet.com)

## CLASSIFIED LIST

### Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

Three, of the pale-bellied *hrota* race, were at Holy Island on 18th (TF/JFa). A single bird of the dark-bellied *bernicla* race flew N at Tynemouth on 6th (DRW).

### Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

The Seaton Sluice monthly total was 14 N and 44 S, including 13 N and 37 S on 29th-30th (SSWT), 60 flew N at Budle Bay on 29th (DF), 30 N at Newbiggin on 31st (BS), and 12 S at North Seaton on 26th (DM/ALT/HD). Peak counts were 92 at Grindon Lough on 23rd (PRM), 91 (including several with goslings) at Plenmeller Common on 21st (SJH), 48 at Caistrion on 15th (JR), 31-40 at Big Waters, Capheaton Lake and Castle Island, and 15-24 at Budle Bay and Holywell flash. One to six were also at Bakethin and Derwent Reservoirs, Coanwood Pond, Halton-Lea-Gate, Lynemouth Flash, Monks' House Pool, Newcastle Exhibition and Leazes Parks, and West Ord. Breeding data (all new unless otherwise stated) were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods/crèches	No. of young	Observer/date
Branton GP	5	25	LJM. On 20th
Rockhouse Fell, Plenmeller Common	4	--	SJH. On 21st
Druridge Pools	3	24	MSH/LJM. Pair with crèche of 17, and broods of 5 and 2. First young noted on 10th
Colt Crag Reservoir	3	17	MR. On 2nd
Hedgeley GP	2	13	LJM. On 20th
Swallow Pond	2	10	PRM. On 31st
Marden Quarry	2	5	KWY. On 19th
Caistrion	1	40	DRO. Large crèche attended by 2 adults on 15th
Bank's Pond, Dinnington	1	8	PCF. On 4th (as April)
Castle Island	1	8	DM/PJA. On 26th
Grindon Lough	1	7	PRM. On 12th
Coanwood Pond	1	5	SJH. On 20th
Airy Holm Reservoir	1	3	IFo. New brood on 29th
Whittle Dene Reservoirs	1	3	MR. On 12th
Linton Ponds	1	1	CDH. On 26th

### Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

On 2nd, 27 flew N at St Mary's on 2nd (AC) and 16 moved N at Budle Bay (GPK). Two flocks, totalling 330, moved N off Holy Island on 3rd (IK). Three were at Grindon Lough on 29th (PRM/SW).

### Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Eight flew N at Holy Island on 23rd (ADM). Peak counts (not including juveniles unless otherwise stated) were 78 (including some goslings) on 21st (SJH), 65 at Derwent Reservoir on 16th (PRM), 22 at Big Waters on 27th (GB), and 15 at Spartylea (CT). Two to eight were also at Arcot, Bothal and Cocklawburn Ponds, Castle Island, Greenlee and Grindon Loughs, Monks' House Pool and Prestwick Carr. Breeding data were as follows (all new unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods/crèches	No. of young	Observer/date
Coanwood Pond	5	29	PRM. On 3rd
Plenmeller Common	4	27	PRM. On 3rd
Druridge Pools	3+	13+	MSH/LJM. First broods (10 and 3) on 7th
Hedgeley GP	3	13	TD. On 22nd
Lynemouth	2	11+	GB. On Lyne Burn on 18th
Branton GP	2	5	LJM. On 20th
Ridley Common	1	34	PRM. 19 adults with a large crèche on 20th.
Middle Ord Pond	1	5	MHu. On 15th. As April?
Bothal Pond	1	2	TF/JFa/TD. From 11th
Derwent Reservoir	--	32	PRM. On 16th. Includes young from April?

### Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

One flew N at Needles Eye on 29th (MHu). 17 at Budle Bay on 5th fell to two by 12th (GPK), 11 were at Hauxley Reserve on 6th (GB), twos at Bell's Pond on 11th (GB) and Low Newton scrape on 7th (TRD), and singles at Boulmer, Derwent Reservoir, Grindon Lough, Holywell East Flash and Killingworth Lake between 2nd-23rd.



**Mute Swan** *Cygnus olor*

Largest concentration concerned 124 at New Water Haugh on 23rd (MHu), 102 at Calot Shad (Tweed Estuary) on 1st (MHu), 78 at Castle Island on 26th (DM/PJA), 49 near Druridge Pools on 10th (LJM), 20-28 at East Chevington and West Ord, and 12-17 at Big Waters, Bothal Pond and Killingworth Lake. Four to six were also at Branton GP, Grindon Lough and Monks' House Pool, and breeding pairs were noted at Howick, Newcastle Exhibition Park and Shield on the Wall. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/date
Holy Island Lough	1	9	IK. On 19th
Big Waters	1	8	TD. On 15th
Linton Ponds	1	7	CDH. On 26th
Branton GP	1	5	TD. On 22nd

**Shelduck** *Tadorna tadorna*

At Seaton Sluice, 14 flew N and eight S during the month, including 10 N and three S on 3rd (SSWT). The Blyth Estuary held a peak of 43 on 15th (LJM), 15 were at Castle Island on 26th (PJA/DM), 12 (including potential breeders) were on a grassy cliff top at Spital, Newbiggin on 18th (GB/LAR), and five to seven at Castle Island (including display), Cresswell Pond, Lynemouth Flash and St Mary's Wetland. Three to four were Arcot Pond, Holywell flash, the Tweed Estuary and West Ord, and one to two at/over Beadnell, Bothal, Holywell (displaying) and Middle Ord Ponds, Big Waters, Hazlerigg and Monks House Pool. Well inland, ten were at Haughton Strother GP (DM/ALT/HD), Hedgeley GP (TD), and twos at Branton GP (TD) and Holystone (DRo). Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/date
Cresswell Pond	1	2	MSH/DLo. On 30th. One duckling carried off by a Carrion Crow
Coquet Estuary	1	9	SW. On 27th
Arcot Pond	1	9	DM/PJA/LJM. On 26th
Branton GP	1	6	LJM. On 20th
Newham Bog	1	6	CGK/GPK on 31st.

**Ruddy Shelduck** *Tadorna ferruginea*

An adult female was at Airy Holm Reservoir on 1st and 5th (IFo). On the former date it was noted calling in response to aggression from a pair of Greylags.

**Mandarin** *Aix galericulata*

Three (two drakes) were in a field at Smalesmouth on 5th (TW), three (two drakes) were at Snabdaugh on 7th (JR/NA), single pairs were at Holystone on 9th and 25th (DRo) and near Lanehead (near Tasset) on 5th (TW), two drakes at Hesleyside, Bellingham on 13th (JR), single drakes at Big Waters on 31st (GB), Redesmouth bridge on 7th (JR/NA) and Sharperton on 4th (JR/NA), and single females at Ridley Stoke on 12th (PRM) and Wark on 25th (PRM). One was at Low Angerton on 13th (IRD).

**Garganey** *Spatula querquedula*

Two drakes were at Woodhorn Flashes on 11th, and one between 14th-19th, with a duck on 15th (AP/GB/PG). A displaying drake at Druridge Pools on 11th flew off south (TF/JFa) and single drakes were at Low Newton on 19th (GPK) and St Mary's Wetland on 22nd (AC/ASJ/DLo).

The popular drake  
Garganey

St. Mary's Island  
wetland

Alan Jack

22nd May



**Shoveler** *Spatula clypeata*

Seven (four drakes) were at Druridge Pools on 14th (TRD), with smaller numbers on other dates. Elsewhere, three were at Bothal Pond on 19th (TD), and one to two at Bell's, Cresswell and Holywell Ponds, Big Waters, Grindon Lough, Hedgeley GP, Holywell flash, Longhirst Flashes, Low Newton scrape and Marden Quarry. More unusual was a drake on the River Tweed at New Water Haugh on 19th (MHu). Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/date
Druridge Pools	1	8	MSH/IDR/JF. On 30th. Fell to 7 young on 31st.

**Gadwall** *Mareca strepera*

24 (all paired) were at Hedgeley GP on 22nd (TD), 19 at Castle Island on 26th (DM/PJA), 14 at Lynemouth Flash on 4th (TB), and five to eight at Arcot and Bothal Ponds, Big Waters, Druridge Pools, Lynemouth (Lyne Burn), Marden Quarry and St Mary's Wetland. Three to four were also at Grindon Lough, Swallow Pond and West Stobswood Pool, and one to two at Capheaton Lake, Ellington Dene, Holywell Pond, Low Newton scrape, Monks' House Pool, Whittle Dene Reservoirs, Woodhorn Flashes and Yarrow Slake. A drake was on a small amphibian pond in a wood at Big Waters on 8th (GB).



A Gadwall  
Druridge Bay CP  
19th May  
Tim Dean

**Wigeon** *Mareca penelope*

A peak of 20 (14 drakes) were at Grindon Lough on 18th (PRM), with three to 18 on various dates all month, 17 (15 drakes) were at Plenmeller Common on 18th (PRM), eight at Budle Bay on 1st and three to four all month (CGK/GPK), eight (six drakes) at Derwent Reservoir on 16th (PRM), and one to two at Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Hauxley Reserve, Newton Pool, the Tweed Estuary and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/date
Plenmeller Common	1-2	7-8	EC/JSB/SJH. Brood of 7 tiny young on 19th and brood of one on 31st



**Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*

Seven flew S at Seaton Sluice between 14th-25th (SSWT), 70 were at Castle Island on 26th (DM/PJA), 42 at West Ord on 19th (MHu), 30-34 at Newcastle Leazes Park (DM/ALT/HD) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs (MR), 22-23 at Arcot Pond (STH), Derwent Reservoir (IFo) and Grindon Lough (SJH), and ten to 15 at Big Waters, Bothal Pond and Spartylea. Breeding data were as follows (all new unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/date
Newcastle Leazes Park	6	30 (7,6,6,5,3,3)	DM. On 11th
Branton GP	5	29	LJM. On 20th
Big Waters	3	35 (13, 12, 10)	GB. On 31st. Including adult-sized brood.
Druridge Pools	2	15 (8,7)	MSH. On 24th
Howick	2	--	JAR. On 6th
Dinnington	1	15	PCF. Down to 11 by 22nd
Derwent Reservoir	1	10	IFo. On 5th. No other broods noted perhaps due to very low water levels.
Holy Island Lough	1	9	IK. On 19th
Newcastle Exhibition Park	1	9	GB. Fresh brood on 8th. The last surviving young was eaten by a Lesser Black-backed Gull on 20th
Woodhorn Flashes (Church Pond)	1	9	GB. On 18th
Cresswell Pond	1	8	MSH. Fresh young on 20th
Airy Holm Reservoir	1	7	IFo. On 25th
Hedgeley GP	1	7	LJM. On 20th
Colt Crag Reservoir	1	6	MR. On 2nd
College Valley	1	6	RPo. On 25th
Linton Ponds	1	6	CDH. Well-grown young on 26th
Wark (North Tyne)	1	6	PRM. On 25th
Whittle Dene Reservoirs	1	6	MR. On 12th
Berwick rowing club	1	3	MHu. On 24th
Marden Quarry	1	3	KWY. On 5th
Arcot Pond	1	2	LJM. On 19th
Bakethin Reservoir	1	1	PRM. On 12th



Mallard duckling at Cragside by Mike Carr on 26th May

**Pintail** *Anas acuta*

At Cresswell Pond, two pairs were noted on 3rd-4th, two drakes and a duck on 5th and a single drake on 7th (TB/MKi/PG et al.), and three at nearby Bell's Pond on 11th (GB) probably involved the same birds. A drake was at Woodhorn Flashes between 4th-19th (AP et al.).

**Teal** *Anas crecca*

12 flew N at Stag Rocks on 6th (DF) and two moved N at Seaton Sluice on 25th (SSWT). 12 were at Budle Bay on 12th (GPK), and at Grindon Lough, a peak of 11 (six drakes) was noted on 3rd (GPK) and two to six between 8th-12th. Six (four drakes) were at Derwent Reservoir on 27th (IFo), and fours at Druridge Pools and Longhirst Flashes. One to two were also noted at Bakethin Reservoir, Big Waters, Capheaton Lake, Castle Island, Hauxley Reserve, Low Newton scrape, Plenmeller Common and Woodhorn Flashes. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/date
Kingwood Common	1	1	EC/JSB. Pair with small chick on tiny roadside pool on 31st.

**Green-winged Teal** *Anas carolinensis*

A drake was at Budle Bay on 1st (DF).

**Pochard** *Aythya ferina*

Eight (seven drakes) were at Holywell Pond on 6th (KWY), seven (six drakes) at Swallow Pond on 31st (PRM), seven drakes at Woodhorn Flashes on 31st (AP), six (four drakes) at Linton Ponds on 6th (GB), twos at Bothal Pond (TF/JFa) and Druridge Pools (DM/ALT/HD), and one at Killingworth Lake. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/date
Woodhorn Flashes	1	7	AP. On 23rd. Down to five young by 25th.

**Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula*

On 9th, four (two pairs) flew N at St Mary's (JBU) and two N at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). Peak counts were 42 at Castron on 11th (JD), 32 at Branton GP on 20th (LJM), 11-17 at Bakethin Reservoir (PRM), Bothal Pond (TD), Capheaton Lake (SW), Castle Island (DM/PJA), Coanwood Pond (PRM), Grindon Lough (PRM), Haughton Strother GP (DM/ALT/HD), Swallow Pond (PRM) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs (MR). Five to eight were also at Arcot and Linton Ponds, Monks' House Pool, Newcastle Exhibition Park and Plenmeller Common, and one to four at Cocklawburn, Holywell and Middle Ord Ponds, Derwent Reservoir, Ellington, Lynemouth, Newcastle Leazes Park and Spartylea.

**Eider** *Somateria mollissima*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 42 N and 39 S (SSWT). A count of 261 at Holy Island on 18th consisted nearly of nearly all adult drakes (IK), 62 at Cocklawburn contained 58 drakes (MHu), and 24-31 were at North Blyth (STH) and Spital, Newbiggin (DM/PJA). One to eight were also at Beadnell, Budle Bay and the Wansbeck Estuary. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods/crèches	No. of young	Observer/date
Coquet Estuary	--	120	SW. On 27th. First young (4) noted on 11th (GB).
Holy Island	--	15	ADM. Also 40 adults, on 31st. First young (3) noted on 18th (MJC).
Seaton Point, Boulmer	1	13	MJC. 3 females with single crèche on 30th
Budle Bay	1	11	GPK. On 26th
Low Newton	1	3	MJC. With 2 females, on 25th
Blyth Estuary	1	2	AC/LJM. Locally bred, tiny young on 28th

**Common Scoter** *Melanitta nigra*

At Seaton Sluice, 229 moved N and 45 S during the month (49 hours) and included 66 N and ten S on 31st (SSWT), and totals of 47 flew N at Annstead on 1st and 22nd (DF), and 29 N at Newbiggin on 14th and 20th (STH). 68 were at Meadow Haven, Berwick on 19th (MHu), 38 at Cocklawburn on 11th (AB/LB), 30 at Hadston Carrs and Coquet Sound (GB), 11-17 at Birling Cars, Newbiggin and Spittal Bay, Berwick, and three at Holy Island.

**Long-tailed Duck** *Clangula hyemalis*

Two were at Stag Rocks on 6th and one on 20th (DF). A pair in breeding plumage were at Spital (Newbiggin) - Sandy Bay between 11th-19th (GB/TB/PC).

**Goldeneye** *Bucephala clangula*

13 (adults and sub-adults) were at a confidential site on 20th (LJM); and six to eight were at a nearby site on 5th and 11th (TF/JFa et al.). Singles were on the River Wansbeck at Ashington on 17th (TB) and Spittal Bay on 1st (MHu). Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/date
Confidential site	1	9	TD. Female and 9 young ducklings on 22nd.



**Goosander** *Mergus merganser*

Peak counts were 18 at West Ord on 15th (MHu), 14 at New Water Haugh on 19th (MHu), eight at St Cuthbert's Island, Holy Island on 8th (IK), and seven at Berwick on 31st (MJC). Threes were at Cocklawburn, Derwent Reservoir and Rothbury, and one to two at Airy Holm and Bakethin Reservoirs, Caistron, Corbridge, Hedgeley GP, Ridley Stokoe, St Mary's Island, Wark (North Tyne) and Warkworth weir. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/date
Wark	1	8	PRM. On 25th.

**Red-breasted Merganser** *Mergus serrator*

A total of 16 flew N at Seaton Sluice between 5th-25th (SSWT) and two to three moved N at Newbiggin on 11th (GB/TB). Three (one drake) were at Budle Bay on 4th (DM/ALT/HD) and a pair was present all month (CGK/GPK), while a pair were fishing on the River Coquet at Warkworth weir on 11th (GB). More unusual were a pair which flew in to Derwent Reservoir and stayed for 30 minutes before flying off NW on 26th (IFo).

**Black Grouse** *Tetrao tetrix*

Up to seven males, plus a single Greyhen were at Paxhill (Allenheads) on 16th whilst five males and two Greyhens were at Swinhope Shield (Allendale) and two males at High Knock Shield Farm on the same day (SJH). Elsewhere four males and a single female were at Westburnhope on 21st, Plenmeller Common peaked at two males and a single Greyhen on 14th and a single male was lekking at Blanchland Moor on 4th.

**Red Grouse** *Lagopus lagopus*

The majority of reports came from the North Pennines with varying numbers seen at both Plenmeller Common and Coanwood Common on various dates with peaks of 12 at both and some small young noted (PRM/EC/JSB/SJH). Seven were at Pithouse Fell (Slaley) on 4th and at Paxhill on 16th, a single was at Lords Lot Farm (Hexham) and, away from the Pennines, ten were in the Hawsen Burn area (Harthope Valley) and one was at Simonside.

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

24 were in the Harthope Valley on 4th (DM/ALT/HD), with ten seen there on 10th (TRD/JD). Three pairs were at both Breamish Valley and Ridley Common and one to three were at Allen Banks, Benridge Moor, Capheaton, Grindon Lough, Halton-Lea-Gate (singing), Hedgeley GP, Northgate (Morpeth), Plenmeller Common, Rothbury, Shoreston, Widdrington and Widehope.

**Grey Partridge** *Perdix perdix*

A total of three pairs was the peak count at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 12th (MR), four birds were regularly seen at Spartylea throughout the month (CT) and one to two were at Benridge (Morpeth), Coanwood Pond, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, East Chevington NR, Ellington Dene, Newbiggin GC, Ridley Common, Sipton Burn, Spital (Newbiggin), Widdrington Moor Lake and Woodhorn Flashes.

**Quail** *Coturnix coturnix*

The first report of the year was one calling in a field east of Barn (Beal) from 21st to 25th (DF/TRD/JD/DF). Another was singing at Elford (Bamburgh) on 24th (GPK).

**Pheasant** *Phasianus colchicus*

Seven were at Spartylea throughout (CT), two at Castle Island and one at Shorestone.

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

As usual for this time of year numbers were low, however 28 (19N, nine S) were sighted on passage past Seaton Sluice during 49 hours of observation (SSWT). Two were on the sea at Hadston Carrs (Druridge Bay) on 6th and one or two were seen at Annstead, Calot Shad (Tweed estuary) and Newton Point.

**Black-throated Diver** *Gavia arctica*

Two flew north past Annstead in a space of just four minutes on 6th and another flew N there on 22nd (DF)

**Great Northern Diver** *Gavia immer*

Seaton Sluice saw a total of four head N during the month, including two on 5th (SSWT). One summer-plumaged individual heading N past Tynemouth on 5th (DRW) and also past Snab Point (ADM) may have been one of these birds.

**Fulmar** *Fulmarus glacialis*

A large scale movement of 280N in five hours was witnessed at Seaton Sluice on 4th in an otherwise quiet month there (SSWT). Elsewhere, 61N in 75 minutes on 28th was the peak monthly total at Annstead (DF) and the only other notable passage was 30+ heading N past Snab Point in 30 minutes on 28th (MSH). At breeding sites 17 nests were counted at Needles Eye (Berwick), 12 birds at Spital Point (Newbiggin) and four at Longhoughton Quarry.



A Fulmar passes Mike Carr at Howick on 11th May

**Manx Shearwater** *Puffinus puffinus*

The vast majority of records were of birds heading on a northward passage. Seaton Sluice had a total of 87N and six S in 49 hours of watching (SSWT) and one to 16 were watched flying N on various dates past Annstead, Beacon Point (Newbiggin), Holy Island and Snab Point. One headed S at Newbiggin on 22nd.

**Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Up to four pairs were at West Stobswood Pool on 17th (MSH) and three pairs were at Swallow Pond on 31st (PRM). Two adults feeding two young at Northumberlandia (Cramlington) on 1st is an indication of the future potential of this new site (LJM) and one to four birds, with many breeding records, were reported from Arcot Pond, Bakethin Reservoir, Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Castron, Capheaton, Coanwood Pond, Exhibition Park, Hedgeley GP, Holywell Flash and Pond, Howick, Linden Hall, Linton Ponds, Longhoughton Quarry, Middle Ord Pond, Milkhope Lake (Blagdon), Monk's House Pool, Swallow Pond and Woodhorn Flashes.

**Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus*

Five adults at Killingworth Lake had broods of two and three chicks on 18th (LJM). Six adults were present at Big Waters NWT all month, two pairs attending nests and the 3rd pair building one (LJM/GB/TD). Breeding success was also reported from Druridge Pools and Linton Ponds and one to three birds were at Airy Holm Reservoir, Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Branton GP, Castle Island, Colt Crag Reservoir, Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir (only up to 5th - thereafter deserted probably due to extremely low water levels(IfO)), East Chevington, Haughton Strother GP, Holywell Flash & Pond and QE11 CP Lake.



A Great Crested Grebe family at Killingworth Lake  
Alan Jack on 16th May



**Black-necked Grebe** *Podiceps nigrocollis*

The pair was at the regular breeding site in SE Northumberland remained throughout the month.(GPK).

**Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus ibis*

A summer plumaged adult at Druridge Pools was first seen on 6th (TB/IDR/JF/TF/JFa) and subsequently seen by dozens of birders during it's stay until at least 11th.



The Chibburn Preceptory Cattle Egret  
by Chris Barlow on 6th May

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

12 birds attended eight occupied nests in the Heronry at Yarrow Slake (Tweed estuary) on 17th (MHu), Whittle Dene Reservoirs peaked at nine on 12th (MR) and one to three birds were at 12 other locations.

**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*

Two flying N at Seaton Sluice on 4th were the first May record for that site (SSWT). Three were at Yarrow Slake (Tweed estuary) on 21st (BWG) and three present between 19th-21st was the peak count at Budle Bay for the month (CGK/GPK). Two were at Beal Point (Lindisfarne NNR) on 19th and singles were at Alnmouth, Berwick, Caistron, Cresswell Pond, Fenham Mill, St. Mary's, Sleek Burn and Weetslade Country Park.

**Gannet** *Morus bassanus*

The largest movements were noted between 3rd-6th with peak counts being 839N in one hour at Stag Rocks on 3rd followed by Annstead (Seahouses) recording 987N in 75 mins on 4th and 1371N on 6th (DF). These counts were mirrored at other locations on those dates and, although passage was somewhat reduced thereafter, some decent numbers were still passing at times towards the end of the month including 285N and 71S in 75 minutes on 28th at Annstead (DF), 130 per hour S at Berwick Pier on 26th (MHu) and 70+ N in one hour in the morning of 28th past Snab Point (MSH). A freshly dead adult was found on the shore at Snab Point on 18th (GB).

**Shag** *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

At Needles Eye (Berwick) 12 birds were roosting on the cliffs and a count of five nests was made. The roost at Meadow Haven (Berwick) peaked at 11 on 26th (MHu) and one to two were at Low Newton, Seahouses and Seaton Sluice.

**Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

No significant movements were recorded from Seaton Sluice Watch Tower (SSWT) this month although some movement was noted at Annstead with nine N and five S on 28th (DF). 13 were at East Chevington North Pool on 4th (DM/ALT/HD), 11 on 28th was the monthly maximum at Derwent Reservoir (IFo), nine were present during a WeBS visit to Castle Island (DM/PJS) and one to four were at several other locations.

**Osprey** *Pandion haliaetus*

A single bird was seen at Colt Crag Reservoir on 2nd and it or another was also seen there on 19th and 28th (MR). A bird flew from the South at Low Newton scrape on 7th; it lingered over The Ship Inn for a minute then flew off North at a leisurely pace (TRD). On 10th a bird was seen at Warkworth weir after being reported at East Chevington earlier (CSa). An adult bird was seen from the Kielder dam on 28th (PRM) and on 31st a bird was flying N at Beal. It landed briefly in a wood only to be chased out by a Buzzard *Buteo buteo* (ADM).



An Osprey eyes up Low Newton flash  
Tim Dean on 6th May

**Honey Buzzard** *Pernis apivorus*

A probable bird was seen briefly before disappearing behind trees at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 31st (NFO).

**Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus*

Two birds were at Lemmington Hall (Edlingham) on 1st (PHa/Aha) and two females were at Ellington on 5th (TB). Single birds this month were reported from 21 sites during the Month.

**Goshawk** *Accipiter gentilis*

An unsexed bird was soaring over Cragside (Rothbury) on 15th (TRD/JD) and female was seen at Colt Crag Reservoir on 24th (MR). A large accipiter flew W from Springwell Plantation (Ellington) on 31st being mobbed by two Carrion Crows which were considerably smaller than the bird itself (TB).

**Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*

On 18th two females and a 2nd calendar year male were at East Chevington (MN), with two birds seen there on 6th (TRD/JD) and an adult female and 1st year bird seen on 27th (SW). A 1st year bird flew SW at Ellington on 13th (TB), and females were at Boulmer on 16th (CSa), Beal on 25th (CGK/GPK) and at East Chevington on 26th (TF/JFa).

**Red Kite** *Milvus Milvus*

Two individual birds were noted at Whitley Chapel on 2nd (STH/AJN/ASH) and other single birds were seen at Ingram Valley on 15th (PT), Derwent Gorge on 17th (EC/SJB) and a bird flew low over the cricket club at Backworth mobbed by Corvids on 26th (GB).

**Common Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*

Nine birds in view in six territories from Bellasis Bridge (Blagdon) on 20th (STH). Thorngrifton Common had six birds on 16th (PRM) and a minimum of four birds were at Belford Moor on 15th (DF), while three birds were at Wingates on 19th (ASJ), at Linton on 23rd (TB) and at Berwick on 31st (MJC). One to two birds were seen at 22 sites including a bird in the North dunes at Holy Island on 18th (MJC).

**Water Rail** *Rallus aquaticus*

Few records this Month with two birds "squealing" at East Chevington North pool on 4th (DM/ALT/HD) and one was heard there on 11th (GB) and one was calling at Holy Island Lough on 17th (MJC/ADM).

**Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*

Breeding was confirmed at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 9th with an adult and seven young seen (GB) and at Leazes Park (Newcastle) with a pair with three young and two other birds on 11th (SM). Six birds were at Castle Island on 26th (DM) and at Swallow Pond (Wallsend) on 31st (PRM). One to three birds were observed at Coanwood Pond, Grindon Lough, Howick, Jesmond Dene (Newcastle), Lambley Mine and at Spartylea.



**Coot** *Fulica atra*

17 birds, including broods of six and five, were at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 9th (GB). 16 birds plus a brood of two young and two nests were at Killingworth Lake on 18th (LJM) and 12 birds were at Linton Ponds on 26th (CDH) and Swallow Pond (Wallsend) on 31st (PRM). 111 birds were at Bothal Pond on 5th (TD) and 10 at Arcot Pond plus three broods comprising of 10 young on 19th (LJM). One to nine birds were also seen at Coanwood Pond, Leazes Park (Newcastle), Monk's House Pool and West Stobbswood Pool.

**Oystercatcher** *Haematopus ostralegus*

Records with breeding evidence came from Branton GP where up to two pairs had four or more young on 20-22nd (LJM, TD), from Breamish Valley, where, on 25th, four nesting pairs were reported (ASJ), as well as from Coanwood Common, where up to nine pairs were displaying on 3rd and 14th (PRM, SJH). There were reports of three to eight pairs at Plenmeller Common on 14th and 18th (SJH, PRM) and four pairs were recorded at Ridley Common on 20th (SJH) with three pairs at Allenheads, Paxhill on 16th (SJH). Reports of one or two pairs came from Allendale (High Knock Shield Farm), Bakethin Reservoir, Coanwood Pond, Grindon Lough, Shotleyfield (Airy Holm Reservoir) and Upper Coquetdale (Clennell). The largest count of 35 came from Beacon Point at Newbiggin on 14th (STH) with 32 seen at Berwick's Coastguard Station on 20th (MHu). North Blyth staithes had 21 on 20th (STH), 18 were at Derwent Reservoir on 28th (IFo) and smaller counts came from Big Waters NWT, Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Castle Island (R Wansbeck), College Valley, Cramlington, Gosforth, Newcastle (Benton), Newton Haven, Prestwick Carr, Shotleyfield (Airy Holm Reservoir), Spartylea, Upper Coquetdale, Windyhaugh and West Stobbswood Pool.



Oystercatcher in the Ingram Valley by Mike Carr on 3rd May

**Avocet** *Recurvirostra avosetta*

As usual, Cresswell Pond dominated submissions with five or six birds on nest (TF/JFa, IRD). The highest count was of 14 on 26th (TF/JFa). Other locations with records were Arcot Pond, Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Druridge Pools, Ellington (Warkworth Lane), Holy Island, Holywell Flash & Pond, Lynemouth Flash and Stakeford Bridge. A report of failed breeding occurred at one of the sites away from Cresswell (ASJ).

**Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus*

Reports of breeding were widespread. Young were seen at Coanwood Common on 14th (SJH), at Cresswell, Bell's Farm on 11th (GB), at Gosforth Park on 26th (ASJ) and at Arcot Pond on 16th (LJM). Birds on nest (nine) were reported from Big Waters NWT on 5th (GB). Records involving displaying pairs were 110 pairs (many on nests) in Allendale on 14th (ASJ), ca. 50 pairs at Coanwood on 3rd (PRM), 25+ pairs at Plenmeller Common on 15th (PRM), 10+ at Derwent Reservoir on 15th (PRM), four pairs at Halton-le-Gate on 2nd (PRM) and two pairs at Grindon Lough on 2nd (PRM), two pairs at Holywell Flash on 16th (ADM) and three birds displaying at Longhorsely on 14th (AB/LB). Other sites from which records came were Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Spartylea, Throckley (Stobbs Farm) and Wheatslade Country Park.

**Golden Plover** *Pluvialis apricaria*

There were eight records submitted. The highest count was of 14 including "several pairs with young" from near Blanchland on 14th (ASJ). Four displaying males were reported from Coanwood Common on the same date (SJH), three from Paxhill, near Allenheads on 16th (SJH) and another three from Plenmeller Common on 21st (SJH). Reports of singles came from Knock Shield Farm in Allendale on 16th and from Low Newton, where a "northern" bird was seen on 25th.



Golden Plover and Chick

Blanchland on 14th May by Alan Jack

#### **Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola*

Budle Bay held a minimum of 150 birds between 18th and 26th (CGK/GPK), 16+ birds were seen in breeding plumage near the Causeway on Holy Island on 19th (MJC/ADM) and eight were at Beal Point on 24th (TRD/JD). Two were reported from Newbiggin, Beacon Point on 27th (AP) and 30th (NFO) and one bird in breeding plumage was at Hauxley NWT on 11th (GB).

#### **Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula*

Records involving breeding evidence were of a pair nesting at Budle Bay on 12th (CGK/GPK), a pair on territory at Buston Links ((Alnmouth) on 6th (STH) and display at Colt Crag Reservoir on 22nd (MR). Passage was evident in the latter part of the month with a count of ca. 500 spread over a wide area at Holy Island on 24th (TRD/JD), 400+ at Budle Bay on 26th (CGK/GPK) and 283 in the Blyth estuary on 23rd (AC). A count of 149 in the Coquet estuary was made on 27th (SW), 48 were at the Low Newton Scrape on 29th (MKi) and 42 were at St Marys Wetland on 23rd (ASJ). On 24th a count of 23 was made at Castle Island, R Wansbeck (TF/JFa), a count repeated at the same location on 26th (DM) and 22 were at Boulmer on 14th (JAR). Newton Haven had a count of 20 on 4th (DM) and 18 were at Grindon Lough on 23rd (PRM). Counts of five and less were from Cramlington (Arcot Manor Pond), Alnmouth (Buston Links), Colt Crag Reservoir, Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge (Budge field), East Chevington, Hauxley NWT and Hedgeley GP.

#### **Little Ringed Plover** *Charadrius dubius*

Reports came from eleven sites distributed over a wide range in the county, many showing evidence of breeding.

#### **Dotterel** *Charadrius morinellus*

A single was reported from the Cheviot summit on 10th (ADMc) and on 20th at Longframlington Common another was "heard calling overhead very distinctly" but was not seen. This was the same location as another report in April, 2017 (JD).

#### **Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus*

Tynemouth reported an impressive 71 flying N between 0640-0850 on 5th (DRW) and Seaton Sluice Watch Tower had its highest day record for May on 6th, when 47 were seen flying N (part of a monthly total of 84). A minimum of ten birds were at Holy Island on 18th (TF/JFa) with counts of eight or fewer from Alnmouth (Buston Links), Amble, Bamburgh (Stag Rocks), Boulmer, Budle Bay, Chatton Moor, Cocklawburn, Craster, Cresswell (Snab Point), Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Grindon Lough, Hauxley NWT, Hedgeley GP, Lindisfarne NNR (Beal Point), Longhirst Flashes, Low Newton, Newbiggin and Seahouses (Annstead).

Whimbrel  
Druridge Pools  
4th May  
Chris Barlow





**Curlew** *Numenius arquata*

Reports of breeding included 20 pairs at Coanwood on 3rd (PRM), 15+ pairs at Plenmeller Common on 18th (PRM), two pairs at Derwent Reservoir on 6th (IFo), two pairs at Halton-le-Gate on 7th, two pairs at Grindon Lough on 7th (PRM), a pair at Thorngraston Common on 15th and a pair at Quarry House Moor (Chillingham) on 7th. A report of 38 individuals, including displaying birds, came from Allendale on 14th (ASJ), 18 were at Howick on 14th (JAR) and 12 at Spartylea throughout the month (CT). Other reports came from Belford Moor, Big Waters NWT, Castle Island (R Wansbeck), Cresswell Pond, Great Whittington, Newton Haven, Powburn (Hedgeley Pools), Shotleyfield (nr), Airy Holm Reservoir, Stobbs Farm (Cresswell), Tweed estuary (Yarrow Slake) and Upper Coquetdale (Alwinton).

Erratum: Curlew entry for Bulletin April 2019 which read, "... East Cramlington LNR reported 133 on 19th (STH)", should read, "...East Cramlington LNR reported 13 on 19th (STH)".



A Curlew at Druridge Pools by Chris Balow on 6th May

**Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica*

Seven birds were reported flying north at Hauxley on 28th (NFO). Counts of three or less were from Amble Braid, Cresswell Pond and Lindisfarne NNR, Beal Point.

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

Good numbers were still present at Druridge Pools with a count of 38 on 10th (LJM). Seven birds were still present there on 31st (IDR/JF). Seven were seen at nearby Cresswell Pool on 4th (DM). Counts of two or less came from Blyth estuary, Hedgeley GP, Tynemouth, Wansbeck (Castle Island) and Woodhorn Flashes.

A Black-tailed Godwit

Cresswell Pond

9th May

Tim Dean





**Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*

Newton Haven attracted 80 on 4th (DM) and a high tide gathering at Sheldrake Hole (Holy Island) reached 60 on 4th (per IK). At Stag Rocks, 30 were counted on 3rd (DF) and a single was at nearby Bamburgh beach on 4th. Further south at Annstead (Seahouses), 29 were noted on 1st (DF). Three were at Holy Island causeway on 24th (TRD/JD) and a single was at Hauxley NWT on 11th. An unusual inland sighting was one at Colt Crag Reservoir on 13th (MR).

**Knot** *Calidris canutus*

A record May for Seaton Sluice involved a total of 242N during the month including 227 N on 9th. All birds were in summer plumage. Passage is rarely recorded in May from this site (SSWT). Some of these birds may have been the same as the flock of 70 which flew N at St Mary's Island on 9th (JBu). Typically, few were noted elsewhere, with 12 at Holy Island, two at Newbiggin and a single at Budle Bay.

**Broad-billed Sandpiper** *Limicola falcinellus*

An excellent find of this extremely rare visitor was one seen near the Snook (Holy Island) on 18th (TF/JFa).



Broad-billed Sandpiper Holy Island on 18th May by Jonathan Farooqi

**Temminck's Stint** *Calidris temminckii*

A welcome small influx into the area brought a single to Holywell Pond and flash from 15th-17th (ASJ/MN/TB *et al*) and two were at Low Newton from 24th-25th with one reported on 26th (TRD/JD/MJC).



Holywell

Temminck's Stint

Chris Barlow

18th May



**Sanderling** *Calidris alba*

Northward passage at Seaton Sluice totaled 33 between 6th-25th, with 22 N on 6th (SSWT). The peak count was 87 at Sandham Bay (Holy Island) on 18th (MJC/ADM). Nearby Beal Point attracted 30 on 24th (TRD/JD), 23 were at Hadston Carrs at the north end of Druridge Bay (GB) and 12 were at Bamburgh on 4th (DM). One to ten were at Budle Bay, East Chevington beach, Newton Haven, Newton scrape and Newbiggin.

**Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*

An estimated 300 were seen in the Beal Point-Holy Island causeway area on 25th (TRD/JD). Reports from Budle Bay fluctuated with 60 on 9th, at least 160 on 25th reducing to 33 by 29th (CGK/GPK/DF). Much smaller numbers were seen at other locations with 25 at Boulmer on 9th declining to 14 by 30th (JAR/MJC). Low Newton held 15 on 25th (MJC) with six reported from Low Newton scrape on 21st (TRD/JD). At Cresswell Pond, two were seen on 4th increasing to ten by 20th (DM/TRD/MSH), and birds were regularly reported from Grindon Lough with a maximum of six on 12th (PRM/SW/ASJ *et al*). One to five were seen at Castle Island, Cheviot summit, Derwent Reservoir, Hauxley NWT and Woodhorn Flashes

**Purple Sandpiper** *Calidris maritima*

Virtually all reports came from the favoured Stag Rocks with counts varying from nine to 38 during the month (GPK/DF). The only other record was two at Seaton Sluice on 1st (SSWT).

**Little Stint** *Calidris minuta*

Light spring passage involved a single at Low Newton scrape on 21st (TRD/JD) with two there on 29th (MKi).

**Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola*

One was roding at Halton-Lea-Gate on 2nd (PRM) and one was at Spartylea on 25th (CT).

**Jack Snipe** *Lymnocyptes minimus*

Late birds were at the Snook (Holy Island) on 11th (ADM) and Cresswell Pond on 27th (ADMc).

**Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago*

Displaying birds were well reported this month with six pairs at Coanwood on 3rd (PRM) and 11 displaying males on 14th (SJH). Four displaying birds were reported from Coanwood Pond on 20th (SJH). A maximum of five pairs were at Plenmeller Common on 18th (PRM) with six displaying birds on 21st (SJH). Four males were displaying at High Knock Shield farm (Allendale) on 16th (SJH), three displaying at Paxhill on 16th and Ridley Common on 20th (DF). Two were 'drumming' at Blanchland Moor on 4th and Newham Bog NNR and two were seen at Westburnhope and Belford Moor. Single displaying birds were also at Grindon Lough, Harthope Valley, Otterburn Ranges, Quarry House Moor and the Snook (Holy Island).

**Red-necked Phalarope** *Phalaropus lobatus*

A breeding plumaged bird was present at Low Newton scrape on 29th (MKi) and the presumed regular returning bird was at Grindon Lough on 31st (EC/JSB).

**Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos*

Well reported from upland breeding territories with a few migrants still at coastal locations. Six pairs were noted in the Breamish Valley on 25th (ASJ) and a maximum of eight birds were noted at Hedgeley GP on 5th (TF/JFa). Two pairs were at Derwent Reservoir during the month which was commented by the observer as 'low' (IFo/PRM). Three territories were counted at Alwinton and three birds were at Bygate (both Upper Coquetdale). Also in Upper Coquetdale, singles were at Carshope and Shillmoor. Single pairs were seen at Bakethin Reservoir, Haydon Bridge and Wark. Three birds were at Corbridge on 4th (DM) and singles were at Branton GP, Castron, Morpeth, Rowhope Burn and Weetwood Bridge. At the coast, three were at Newbiggin, two were at each of Bothal Pond, Cresswell Pond, Lynemouth and Monk's House Pool and singles at Arcot Pond, Beal Point, Hauxley, Holy Island, Low Newton scrape and Tynemouth.

**Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*

A Single was at Arcot Pond on 7th (STH/LJM).

**Redshank** *Tringa totanus*

Few were reported from the coast as birds dispersed to inland and northerly breeding grounds. Grindon Lough attracted a maximum of 12 during the month (PRM/SJH/MRS) and 12 were also paired and displaying at Coanwood Common on 14th (SJH). Three pairs were at Plenmeller Common on 19th and Coanwood Pond on 20th (SJH). Two pairs were at High Knock Shield farm (Allendale) on 16th (SJH) and Ridley Common on 20th (SJH). Four birds were seen at each of Derwent Reservoir, Paxhill and Spartylea, three were at Powburn, two at Blanchland Moor and one at Branton GP. Coastal records were eight at Newton Haven, three at Foxton bend, two at Amble Braid, Cresswell Pond and Monk's House Pool. Singles were seen at Hauxley NWT and Newbiggin.

**Wood Sandpiper** *Tringa glareola*

Two were at Druridge Pools on 24th (EC/JSB/MSH) and a single was well inland at Hedgeley GP on 11th (TRD/JD).

**Spotted Redshank** *Tringa erythropus*

The regular adult was present at Budle Bay until 6th (CGK/GPK/DF) and one was seen at Grindon Lough on 18th (PRM). (TRD/JD/KDa/IBDa).

**Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*

Four flew N together at Beal on 1st (DF) and four were in Budle Bay on 5th with one-two noted up to 15th (CGK/GPK). Four were also present at Warkworth Gut on 9th (CSa). At Grindon Lough, two were observed on 18th with one on 20th (PRM/SJH). Singles were seen at Cocklawburn, Colt Crag Reservoir, Cresswell Pond, Chugdon Wood (flying S), Druridge, Foxton bend, Holy Island, Newham Bog NNR, St Mary's Island and Warkworth Weir.

**Kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla*

The strong northerly winds and gales from 3rd-5th produced very significant movements N with a maximum of 700/hour witnessed at Annstead (DF) and up to 300/hour at Bamburgh, Longhoughton, Holy Island and Seaton Sluice (IK/TRD/JD/DF/SSWT). At two breeding colonies, 1,146 nests were counted at Berwick, Needles Eye (MHu) and 190 were on the Priory Cliffs, Tynemouth (ASJ). In the gull roost at Calot Shad in the Tweed Estuary 56 were present on 26th (MHu).

**Black-headed Gull** *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

At the Plenmeller Common breeding colony, an estimated 1,500 birds were present on 22nd (SJH); elsewhere, 91 flew S at Bamburgh on 20th (DF), 44 were at Castle Island and 32 at Spartylea on 15th (CT).

**Little Gull** *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

Three flew S at Berwick, Spittal Bay on 16th (BWG) and single immature birds were seen in the Blyth Estuary on 4th (AC) and at East Chevington on 27th (SW).

**Mediterranean Gull** *Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus*

Two immature birds bathed in the River Coquet at Warkworth weir on 6th (GB) and an adult was at Newbiggin on 1st (TB). Two adults were seen elsewhere at a potential breeding site.

**Common Gull** *Larus canus*

At Longhoughton, Low Steads, 300 were on the beach on 3rd, an unusual influx due to the prevailing northerly gale (TRD/JD) and at Annstead 46 flew N in an hour on 6th (DF). Elsewhere, 35 were in Budle Bay, 11 at Cresswell Pond (GB) and a single was at a moorland site in the south west (PRM).

**Great Black-backed Gull** *Larus marinus*

Two or three were at Colt Crag Reservoir, Grindon Lough, Newton Haven and Plenmeller Common on various dates throughout (MR/PRM/DM).

**Iceland Gull** *Larus glaucoideus*

A 3rd-summer bird was on the Black Midden Rocks, Tynemouth on 3rd (DRW).

**Herring Gull** *Larus argentatus argentatus*

A large group of ca.600 were on the beach at Longhoughton, Low Steads on 3rd, an influx due to the northerly gale (TRD/JD), 233 in the Blyth Estuary on 15th (LJM) and 107, including only two adults, at Derwent Reservoir on 5th (IFo). At Bamburgh, 70 flew S on 20th (DF) and three other gatherings numbering 40-90 were counted at Berwick (West Ord), Castle Island, Colt Crag Reservoir and Wallsend (Davy Bank) (MHu/DM/CDH/MR). Breeding birds were found with 42 nests counted in four areas within the River Blyth estuary (LJM/STH), four nests at Wallsend, Davy Bank (CDH) and three on factory roofs at Cramlington (LJM).

**Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus fuscus graelsii*

A large gathering of mainly immature birds were recorded in Upper Coquetdale from 21st-26th at Barrow Low and nearby Hindside Knowe (JR/NA). Elsewhere, 20 were at Derwent Reservoir and Swallow Pond (IFo/TRD), 12 at Arcot Pond, Ellington, Monks' House Pool and Wallsend, Davy Bank with up to six at eleven other localities including seven inland/upland sites. At Wallsend, Davy Bank two AON were counted (CDH) as were 12 nests in the Blyth Estuary riverside areas (LJM).

**Sandwich Tern** *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

At Beacon Point, Newbiggin a maximum of 170 birds, many in pairs, were present on 14th (STH) and counts of 20-60 came from Bamburgh, Berwick (Meadow Haven), Boulmer, Holy Island (St Cuthbert's Island) and Low Newton (DF/TRD/ADM/IK/JAR). One to seven were at five other sites.

**Little Tern** *Sternula albifrons*

The first record of the year was three in Budle Bay on 1st (GPK). Thereafter the numbers increased slowly with up to seven seen at Annstead, Bamburgh, Boulmer, Druridge Bay, Holy Island, the Long Nanny, St Mary's Island and Seaton Sluice with a maximum count of 18+ at Holy Island on 31st (JBu).

**Roseate Tern** *Sterna dougallii*

The earliest record was of two at Beacon Point, Newbiggin on 12th (TB) where up to nine were present on 14th, one fitted with a geolocator (STH). The only other recorded sighting was a single roosting on St Cuthbert's Island (IK).



**Common Tern** *Sterna hirundo*

The breeding colonies held 58 birds at the Royal Quays, North Shields (ASJ), 33 at North Blyth staithe, (STH) and eight at Whittle Dene Reservoirs, (MR). Elsewhere, 20 were at St Mary's Island (KWY), 15 at Killingworth Lake (GB) and two to six at Annstead, Arcot Pond, Beacon Point (Newbiggin), Big Waters NWT, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Holywell Pond Monks' House Pool and Swallow Pond with singles at three other localities.

**Arctic Tern** *Sterna paradisaea*

The mainland colony at the Long Nanny burn mouth held ca.1,500 on 21st (TRD/JD), ca.200 fed offshore at Newton, Football Hole, 150+ flew N at Annstead point on 4th (CGK/GPK) and 56 flew N at Annstead on 22nd (DF).

An Arctic Tern  
the Long Nanny  
Tim Dean  
21st May

**Great Skua** *Stercorarius skua*

Two passed N and one S at Seaton Sluice from 5th-9th (SSWT) and two were at Annstead on 28th (DF). Singles moving N were seen at Annstead on 4th (DF/CGK/GPK) and St Mary's island on 9th (JBu) with one moving S and chasing Gannets at Bamburgh on 27th (DF).

**Arctic Skua** *Stercorarius parasiticus*

A total of three moved N at Seaton Sluice from 3rd-6th (SSWT) and on 4th one flew S at Tynemouth (DRW) and one N at St Mary's Island (JBu); a single bird moved N at Newbiggin on 25th (ADMc)..

**Long-tailed Skua** *Stercorarius longicaudus*

The earliest spring site record from Seaton Sluice was an adult flying N on 17th, the third earliest county record (MH/SSWT).

**Auk** *sp*

During the northerly winds and gales from 3rd-6th very large numbers of Auks were noted flying N, mainly Guillemots with some Razorbills, and a maximum of 4,500 in two hours were recorded on 5th (SSWT); at Cresswell, Snab Point 204 flew N in 30 minutes on 28th during late morning (MSH).

**Common Guillemot** *Uria aalge*

On 17th, 1,380 moved N at Seaton Sluice in one hour (SSWT) and at Annstead, Longhoughton and Newton Point significant movement N was also noted on 3rd, 6th and 7th with a maximum 465 counted on 17th at Annstead (DF/TRD). Smaller numbers of up to 15 were present at five sites in the Berwick/Tweed estuary area and 144 nests were occupied at Berwick, Needles Eye on 29th when 140 birds were also on the sea (MHu).

**Razorbill** *Alca torda*

During the large Auk movement on 17th, 120 in one hour were specifically identified at Seaton Sluice (SSWT) and similarly on 6th, 11 moved N at Annstead (DF). At Berwick, Needles Eye 32 occupied nests were counted on 29th (MHU).

**Puffin** *Fratercula arctica*

180 were identified as they flew N on the 17th during the notable Auk movement (DF) and the largest daily count at Seaton Sluice comprised 30N and 5S on 25th (SSWT) whilst at Cresswell, Snab Point 28 flew N in 30 minutes on 28th (MSH). Two birds were also seen at Saltpan Rocks, Cocklawburn (MHu).

**Rock Dove** *Columba livia*

A ringed bird stayed all month at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) (RS) and many were present at Jesmond Dene (MJCo).

**Stock Dove** *Columba oenas*

There was a high count of five at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 6th (TB) with four at Coanwood on 3rd and the peak at Spartylea during the month (CT). Three were at Ellington on 16th with one to two at eleven other widespread localities.

**Woodpigeon** *Columba palumbus*

On 16th 15 were at Shorestone (IDR) and ten at Jesmond Dene on 17th (MJCo) with three pairs at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) during the month.

**Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto*

A peak of eight at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) during the month (RS) and two at Spartylea (CT).

**Cuckoo** *Cuculus canorus*

Three calling males were at Fourlaws Forest (Wannys) on 11th (IK) with two at Breamish Valley on 6th, Chatton Moor on 12th, Dipton Wood on 13th, Melkridge Village on 15th, Holy Island on 18th, Simonside and Tarsset Burn (Sidwood) on 19th. There were 31 reports of singles mainly from upland locations the exceptions being Holy Island, Howick and Prestwick Carr.

**Barn Owl** *Tyto alba*

A pair near High Newton had hatching eggs on 19th (PHa/AHa) with two at Spartylea during the month (CT). Singles were at Halton le Gate on 2nd, Halton Shields on 4th, Howick on 6th and 9th, Cresswell Pond on 7th, 14th and 27th, Druridge Pools on 11th, Park End on 15th, Holy Island on 19th and Heddon on the Wall on 31st.



A Barn Owl photographed from the hide at Cresswell Pond on 14th May by Tim Dean

**Tawny Owl** *Strix aluco*

A pair in garden nest box at Stamfordham had two young one leaving on 21st and the second on 23rd (EC). Two males and a female were at Rothbury during the month (TRD/JD) and a male and two females were at Plenmellor Village on 22nd (PRM). Two had nested at Lemmington Hall (Edlingham) on 1st (PHa/AHa) and two at Spartylea (CT) with singles at 17 widespread locations and juvenile noted at Hauxley NWT on 25th.



Eddie Crabtree's garden in Stamfordham  
His Tawny Owl box on 21st May



Breeding pairs were confirmed at Startup and Berwick Hill in the first week of the month with a juvenile at Berwick Hill Bridge on 1st (AHB) and singles reported all month from Druridge, near Matfen on 4th (ALT/HD/DM) and Paxhill (nr Allenheads) on 16th (SJH).

**Long-eared Owl** *Asio otus*

One roosted in a tree at Allen Banks on 31st (EC/JSB).

**Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus*

One was reported from various locations at Holy Island from 11th to 18th (MJC/IK) and one came in off the sea at Lynemouth Flash on 27th (TB).

**Swift** *Apus apus*

A high count of 70 feeding at Swallow Pond on 11th (ASJ/SPP), 35 favoured streets at Whitley Bay on 27th (ASJ), 26 at Bellasis Bridge (Blagdon) on 20th (STH), 25 at Castle Island (R.Wansbeck) on 11th and Big Waters NWT on 28th (GB). At least 22 were at Belford on 19th, only 15 at Budle Bay on 26th with one to ten at 34 widespread localities.

**Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis*

Two pairs were at Wark (N.Tyne) on 25th (PRM) with singles at Breamish Valley on 10th, Morpeth on 11th, Jesmond Dene on 12th and Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth) on 13th.

**Wryneck** *Jynx torquilla*

A singing male was found in the Breamish Valley by MJC and present from 3rd to 21st (MJC/TRD/JD/ASJ).



A rare sight in Northumberland. A Wryneck in the Ingram valley on 14th May by Mike Carr

**Great Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos major*

Two were at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 11th and 13th (GB/STH), at Spartylea during the month (CT), at different locations in Jesmond Dene on 13th (MJCo) and a pair fed young in the nest at Beacon Lane (Cramlington) on 27th (DM). Singles were at ten further locations.

**Green Woodpecker** *Picus viridis*

All reports were singles at North Wood (Holystone) and Rawgreen (Whitley Chapel) on 2nd, Billerley (Wark) on 3rd, Gosforth Garden Village and Dipton Wood on 5th, Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 11th, Dipton Wood and Holystone on 13th, Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 19th, Gosforth Park NR on 21st, Havannah NR on 22nd, Prestwick Carr and Rothbury on 24th and Kielder Water on 28th.

**Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*

Up to two birds were seen at West Hartford throughout the Month (TB), two were also seen at Widdrington Moor Lake on 10th (TB), Mill Race (Lesbury) (PHa/Aha) on 11th and at Ellington on 30th (TB). Single birds were noted at 19 sites during the month.

**Merlin** *Falco columbarius*

Only one record this Month with a bird at Buston Links (Alnmouth) on 8th (CSa).

**Peregrine** *Falco peregrinus*

Up to three birds were seen throughout the Month at a Confidential site in the South East of the County (GB et al) and a single birds was at a nest site in South/Central Northumberland on 4th (ALT/HD/DM), the only other records came from singles at Budle Bay on 2nd (GPK) and at Holy Island on 12th (MJC).

**Ring necked Parakeet** *Psittacula krameri*

Four were at Gosforth Garden Village on 5th (MJC), three flew E over Whitebridge Park (Gosforth) on 3rd, a single appeared to land in tree at Brandling Park (Jesmond) on 16th and one was in trees near 'Goals' Gosforth Park on 27th (GB).

**Jay** *Garrulus glandarius*

A high count of just three at Dipton Wood on 5th (MJC), two at Ellington Dene on the same date and at West Hartford on 17th (TB) with singles at 11 other widespread localities.

**Magpie** *Pica pica*

Two young seen fledging at Holywell Pond on 15th (MSH) with two at Jesmond Dene on 27th (MJCo) and single at Holy Island where they are regarded as scarce (MJC).

**Jackdaw** *Corvus monedula*

A Pegswood BBS recorded 30 on 1st (TD), 30 was the peak count at Spartylea during the month (CT) Seven were at Shorestone on 16th and six at Jesmond Dene on 17th.

**Rook** *Corvus frugilegus*

Eight was the high count at Spartylea during the month (CT), a pair with two juveniles at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) in from 20th to 31st and three at Shorestone on 16th.

**Carrion Crow** *Corvus corone*

Passage at Seaton Sluice saw 37N on 1st out of total 53N and 1S (SSWT). 30 were at Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 19th (KWY), 21 at Tyne Estuary on 15th (CDH), 13 at Shorestone on 16th with four at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) and three at Jesmond Dene.

**Hooded Crow** *Corvus cornix*

One was at Low Steads (Longhoughton) on 3rd and 4th (TRD/JD/DM/ALT/HD).

**Raven** *Corvus corax*

Five were at Holystone on 10th (DRo), three singles at Cheviot summit area on the same date (ADMc) with two at Colt Crag Reservoir on 2nd, Rothbury on 15th and Ingram Valley on 17th. Singles were at nine other upland locations.

**Coal Tit** *Periparus ater*

The peak at Spartylea during the month was four (CT) with one at Paddy Freemans Lake (Jesmond Dene) on 13th (MJCo) the only other record.

**Marsh Tit** *Poecile palustris*

On 5th three were at Dipton Wood (MJC) with singles at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 11th, Mitford on the same date and Nunnykirk on 17th.

**Willow Tit** *Poecile montanus*

Three nesting pairs were at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 25th, two nesting pairs at Holywell Dene on 6th and a pair at Backworth on that date (ASJ). Two were at Prestwick Carr on 13th with singles at Big Waters NWT, Cramlington, West Hartford and Whitley Bay.

A Willow Tit  
Holywell Dene  
3rd May  
Alan Jack

**Blue Tit** *Cyanistes caeruleus*

In the observer's garden at Fulbeck (Morpeth) three pairs used nestboxes (TD), four the peak count at Spartylea during the month (CT), two at Jesmond Dene and one feeding young in viaduct wall at Redesmouth Bridge on 23rd.



**Great Tit** *Parus major*

Three were at Jesmond Dene on 17th (MJCo), two at Spartylea and a pair fledged young from a terrace nest box with Tree Sparrow neighbours on 26th (TD).

**Bearded Tit** *Panurus biarmicus*

A pair seen at East Chevington on 6th were seen again on 12th with two juveniles apparently having been present since 2nd (TRD/JD/ADMc/DE).



A Bearded Tit at East Chevington on 6th May by Tim Dean

**Skylark** *Alauda arvensis*

A high count of 55 at Otterburn Ranges on 12th, 26 at Simonside on 19th (ASJ) and 20 at Shorestone on 16th (IDR). 18 were at St Mary's and adjacent fields on 6th, ten at Dykehead (Rochester) on 23rd and four to eight at Broomhaugh, Cramlington, Newcastle Town Moor and Spartylea.



A Skylark  
Howick  
25th May  
Mike Carr

**Shore Lark** *Eremophila alpestris*

One found by Alan Priest at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 11th was still present on 12th (GB/TB).

**Sand Martin** *Riparia riparia*

High counts of 200+ at Branton GP on 4th (DM/ALT/HD), 150 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 5th (MR), 100 at Bothal Pond on 7th (TF/JFa) and at Derwent Reservoir on 29th (IFo). 50 to 80 were at Big Waters NWT, Castron, East Chevington, Felton and Wark with one to 35 at a further 14 widespread locations.



A Sand Martin at Hedgley by Tim Dean on 11th May

**Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

There were low numbers this year with 30 the peak count at Simonside/Alwinton on 19th (ASJ), 25 at Shorestone on 16th (IDR), 12 nest building at Breamish Valley on 12th, eight at Foxhunters Estate (Whitley Bay) on 17th and at Spartylea. One to four were at nine other locations.



A Swallow on 25th May at Ingram by Alan Jack

**House Martin** *Delichon urbica*

40 were at Castle Island on 11th, Swallow Pond on 18th and Beacon Lane Cramlington on 27th (GB/ASJ/DM) with 26 nest building in Breamish Valley on 25th and 24 at Holywell (ASJ). 10+ collected mud at Castle Island on 7th with ten at Spartylea during the month and one to six at 19 other widespread localities. Six nests were at Needles Eye (Berwick) on 29th (MHu)

A House Martin  
Ingram  
25th May  
Alan Jack



**Cetti's Warbler** *Cettia cetti*

The singing birds heard at East Chevington and Holywell Pond in April were still present. The former was noted to at least 27th (GB/SW *et al.*), while the Holywell bird was heard on 15th and 17th (MSH/MPF/TB).



**Long-tailed Tit** *Aegithalos caudatus*

Family parties of six were at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 18th and Redesmouth Bridge on 23rd (JR) and at least four at Brandling Park (Jesmond) on 24th. Four were noted at Hareshaw Linn on 15th and one to two at a further ten localities, including a pair feeding young in the nest at Melkridge on 14th.

**Willow Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochilus*

The strong start to the year continued with some excellent counts from breeding areas. An 8km stretch from Heighleygate-Todburn produced a total of 77 singing males on 19th, 41 were in song in the Breamish Valley and 30 likewise at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 5th (all ASJ). At Foulaws Forest (Wanneys) 29 were heard singing over a distance of 3km on 11th, numbers remained high at Colt Crag Reservoir where 24 were in song on 13th and ten singing birds were at Bakethin Reservoir on 12th. On the coast, 25 were at Holy Island on 1st, with seven here on 19th and six on 9th. Seven were in song at Coanwood, five at Spartylea and four were at Bamburgh Castle woods, Church Wood (Longhorsley), Longhorsley and Sundaysight (Bellingham). One to three were noted at a further 11 localities.

Birds showing characteristics of the **Northern race** ssp *P.t.acredula* where noted at Holy Island on 18th-19th and 31st (MJC/ADM).

A Willow Warbler  
in the Breamish Valley  
Alan Jack  
14th May

**Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita*

Counts of singing males included 18 in the Breamish Valley on 12th (ASJ), 14 from Brockwell-Westwood Grange (Cramlington-2km) on 5th and 13 at Holywell Dene on 20th. There were further counts of four to five from Bamburgh Castle woods, Church Wood (Longhorsley), Hethpool (College Valley), Jesmond Dene, Longhorsley and Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay). One to three were noted at Holy Island on seven dates, with a peak on 19th and one to two were noted at a further ten localities.

**Wood Warbler** *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

The first of the year was singing at Coanwood on 3rd (PRM), followed by another at Hareshaw Linn (Bellingham) on 5th. By mid-month, two were in song at Sidwood (Tasset Burn) from 13th-19th (JR) and singles were singing from a roadside copse near Catton on 14th and at a regular site at Derwent Gorge from 16th-27th.

**Sedge Warbler** *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

There were several good local counts this month, including 18 singing males along a 2km stretch at Prestwick Carr on 9th (IK), 14 territories at Arcot Pond (STH), and 11 singing at Buston Links and 11 at Holy Island, of which seven were singing males at the lough. Elsewhere, nine singing at Whittle Dene Reservoirs were mostly in oil-seed rape crops, nine were at Bamburgh Castle woods on 19th, seven at Castron and Shorestone and up to five at East Cramlington LNR and St Mary's Wetland. There were at least four singing males at Cresswell Pond, four at Brockwell-Westwood Grange (Cramlington), Breamish Valley and Linton Ponds and three at Embleton links, with one to two at a further 12 localities.

A Sedge Warbler at Druridge Pools  
14th May by Tim Dean



**Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Gosforth Park NR supported a healthy population of 12 singing males from 7th-15th (LAR), while up to six were singing at East Chevington and three at Cresswell Pond. Counts of two came from Big Waters, Druridge Pools and Holy Island Lough and singles were noted well inland at Caistron and at Holywell flash / pond and St Mary's Wetland.

**Probable Marsh Warbler** *Acrocephalus palustris*

An un-streaked *Acrocephalus* warbler at Holy Island on 19th was probably this species, although eastern race Reed Warbler *ssp fuscus* could not be ruled out (MJC).

**Icterine Warbler** *Hippolais icterina*

One was at Holy Island (Snook) on 18th (MJC).

**Grasshopper Warbler** *Locustella naevia*

Numbers in the Cramlington Study Area rose to at least 25 territories by 19th (12 at Arcot Pond and seven at West Hartford-STH *et al.*). Four were 'reeling' at East Chevington on 4th, three in the St Mary's Island / Wetland area on 5th and two were at Castle Island on 26th. Elsewhere, singles were noted at Bamburgh, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Hauxley NWT, Holy Island (Snook), Linton Ponds, Lynemouth and perhaps more unusually at Nunnykirk.



A reeling Grasshopper Warbler on 14th May at Castle Island by Tim Dean

**Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla*

Nine singing males were noted from Brockwell-Westwood Grange (Cramlington-2km) on 5th (LJM), eight were singing at Dipton Wood on 13th and Valley Park (Cramlington) on 5th and six at Dilston on 1st. At least five were noted at Bamburgh and five at Lemmington Hall (Edlingham) on 1st, five at Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 26th included two birds feeding young. Counts of four singing birds came from Colt Crag Reservoir, Howick Hall and Longhorsley, while threes were at Bakethin Reservoir, Church Wood (Longhorsley) and Jesmond Dene. One to two were noted at a further 17 localities.

**Garden Warbler** *Sylvia borin*

Eight singing males were at Wingates on 25th (ASJ) and four at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 5th, Caistron on 11th and Derwent Reservoir on 3rd. Counts of three singing birds came from Branton GP, Derwent Gorge, Harthope Valley, Linden Hall, Nunnykirk, Spindlestone and Swinhoe. One to two were reported from a further 28 localities, mainly in potential breeding habitat; passage birds included one to two at Holy Island on 18th-19th.

**Lesser Whitethroat** *Sylvia curruca*

At least ten territories had been identified in the Cramlington Study Area (including three at Arcot Pond and three in the Brockwell area) by 19th (STH *et al.*). On the coast six were at Holy Island on 18th, three on 19th and one on 12th and four (including three singing) were at East Chevington on 14th. Counts of three came from Holywell Waggonways and Warkworth Lane, while two were at Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools and Linton Lane, the latter a pair feeding young. Singles, most of which were in song were noted at Bamburgh, Beal, Big Waters, Castle Island, Dinnington, Elswick, Holywell Dene, Longhirst Flash, near Mitford, Newbiggin GC, Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin), Tynemouth (migrants on 10th and 19th) and Widdrington.



**Whitethroat** *Sylvia communis*

A total of 27 singing males were noted from Backworth-Holywell Waggonways on 13th and 23 were singing in the Breamish Valley on 25th (ASJ). A 2.5km stretch of track at Prestwick Carr produced 13 singing birds, while five nesting pairs were located at St Mary's Wetlands and adjacent fields. Another walk, of 2km, from Brockwell-Westwood Grange (Cramlington) produced nine singing and 800m of hedgerow at Ellington held six. Counts of five came from Bamburgh Castle wood, Boulmer and Church Wood (Longhorsley), while four were noted at Beal Point, Castle Island, East Chevington and Weetslade CP and two pairs at Needles Eye (Berwick). One to three at a further 28 localities included a singing male in moorland habitat at 580m.a.s.l in the Cheviots.



A White-throat at St. Mary's by Iain Johnstone on 12th May

**Firecrest** *Regulus ignicapilla*

A male was seen briefly at Mill Burn, East Ord (Berwick) on 11th (CH).

**Goldcrest** *Regulus regulus*

Up to three were noted at Valley Park (Cramlington) and singles at Barns Park (Cramlington), Jesmond Dene, Kirkley Hall and Slaley Forest.

**Wren** *Troglodytes troglodytes*

A pair at Fulbeck (Morpeth) built a domed nest in a garden nest box (TD). Three were noted in Jesmond Dene, two at Spartylea and one at Wark (North Tyne).

**Nuthatch** *Sitta europaea*

Five were singing in Plessey Woods CP on 2nd (LJM) and up to four were at Chugdon Wood (Ellington). A pair were feeding young in the nest at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 6th, two were reported from Beacon Hill (Longhorsley), Spindlestone and Wark (North Tyne) and singles at Harbottle, Leazes Park, Low Carritheth, Matfen Hall, Rothbury and Whitley Chapel.

**Treecreeper** *Certhia familiaris*

Five were noted in Dipton Woods on 5th (MJC) and up to three at Ellington Dene. Two were reported from Chugdon Wood (Ellington) and singles at Colt Crag Reservoir (food for young), Crooked Oak, Derwent Reservoir, Howick Dene, Kirkley Hall, Low Carritheth, Wark (North Tyne), Widdrington and Widehope.

**Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris*

28 were noted during a Pegswood BBS count on 1st (TD), eight were at Spartylea during the month, three at Shorestone on 16th and a pair with young in a tree hole nest at Exhibition Park on 8th. Three pairs were nesting at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) and another pair at nearby Eider View.

**Ring Ouzel** *Turdus torquatus*

A passage bird was at Holy Island (Chare Ends) from 9th-12th (MJC/ADM). In or near inland breeding areas three were at Langleefordhope and two males at Hawsen Burn on 10th and singles at Bakethin Reservoir on 28th, Breamish Valley on 3rd, College Valley on 26th, Sipton Burn on 16th and Black Lough (Widehope) on 14th.

**Blackbird** *Turdus merula*

There were an impressive total of 46 singing males holding territory at Marden Estate (Tynemouth) on 9th (ASJ). Six were noted at Jesmond Dene, four at Spartylea, a pair at Shorestone and an adult was carrying food for young at Howick on 11th. Three pairs were breeding in the area of Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin).

**Fieldfare** *Turdus pilaris*

Singles were at Holy Island on 11th and 18th-19th (ADM/MJC/TF/JFa).

**Redwing** *Turdus iliacus*

A late bird was at Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 14th (KWY).

**Song Thrush** *Turdus philomelos*

A total of 17 in the Breamish Valley included singing males and pairs collecting food (ASJ). Up to six were at Spartylea, five at Hethpool (College Valley), two pairs at Coanwood, four at Jesmond Dene, three at Arcot Pond, two at Linton Ponds and one at Fulbeck (Morpeth), the latter singing vigorously again from 12th.

**Mistle Thrush** *Turdus viscivorus*

Up to five were at Spartylea during the month, two pairs at Coanwood on 3rd and four at North Yardhope (MoD) on 4th. Two recently fledged young and an adult carrying food was noted at Plessey Woods CP on 2nd, two were at Newbiggin and near Ninebanks and singles at Jesmond Dene and Thorngraston Common.

**Spotted Flycatcher** *Muscicapa striata*

The first of the year were at Spartylea where four (and two nests) were noted from 12th (CT) and two at Kirkley Hall on the same date (PG). Twos followed at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 13th, Langley on 14th and Stamfordham on 15th. At Holy Island the peak count was six on 19th (MJC/ADM), with two here on 18th and singles on 23rd and 31st. Three pairs were noted in the Breamish Valley on 25th (ASJ), four were at Lordenshaw on 19th and three at Blakehopeburnhaugh (Kieler) on 27th. On the North Tyne, one to two were reported from Hareshaw Linn, Haughton Mains, Low Carritheth and Smalesmouth, with singles also noted at Rothbury, St Mary's Wetland and Widehope.

**Robin** *Erithacus rubecula*

At least seven pairs were noted at Ingram village during the month (ASJ). Single pairs were feeding three fledged young at Gosforth Garden Village by 2nd and Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) from 20th and fours were reported from Jesmond Dene and Spartylea.

**Bluethroat** *Luscinia svecica*

Two birds of the 'red-spotted' race were at Holy Island (Excavations and Snipe Point) on 18th (TF/JFa), while another was at Newbiggin GC on the same day (GES *et al.*).



A smart migrant on Holy Island on 18th May. A Bluethroat by Mike Carr

**Pied Flycatcher** *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Eight singing males were at Dipton Woods on 5th (MJC), four at Allen Banks on 31st and at least four at Bickerton Wood (near Castron) on 15th. Three males were at Derwent Gorge on 17th and Nunnykirk on 5th, two at Holystone on 2nd and Derwent Reservoir on 4th (two males) and a pair were at a nest site at the latter locality on 29th. Singles were also reported from Alwinton, Barrow Burn, Wark (North Tyne) and Wingates. Passage birds were at Holy Island on 1st (1) and 18th (2).

A male Pied Flycatcher

Holy Island

18th May

Jonathan Farooqi





**Black Redstart** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

A female was at Middle Ord (Berwick) on 5th (MHu).

**Redstart** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Six passage birds were at Holy Island on 18th and two on 19th (MJC/ADM). In breeding areas, five singing males were noted from Beacon Hill-Mitford on 11th, with four at Beacon Hill alone by 19th (GB/ASJ), when five were also at Whittingham (Beech wood). Three territories were established at Derwent Reservoir by 4th, three were at Dipton Wood on 13th and three were singing west of Mitford on 12th. Two were noted at Bickerton Wood (near Caiströn), Blakehopeburnhaugh (Kielder), Harehaugh and Wark (North Tyne) and singles at a further 20 localities.

**Whinchat** *Saxicola rubetra*

In the Breamish Valley, 11 males on 12th increased to 18 by 25th (ASJ). Peak counts from Upper Coquetdale included 15 near Alwinton on 19th (ASJ) and at least eight territories between Linbriggs and Shilmoor on 13th. Four passage birds were at Holy Island on 18th, three at Rowhope Burn on 14th and Allerhope on 21st and twos at Bygate, College Valley and Makendon. Singles were noted at Cresswell Pond and Hauxley NWT on 11th and St Mary's Island on 9th, the Harthope Valley, Ros Castle (Chillingham) and more widely in the Upper Coquetdale area.

A Whinchat in the Ingram Valley on 12th May by Alan Jack

**Stonechat** *Saxicola rubicola*

There was a significant increase in reports from inland sites this month. At Chatton Moor, seven pairs on 12th included two pairs showing characteristics of the continental ssp *rubicola* and a similar pair in the College Valley escorted three fledged juveniles on 28th (MJC). Eight birds (four territories) in the Breamish Valley on 6th included a female carrying food, two pairs were alarm calling at Fourlaws Forest (Wanneys) on 11th, two pairs were feeding young in nests at Simonside on 19th and a female and three juveniles were at Longframlington Common on 20th. There were further inland records of two males and a female at Plennmeller Common on various dates, a pair carrying food at Belford Moor, pairs at Makendon (Upper Coquetdale) and Winnow's Hill (Slaley) and singles at Widehope and Winter's Gibbet. On the coast, nine at Buston Links included a pair with five fledged young on 6th; two pairs and a fledged juvenile were in the Druridge Pools /dunes area, two males, two females and a fledged juvenile were at East Chevington on various dates and up to four were at Low Newton. A pair was also reported from Cocklawburn, a male and juvenile at Longhoughton and single males at Cresswell and Newbiggin.

**Wheatear** *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Counts from Holy Island included eight on 9th (ADM) and five on 19th. Five were also noted at Prestwick Carr on 5th and Hemscott Hill on 11th, four were at East Chevington on 9th and three at the Breamish Valley on 3rd and Newbiggin on 11th, with one to two at a further eight coastal and nine inland localities.

Two of three birds seen at Holy Island on 3rd and two at Prestwick Carr on 9th showed characteristics of the **Greenland race** *O.o.leucorhoa* (IK).

**Dipper** *Cinclus cinclus*

Pairs were seen this month at Plessey Woods, carrying food, Wark, Halton Le Gate and Spartylea and Allenbanks. Singles were at a further eight river sites.

**House Sparrow** *Passer Domesticus*

60 were counted at Pegswood on 1st (TD). 15 plus were at Wark on 28th and at a Marden Estate garden all month two pairs fed young in nests (PRM/ASJ).



A House Sparrow at Newton by Tim Dean on 21st May

**Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus*

35 were at Chugdon Wood on 4th with 11 at nearby Ellington pond on 5th (TB). 25 spent all month at Mitford (PG). 20 were noted at Edlingham on 1st ( PHa/AHa). Ten were in Holywell Dene on 6th (KWY). Nine at Shoreston on 16th (IDR). One to six were at nine other sites.

**Duncock** *Prunella modularis*

Poorly recorded with a pair at Spartylea and one in Jesmond Dene the only reports.

**Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava*

Three (one female) were at Low Newton on 7th (TRD). Twos were seen at ten sites and single birds at a further seven this month.

**Blue Headed Wagtail** ( *Motacilla flava flava*) one was at Druridge Pools on 27th (SW).

**Yellow/Blue Headed (Channel Wagtail)** A pair was seen on two dates at Broomhaugh on 7th and 21st (Rpo).

**Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*

Seven pairs were located in Upper Coquetdale on visits on 11th and 21st (JR/NA). Pairs also at six other sites during the month. Singles seen at ten further riverside locations.

**Pied Wagtail** *Motacilla alba yarrellii*

Ten were noted at Castle Island on 18th (GB). Nine were on the north shore at Snook (Holy Island) on 9th (MJC). One to three were seen at seven other sites. Numbers in Upper Coquetdale on several visits, seemed low this spring (ASJ).

**White Wagtail** *Motacilla alba alba*

The only reports were of one at Low Newton on 7th and 17th.

**Meadow Pipit** *Anthus pratensis*

An area of Otterburn Ranges held 36 song flighting birds on 12th. At the coast at St. Mary's, 14 pairs were established, some feeding young in nests (ASJ). One to seven were at only nine further sites. Several people observing that the species numbers appeared well down this spring.

**Tree Pipit** *Anthus*

As in previous years, young trees at Wingates held good numbers, with 12 displaying males observed on 5th and five at Simonside on 19th (ASJ). Four displayed at Beanley and Dipton Wood on 5th and at Beacon Hill on 19th (TRD/JD/MJC/ASJ). Two were at Comb (Falstone) on 13th and two coastal migrants found at St. Mary's on 2nd, one even pausing to song flight (JR/JBu/AC). Singles were seen at a further nine sites this month.





A Tree Pipit in the Ingram Valley by Alan Jack on 19th May

**Rock Pipit** *Anthus petrosus*

15 were counted along Holy Island north shore on 19th with the previous day, 14 were noted involving a pair feeding young at Sandham Bay and ten at Coombs Haven (ADM/MJC). The only other sightings were of singles at St. Mary's and Cullercoats (ASJ).

**Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelebs*

Six were at Spartylea during the month (CT) and four in Jesmond Dene on 27th. Three were at Shorestone on 16th.

**Bullfinch** *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Four pairs were found at Holywell Dene and Beacon Hill during the month, three males noted at the former on 6th (ASJ/KWY). Six were at Prestwick Carr on 18th and at garden feeders at Rothbury all month. Pairs or singles noted at a further 25 locations.

**Greenfinch** *Chloris chloris*

Poorly recorded this month with five at Spartylea all month and two singles the only reports.

**Linnet** *Carduelis cannabina*

A flock of 25 was seen at Holy Island on 3rd (IK). 16 were at Whittle Dene on 12th and 15 plus at Newbiggin on 10th (MR/DLo). Seven pairs were nesting along the waggonway at Holywell during the month (ASJ). One to nine were seen at five other sites.

**Lesser Redpoll** *Carduelis caberet*

On 11th, 20 singing/displaying males were seen at Fourlaws Forest (Wannys) (IK). Four to five displaying males seen at each of Beacon Hill, Wingates and Simonside on 19th (ASJ). Four pairs were at Coanwood on 3rd (PRM). Six were at Branton on 20th (LJM). One to four were at seven other sites, including three feeding on niger seeds at a Rothbury garden. One fledged youngster was seen on a road at Sidwood on 13th (JR).

**Crossbill** *Loxia curvirostra*

12 seen at Holystone on 6th and 10 at Beanley the previous day (DRo/TRD/JD). Seven were at Dipton on 5th and a family party of six was at Lordenshaw on 19th and five at Cragside on 26th (MJC/ASJ). One to two seen at seven further sites.

**Goldfinch** *Carduelis carduelis*

30 plus were mainly in pairs at Holywell Dene on 6 th (ASJ). At Coanwood, four pairs were seen on 3 rd. Eight were at Spartylea during the month. Six plus were at Castle Island on 10 th and singles noted at five further sites.

**Siskin** *Carduelis spinus*

20 spent all month at Lemmington Hall (PHa/Aha). Eight seen at Bakethin on 28th (PRM). Five coming into a Rothbury garden during the month. One to three were seen at eight other sites.

**Yellowhammer** *Emberiza citronella*

Eight were at Shoreston on 16th (IDR). Seven males sang at Breamish Valley on 12 th, six singing at Holywell on 6th and in the Beacon Hill area on 9th (ASJ). One to three noted at a further nine places.

**Ortolan Bunting** *Emberiza hortulana*

One seen briefly and heard calling in flight on 18th at Snook (Holy Island) (MJC).

**Reed Bunting** *Emberiza schoeniclus*

28 (14 pairs) were nesting in the St. Mary's/Old Hartley area during the month, with several feeding young in nests (ASJ). Nine singing at Arcot Pond on 19 th (LJM), eight at Newcastle Great Park on 7th, seven in Breamish Valley on 12th and five at Budle Bay on many dates (LAR/ASJ/CGK/GPK). One to three were at seven further sites.

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

Two were still being seen in Druridge Bay area with sightings on field north of Druridge Pools on 9th (TRD/JD) and at Bell's farm, Cresswell on 11th (GB). One was also seen flying S at Tynemouth on 18th (DRW).

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

A hybrid drake was seen at East Chevington on 26th (TF / JFa).

**Birds of Unknown Origin**

No sightings

**LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS**

R.Ahmed, N.Anderson, A.H.Banks, R.J. & M. Bentley (RB / MB), T.Blake, J.S.Booth, G.Bowman, J.Bowyer, A. & L.Brunton, J.Bucknall (JBu), M.J.Carr, M.J.Cook, (MJCo), A.Curry, T.Daley, T.R.& J.Dean, I.R.Douglas, J.Fairclough, T. & J.Farooqi (TF / JFa), P.C.Fletcher, D.F.Forshaw, I.Forsyth (IFo), M.P.Frankis, P.Gilbert, C.D.Hampton, A.& P.H.Hanmer (AHa / PHa), A.S.Hart, M.Hepple (MHP), A.J.Hewitt, S.J.Hingston, M.S.Hodgson, S.T.Holliday, M.Hutcheson (MHu), A.S.Jack, A.Janes, 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, A.D.Mould, M.Natras, A.J.Newson, N.F.Osborne, S.P.Parnaby, R.Poyer (RPo), A.Priest, A.J.Richards, J.Richardson, M.Richardson, D.Robinson (DRo), I.D.Robson, L.A.Robson, J.A.Roper, C.Saunders (CSa), M.R.Smith, R.Stevens, P.A.Tapsell, C.Tudge, D.R.Watson, T.Watson, S.Westerberg, K.W.York.

Bamburgh Ringing Station, Berwick Wildlife Group, 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).

North Northumberland Bird Club (R Poyer and J Lumby), Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

Thanks to David Sanders of NNBC for providing data.

**Apologies for any accidental omissions**

Mail distribution by Paul Stewart.

Tom Brewis is Data Manager

Edited by Steve Barrett [NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com](mailto:NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com)



## RECORD SUBMISSION

Please email records for the month to [ntbc.records@googlemail.com](mailto: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](mailto: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. 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 [ntbcorg@gmail.com](mailto:ntbcorg@gmail.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 [ntbcorg@jobentleyplus.com](mailto:ntbcorg@jobentleyplus.com) or [ntbcorg@gmail.com](mailto:ntbcorg@gmail.com)

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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://www.ntbc.org.uk)

**WINTER RECORD OF WILLOW WARBLER IN JANUARY 1912 - AN UPDATE**

Owners of Northumberland Birds ( Galloway and Meek) and Northumbrian Birds ( Kerr) may wish to put a note in there copies referencing the following extract from British Birds magazine

EXTRACT BRITISH BIRDS V27 PG172 LETTERS:  
WILLOW-WARBLER IN WINTER IN NORTHUMBERLAND.

*To the Editors of BRITISH BIRDS.*

SIRS,—The record of a Willow-Warbler, said to have been seen in Newcastle by me, on January 27th, 1912 (Cat. Birds of Northumberland —by George Bolam—Nat. Hist. Soc, Newcastle, Transactions, Vol. VIII., page 40), was an invention of a professional writer of nature notes—which was published in the Newcastle Weekly Chronicle, without my knowledge, and evidently copied by Mr. Bolam. The writer carried the joke a little further—as he stated that I heard the bird trill its familiar notes.

ISAAC CLARK.  
NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE.

**Les Robson**



A May 2019 Willow Warbler by Mike Carr



# Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2019 No 6

MONTHLY SUMMARY

3rd August 2019



## CONTENTS

Birds in Northumbria - new author appeal

## CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Whooper Swan	Three at Bothal Pond on 3rd which then relocated to Berwick the next day.
Ruddy Shelduck	Female seen at Derwent Reservoir on 14th and 15th.
Baikal Teal	Drake first at East Chev on 3rd and Druridge from 4th to 30th. Potential county first.
Garganey	Drake at Monks' House Pool from 3rd to 6th.
American Wigeon	Returning drake from 5th to 27th.
Velvet Scoter	Unseasonal record of two on sea at Seaton Sluice on 14th.
Great Northern Diver	Several unseasonal records at Seaton Sluice and Budle Pt.
White-billed Diver	Summer plumaged individual past Cullercoats and Newbiggin on 8th.
Spoonbill	Five past Cheswick on 2nd, one in Druridge Bay area from 7th and one at Holy Island.
Great White Egret	One at East Chevington on 18th.
Baillon's Crake	Adult at Monks' House Pool on 5th. First county record since 1942!
Curlew Sandpiper	Up to two at Budle Bay and Holy Island causeway until 10th.
Red-necked Phalarope	The returning female remained at Grindon Lough until 27th.
Wood Sandpiper	Several sightings during month.
Spotted Redshank	Several sightings during month.
Iceland Gull	First-summer at Boulmer on 25th.
Great Skua	Single off Seaton Sluice on 12th.
Arctic Skua	Singles off Seaton Sluice, Seahouses and Cresswell.
Hobby	Adult at East Chevington and then Druridge on 18th.
Red-backed Shrike	Male at Druridge dunes on 9th.
Bearded Tit	Pair bred at East Chevington and three juveniles seen on 16th.
Icterine Warbler	Adult seen and calling at East Chevington on 11th.
Common Rosefinch	Male singing at Druridge Pools 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 is in September. See you there.

## FIELD TRIPS

Contact Steve Anderson [seaswan@btinternet.com](mailto:seaswan@btinternet.com)

**Sunday 18th August Waders at Alnmouth (am) and Boulmer (pm)**

Leader: Tim Dean, meet at Alnmouth Dunes Car Park 9-00am.

[t.r.dean@btinternet.com](mailto:t.r.dean@btinternet.com) Tel: 01669 621460

An Arctic Tern

Staple Island

8th June

Tim Dean



**CLASSIFIED LIST****Canada Goose** *Branta canadensis*

A total of 71 flew N and nine S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), 78 flew N at Cocklawburn on 4th and a further 128 N on 10th (MHu), 60-61 N at Boulmer (BS) and St Mary's on 9th (MSH), and 16-36 N at Berwick, Ellington and Holy Island between 14th-16th, while about 40 moved S at Fenham Mill on 3rd. Peak counts (excluding young) were 201 at Castle Island on 16th (DM/PJA), 169 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 14th (MR), 138 at Hauxley Reserve on 17th (HRS), 124 at Derwent Reservoir on 14th (IFo), 52-82 at the Aln Estuary, Budle Bay, Capheaton and Killingworth Lakes, Grindon Lough, Newcastle Leazes Park and QEII CP Lake, and 19-45 at Arcot Pond, Boulmer, Druridge Pools, Greenlee Lough, Marden Quarry and the Tweed Estuary. Four to five were also at Bothal Pond and Haughton Strother GP. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods/crèches	No. of young	Observer/date
Castle Island	3	24 (11,9,4)	DM/PJA on 16th. Includes brood from May?
Colt Crag Reservoir	--	17	MR. On 14th. Presumed same as May
Druridge Pools	--	15	MKi. On 5th. As May?
Coanwood Pond	1	7	PRM. On 15th
Grindon Lough	1	7	PRM. From 1st. As May?
Linton Ponds	1	6	CDH. On 16th
West Ord	1	5	MHu. On 2nd
Wansbeck Business Park, Ashington	1	1	DM. On 17th
Derwent Reservoir	1	3	IFo. New brood on 25th
Howdon Wetland	1	2	CB. On 22nd
QEII CP Lake	1	3	STH. Half-grown young on 9th
Newcastle Leazes Park	1	2	DM. On 17th
Greenlee Lough	1	1	MRS. On 16th

**Barnacle Goose** *Branta leucopsis*

Three flew N at Seaton Sluice on 19th (SSWT) and three were at Druridge Pools on 26th (STH/IFo), and one flew N, with Canada Geese, at Boulmer on 16th (BS). One was also at QEII CP Lake between 9th-16th.

**Greylag Goose** *Anser anser*

A total of 32 flew S at Seaton Sluice between 9th-16th, including 23 S on 9th (SSWT), and 14-20 flew N/NE at Ellington (TB) and Whitfield Moor (SW) on three dates between 9th-15th (TB/SW). About 2,100 were at Derwent Reservoir on 15th (PRM) and a minimum of 1,700 (including 'innumerable young') on 24th (IFo). Counts elsewhere were much more moderate; 212 at Hauxley Reserve on 17th (HRS), 41 at Haughton Strother GP on 1st (SW), and 13-21 at the Aln Estuary, Marden Quarry, Middle Ord Pond and Plenmeller Common. One to six were at Capheaton Lake, Castle Island, Coanwood and Linton Ponds, Druridge and Monks' House Pools, East Chevington, Grindon Lough and Newcastle Leazes Park.

Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods/crèches	No. of young	Observer/date
Middle Ord Pond, Berwick	2	12 (7,5)	MHu. On 2nd
Plenmeller Common	2	8 (5,3)	PRM. On 20th. As May?
Bothal Pond	1	2	TD. As May?

**Mute Swan** *Cygnus olor*

One flew N and two S at Seaton Sluice during the month, and five N at Ellington. 212 at Calot Shad, the Tweed Estuary, on 2nd rose to 330 by 25th as moulting birds gathered (MHu), 60 were at QEII CP Lake on 16th (CDH), 32-44 at Castle Island (DM/PJA), East Chevington (PRM) and Howdon (CB), and 14-22 at Bothal Pond and Killingworth Lake. Six to seven were also at the Blyth Estuary, Grindon Lough and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

A Mute Swan family takes to the water

11th June

Druridge Pools

Tim Dean





Mute Swan breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/date
Linton Ponds	2	10	CDH/STH. Brood of 6 young (previously 7) from May, and new brood of 4. On 15th.
East Chevington south pool	1	8	IF on 4th.
Howick	1	7	JAR on 10th
Killingworth Lake	1	5	LJM on 17th
North Seaton weir	1	4	DM/PJA on 16th. Bred at Castle Island?
Whittle Dene Reservoirs	1	3	PRM on 7th.
Shield on the Wall	1	3	MRS on 16th
Woodhorn Flashes	1	3	CDH on 16th.
Newcastle Exhibition Park	1	2	DM on 17th
Newcastle Leazes Park	1	1	DM on 17th

#### Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Three adults (including one with a yellow darvic ring) were at Bothal Pond on 3rd (TD) and three flew N at East Ord on 4th (MHu). One was at New Water Haugh (River Tweed) on 19th (MHu).

#### Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

A total of 27 flew N and 21 S at Seaton Sluice during the month, including nine N and 11 S on 19th (SSWT). Numbers at Budle Bay peaked at 131 on 4th (MSH). Counts of 23 adults came from the Blyth Estuary on 1st (GB/LAR), Castle Island on 16th (DM/PJA), and the Coquet Estuary on 9th (SW). Three to four were at New Water Haugh and Yarrow Slake, and one to two at Arcot Pond, Big Waters, Druridge and Monks' House Pools, Grindon Lough, Hauxley Reserve, Low Newton and West Ord. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods/crèches	No. of young	Observer/date
Warkworth	2	10 (6,4)	MKi. As Coquet Estuary (below)?
Cresswell Pond	2	9 (8,1)	STH. One small young (as May) and new brood of 8 very small young, on 7th
Coquet Estuary	1+	14	SW. On 9th. Also 23 adults
Aln Estuary	1	8	MKi. Plus pair, on 30th
Blyth Estuary	1	7	GB/LAR/LJM. Plus pair, on 1st. Down to 6 young by 15th
Newton flash	1	7	TD. Plus pair, on 23rd
Druridge Pools	1	6	MSH/TAC. Plus pair, on 11th
East Chevington	1	6	PRM. Plus female, on 8th
Monks' House Pool	1	5	DF. Plus pair, 10th

#### Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*

An adult female was at Derwent Reservoir on 14th (IFo), 15th (PRM), and 29th (PJA/GB/DM).

#### Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

A female accompanied four ducklings at Gold Island, Wark on 14th (SW).

#### Baikal Teal *Sibirionetta formosa*

A smart drake was found at East Chevington north pool on 3rd (Lawrence Gray), having been reported in the preceding days at East Yorkshire and Falkirk, Scotland. On 4th, it was relocated at Druridge Pools and was reported from there until 9th and regularly again between 18th-30th. If accepted, this represents the first record for the county.

The popular Baikal Teal

Colin Bradshaw

19th June

Druridge Pools



**Garganey** *Spatula querquedula*

A drake at Monks' House Pool between 3rd-6th (DF/GPK *et al.*) was the sole report.

**Shoveler** *Spatula clypeata*

A peak of eight was at Druridge Pools on 18th (TB), three to four were at East Chevington (SW), Low Newton scrape (TRD) and Monks' House Pool on 4th (MSH), and one to two at Bothal Pond, Grindon Lough and Holy Island Lough. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/date
Druridge Pools	2	17 (10,7)	New brood of 10 on 4th (TRD). Brood of 7 young on 1st (as May) dropped to 5 young by 4th (IF/SW <i>et al.</i> ) and 5 still present on 11th.
Bothal Pond	1	5	TD on 5th. Down to two young by 29th.

**Gadwall** *Mareca strepera*

Five flew N at Seaton Sluice on 20th (SSWT). Peak counts (of adults where stated) were 28 at Caistrion on 15th (JD), 18 (including fully grown young) at Linton Ponds on 15th (STH), 16 at Druridge Pools on 18th (LJM), 11-12 at Castle Island (DM/PJA) and Low Newton (PRM), and seven to nine at Bothal Pond, East Chevington and Hauxley Reserve. Three to four were also at Cresswell Pond, Marden Quarry and Monks' House Pool, and singles at Budle Bay, Capheaton Lake, Grindon Lough and Haughton Strother GP. More unusual were two at Annitsford Pond on 17th (the observer's first record for the site; LJM) and a pair at the Breamish Valley on 9th (TB). Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/date
Linton Ponds	2	13 (8,5)	CDH. On 16th
Caistrion	2	--	JD. On 15th
Big Waters	1	4	GB. Half-grown young on 26th
Branton GP	1	3	TRD/JD. On 19th

**Wigeon** *Mareca penelope*

Early in the month numbers at Grindon Lough peaked at 17 (14 drakes) on 1st (PRM) and 18 on 3rd (LJM), dropping to 11 (nine drakes) by 12th and one by 20th (PRM). Birds were present at Budle Bay all month, with a peak of 13 on 15th (GPK), 12 were at Druridge Pools on 21st (CB), nine at Derwent Reservoir on 4th (IFo), and one to two at East Chevington, Hauxley Reserve and Newton Pool. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/date
Derwent Reservoir	2	13 (8,5)	IFo. New brood of 8 young on 8th and brood of 5 (about 3 weeks old) on 25th.

**American Wigeon** *Mareca americana*

A drake was discovered at Grindon Lough on 5th (SW) and was noted there again on 7th and between 10th-12th (SJH/PRM *et al.*).

**Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*

Peak counts (of adults where stated) were 86 at Castle Island on 16th (DM/PJA), 78 at Derwent Reservoir on 14th (IFo), 42-47 at Grindon Lough (PRM) and Newcastle Leazes Park (DM), 32-39 at Linton Ponds (CDH) and West Ord (MHu), and 12-24 at Airy Holm Reservoir, Bothal Pond, Hauxley Reserve and Newcastle Exhibition Park. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/date
Castle Island	3	9 (4,3,2,)	DM/PJA on 16th
Newcastle Leazes Park	3	10 (5,4,1)	DM on 17th. As May?
West Ord	3	20 (9,7,4)	MHu. On 25th
Colt Crag Reservoir	1	12	MR. New brood on 10th
St Mary's Wetland	1	9	MSH. Recent brood on 24th
North Seaton weir	1	10	DM/PJA on 16th
Middle Ord Pond	1	8	MHu. On 23rd
Catcleugh Reservoir	1	7	PRM. On 19th
Howick	1	7	JAR. On 4th
Prestwick Carr	1	6	MRS. On 21st
Lower Holywell Dene	1	3	CDH. On 16th
Linton Ponds	1	2	STH. Half-grown young on 15th
Monks' House Pool	1	2	PRM. On 1st



**Teal** *Anas crecca*

A total of six flew N and seven S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), and seven moved N at Beadnell Point on 25th (DF). Peak counts were 14 at Druridge Pools on 30th (CB), ten at Low Newton scrape on 27th (TRD/JD), and five to six at Derwent Reservoir and Grindon Lough. A pair was at Middle Ord Pond on 23rd (MHu), and single drakes at Monks' House Pool and Woodhorn Flashes between 1st-6th.

**Pochard** *Aythya ferina*

18 (16 drakes) were at Holywell Pond on 1st (LJM), 12 drakes were at Swallow Pond on 2nd (SRB), and unusually, nine drakes were on the shallow Druridge 'Budge fields' on 3rd (TRD/JD/NFO). Three (two drakes) were at Bothal Pond (TD), three drakes at Woodhorn Flashes (CDH), and one at East Chevington. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/date
Holywell Pond	1	5	LJM on 1st. Presumed same brood down to 2 young by 5th (MSH).

**Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula*

Four flew S at Seaton Sluice on 6th (SSWT). Peak counts were 41 at Caistron on 15th (JD), 22 at Bothal Pond on 3rd (TD), and ten to 18 at East Chevington, Haughton Strother GP, Hauxley Reserve, Linton Ponds and Milkhope Lake. Seven to nine were also at Castle Island, Druridge Pools and Grindon Lough, and one to three at Coanwood and Cresswell Ponds, Derwent Reservoir, Jesmond Dene, Monks' House and Newton Pools, and Wansbeck Business Park (Ashington).

**Eider** *Somateria mollissima*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 41 N and 25 S (SSWT).

218, mainly drakes, were at Holy Island harbour on 9th (IK), 65 were at North Blyth on 26th (STH/IFo), 52 adults at Seahouses harbour on 23rd (PRM), and 47 at Cocklawburn (MHu). Ten to 14 were also at Calot Shad (the Tweed Estuary) and Newbiggin, and four on the River Coquet at Warkworth. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods/crèches	No. of young	Observer/date
Holy Island	4	31	IK. A total of 24 young of various ages on 8th-9th and a new crèche of 7 young on 20th.
Coquet Estuary	--	45	SW on 9th. As May?
Seahouses Harbour	--	36	PRM on 23rd
Blyth Estuary	1	2	GB/LAR. Female with two small young (locally bred?) on 1st.

**Velvet Scoter** *Melanitta fusca*

Two offshore at Seaton Sluice on 14th (SSWT) was the only report.

**Common Scoter** *Melanitta nigra*

A total of 658 flew N and 402 S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), while 61 flew N at Annstead on 5th (DF), 28 N at Beadnell Point on 25th (DF) and 17 S at Annstead on 10th (DF). Few were noted on the sea, with 11 off East Chevington on 9th (TRD) and two to seven at Birling Carrs, Meadow Haven and North Blyth.

**Goldeneye** *Bucephala clangula*

13 (adults and sub-adults) were at a confidential site on 20th (LJM); and six to eight were at a nearby site on 5th and 11th (TF/JFa *et al.*). Singles were on the River Wansbeck at Ashington on 17th (TB) and Spittal Bay on 1st (MHu). Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/date
Confidential site	1	9	TD. Female and 9 young ducklings on 22nd.

**Goosander** *Mergus merganser*

Five flew N at Seaton Sluice between 2nd-10th (SSWT) and three N at Newbiggin on 8th (GB/LAR). 100+ were at St Cuthbert's Island, Holy Island on 12th (MSH), 43 were at Budle Bay on 24th (GPK), 24 at the Blyth Estuary on 14th and 28th (ASJ/LJM), 12 at Calot Shad, the Tweed Estuary (MHu) and 12 on the River Coquet at Warkworth (MKi). Five to six were at Alnmouth, Meadow Haven and West Ord, three to four at/over Catcleugh Reservoir, Monks' House Pool and Rothbury, and one to two at Airy Holm and Derwent Reservoirs, and Cresswell Pond. A female with three large young at Derwent Reservoir on 29th may have been locally bred (GB/DM/PJA).

**Red-breasted Merganser** *Mergus serrator*

A total of 20 flew N at Seaton Sluice during the month, including 11 N on 11th (SSWT). Eight were at Boulmer on 13th (BS), eight at Budle Bay on 14th with a pair present there all month (CGK/GPK), two at Newton Links (SW) and a drake (presumed part of breeding pair) at Inner Farne, the Farne Islands on 7th (TRD).

**Red Grouse** *Lagopus lagopus*

Only four records received this month. 13 were at Hedgehope on 27th (IRD), at least 12 at Coanwood Common on 15th (PRM), two in Harthope Valley on 8th (TRD) and a single at Pithouse Fell (Slaley) on 29th (DM/GB/PJA).

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

One to two were at Breamish Valley, Brier Dene Farm, Midgeholme, Wingates Moor and Wooler.

**Grey Partridge** *Perdix perdix*

Six were at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) on 5th and one to three were at Arcot Pond, Beal, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Bay, Druridge Pools, Easington Grange, Ellington, Fieldhead (Longhorsley), Harlow Hill, Hemscott Hill and Warkworth Lane.

**Quail** *Coturnix coturnix*

The first sighting of the year, as opposed to heard birds, was at Cresswell on 11th when one flew up from under the observer's feet and flew a short distance into grass (TRD/JD). A male was singing at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) on 13th (JBu) and another at Great Whittington on 16th (ALT). One calling at Derwent Reservoir on 24th was the observer's first record here since 1990 (IFO) and one calling at Whittingham on 28-29th was seen when raised by a passing hare (CW). An unusual sighting, with photos, was one in a Tynemouth garden on 13th (KL per TD).

**Pheasant** *Phasianus colchicus*

Two were at both Castle Island and Arcot Pond (DM/PJA).

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

The monthly total passing Seaton Sluice was 21N and ten S (SSWT). Three were in Druridge Bay on 1st (SW) and a single flew north past Annstead on 5th (DF).

**Great Northern Diver** *Gavia immer*

Following last year's first site June record, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower experienced another record crop of unseasonal sightings with singles flying N on 5th, 11th and 24th and one on the sea on 22nd (SSWT). Two adults were also at Budle Point on 9th (CGK/GPK).

**White-billed Diver** *Gavia adamsii*

One flew N past Cullercoats/Rockcliffe on 8th (MK/IJ).

**Fulmar** *Fulmarus glacialis*

The only sizeable count made at Seaton Sluice was 75N in two hours on 12th (SSWT). 16 headed N past Annstead in the space of just four minutes on 11th (DF). Reports from breeding sites included 88 apparently occupied nests at Howick/Cullernose Point on 1st (BS) and a total of 51 birds – ca.25 AON – in the regular breeding colony at Coves Haven (Holy Island) on 8th (IK). One to eight were at several other localities including one a mile inland at Ellington.



A Fulmar at Rockcliffe on 5th June by Iain Johnstone



**Manx Shearwater** *Puffinus puffinus*

Seaton Sluice Watch Tower recorded a below average monthly total of 365 (279N, 86S) in 69 hours with the largest numbers on 4th-5th and on 22nd (SSWT). One to 14 were sighted on passage at several other coastal viewpoints.

**Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Breeding data as follows:

Locality	Peak Count	Date	Observer/notes
Linton Ponds	8	15th	8 adults plus 3 broods across the two ponds (STH)
Newcastle Town Moor, Exhibition Park	2	3rd	Adult and small chick. Believed to be first confirmed breeding for this site (GB/DM)
Longhorsley, Linden Hall	2	13th	One juvenile – first breeding here in 15 years (NFO)
Arcot Pond	3	1st	Pair with two small young (DM)

Up to six birds were at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) on 3rd (TD), five at Swallow Pond on 2nd (SRB) and one to four at Branton GP, Castron, Coanwood Pond, East Chevington South Pool, Grindon Lough, Middle Ord Pond (Berwick), Monks' House Pool, Newton Pool, and on nest at Northumberlandia (Cramlington).

**Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus*

Widdrington Moor Lake peaked at nine adult birds on 19th (MSH), five were at Big Waters NWT on 26th (GB) and two pairs were at East Chevington on 29th (TRD). Breeding records came from Holywell Pond with two adults and one large chick there on 5th (MSH) and Linton Ponds with a brood of two, down from three last month, on 16th (CDH/STH). One to three birds were at Airy Holm Reservoir, Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Branton GP, Castron, Haughton Strothers, Holywell Pond NR, Seaton Sluice, Swallow Pond and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

**Black-necked Grebe** *Podiceps nigrocollis*

The pair at the regular breeding site in SE Northumberland were present on 2nd but with no evidence of breeding, possibly due to high water levels (SRB).

**Spoonbill** *Platalea leucorodia*

Five were watched flying north up the coast at Cheswick beach on 2nd (BWG). Thereafter at least two remained in the county with an adult at Cresswell Pond/Druridge Pools from 7th until 30th (STH/TB/PRM/MN *et al.*) and a second calendar year bird at Holy Island causeway from 8th-9th (ADM/RA/TRD/MJC).



A Spoonbill over Druridge Pools

25th June

Tim Dean

**Bittern** *Botaurus stellaris*

One was seen at Chevington North Pool on 15th (ADMc).

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

The highest count was 14 at Druridge Pools NR on 3rd (DM/PJA) followed by 11 at Yarrow Slake (R. Tweed) on 19th (MHu), whilst three pairs fledged young from a small colony in Boulmer Village by 9th (BS). Eight birds attended four nests in the heronry at Howdon on 7th (CB) and six birds were at both Whittle Dene Reservoirs and Colt Crag Reservoir. One to five were at 13 other localities including one at a nest at Haughton Castle and a partial melanistic bird with an all sooty brown body in Borough Woods (Morpeth) on 3rd (ADMc).

A Grey Heron takes off

Cresswell Pond

Alan Jack

14th June

**Great White Egret** *Ardea alba*

One was at East Chevington North Pool on 18th (TB/BS) and another possible sighting in the Coquet Estuary on 26th - however the observer was without binoculars and at a great distance with no birds nearby for size comparison. The long neck and behaviour suggested this species (MKi).

**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*

Birds were present in Budle Bay all month peaking at nine on 27th (CGL/GPK). Elsewhere, seven were at Yarrow Slake (R. Tweed Estuary) on 15th (BWG), five at Warkworth Gut on 30th (CSa) and four at Holy Island on 8th (ADM). One to three were at Alnmouth, Colt Crag Reservoir, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Long Nanny and Monks' House Pool.

**Gannet** *Morus bassanus*

Steady passage counts this month with no large movements noted other than 660N per hour past Berwick Pier at 09.00 on 12th (MHu). The peak count at Seaton Sluice was 410N in four hours on 11th (SSWT). Also on 11th, 262 flew N past Annstead, whilst 110N and 58S were recorded at Stag Rocks on 26th with similar numbers on several other days at those two northerly locations (DF). Smaller numbers were seen at several other coastal sites.

**Shag** *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

As is usual this time of year reports were few with ten at Holy Island on 5th (TRD), eight at the Meadow Haven (Berwick) roost on two dates, two at Low Blyth South Harbour and a single bird being the only sighting all month from Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

A Shag close up

Staple Island

8th June

Tim Dean





**Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

29 were in Blyth South Harbour on 15th (LJM) and East Chevington peaked at 25 on 20th (MSH). On the R. Tweed a flock of 18 flew upstream at Calot Shad on 2nd and 16 were in the New Water Haugh low tide roost on the same day (MHu). The monthly maximum at Derwent Reservoir was 13 on 14th (IFo), nine were at Castle island on 16th and one to seven were at several other sites.

**Osprey** *Pandion haliaetus*

Two birds were seen fishing over the Southern reservoir at Whittle Dene on 2nd (PRM) and a single bird was present the previous day (ASJ), also on 1st a bird flew S along the coast at St Mary's Island (AC/MSH). Other singles were at Colt Crag Reservoir on 5th (MR) and at Winnows Hill on 26th (ADMc).

**Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus*

A pair was at Ellington on 1st (TB) and two birds, probably a juvenile and an adult, were calling overhead at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 29th (TD). Single birds this month were reported from the following sites: Blyth, East Allen Valley, Ellington, Haydon Bridge, Howick, Humshaugh, River Aln estuary and Sleekburn.

**Goshawk** *Accipiter gentilis*

Three birds at Harwood Forest on 1st (STE) were the only records this month of this secretive species.

**Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*

A 1st-year male and two females were at east Chevington on 4th (IF) and three birds were at another site regularly throughout the month (BS). Two females were also noted at East Chevington on 9th (TB) and single birds were reported from Cresswell Pond, Druridge Lane, Druridge Pools and East Chevington involving a mixture of females and a male.

**Red Kite** *Milvus Milvus*

On 11th two birds were at Carterway Heads (IFo) and single birds were seen at Ovingham on 1st (ASJ), nr Slaley Forest on 3rd (IFo), Allensford on 4th (IFo), Humshaugh on 8th (TWi), Tynemouth on 9th (MK), Coanwood Common on 14th (AA), Derwent Reservoir on 15th (IFo), Carterway Heads on 16th (PRM), Harthope Valley on 25th (LJM *et al.*) and Airy Holm Reservoir on 29th (IFo).

**Common Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*

Four birds were in the air together at Howick on 28th (JAR) and three were at Bothal Village on 28th (TB). One to two birds were at 16 sites including one bird carrying a large prey item being mobbed by a Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus* at Northumberlandia (Cramlington) on 29th (LJM).

**Water Rail** *Rallus aquaticus*

East Chevington had the most records this month with a peak of four birds on 4th (IF *et al.*) followed by Cresswell Pond with singles heard or seen on 7th and 18th (TB/TRD) and a bird squealing at Arcot Pond on 21st (STH). Calling birds have been heard at Branton and Hedgeley GPs throughout the spring and summer with breeding suspected at the latter site (GD *per* TRD).

**Baillon's Crake** *Porzana pusilla*

An adult was seen at Monks' House Pool on 5th (IF).

**Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*

Eight birds were at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 17th (DM), six were at Druridge Pools on 8th (PRM) and five were seen at Hauxley NWT and Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 17th (HRS/DM). One to four were observed at Benton (Newcastle), Coanwood Pond, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough, Howick, Jesmond Dene (Newcastle), Wansbeck Business Park (Ashington), West Sleekburn and at Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

**Coot** *Fulica atra*

At Bothal Pond the numbers increased throughout the month peaking at 37 birds on 29th (TD). Killingworth Lake had 24 birds plus 13 young on 17th (LJM). 21 birds were seen at Linton Pond on 16th (CDH), and 12 birds were at Coanwood Pond on 15th (PRM). One to eight birds were also seen at Arcot Pond, Banks Pond (Dinnington), Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Grindon Lough, Leazes Park (Newcastle), Monks' House Pool, Middle Ord Pond (Berwick), Wansbeck Business Park (Ashington) and at Woodhorn Flashes.

May bulletin should read "11 birds were at Bothal pond on 5th" (not 111).

**Oystercatcher** *Haematopus ostralegus*

For the month as a whole Seaton Sluice Watch Tower recorded a total count of 205 (61N, 144S). Records of young came from Colt Crag Reservoir where a chick was noted on 10th (MR), from Newcastle Airport on 18th, where a pair were flying around with a single young bird (IF), from Boulmer on 21st where a juvenile was reported (BS) and from Derwent Reservoir where, on 8th, a "newish" chick was seen with an adult (IF). Six nesting pairs were noted at Breamish Valley for much of the month (ASJ), two pairs were at Rothbury, Lady's Bridge on 18th (IRD) and at East Allen Valley, The Hagg on 7th (RPo) and a pair were present all month at Shotleyfield, Airy Holm Reservoir (IF). The largest count was of 68 at Boulmer on 21st (BS). Sixty-seven were at North Blyth staithes on 17th (STH), 24 at Low Newton scrape on 8th (SW), 20 at Newbiggin, Beacon Point on 18th (STH) and a flock of 20 arriving from the north-east at St Mary's Island on 24th (MSH). Smaller counts came

from Bellister, Blanchland Moor (Acton Farm), Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Breamish Valley, Coanwood, Colt Crag Reservoir, Greenlee Lough, Grindon Lough, Hauxley NWT, Holy Island Harbour, Newcastle (Longbenton), the Tweed Estuary (Calot Shad) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

#### **Avocet** *Recurvirostra avosetta*

A total count of 21 was made at Cresswell Pool on 9th with up to eight nests (MN). However, between 12th-13th these were washed out (STH). Thereafter most reports were of birds in single figures. Other sites reporting Avocets were the Blyth Estuary (Kitty Brewster), Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Budle Bay, Cresswell (Snab Point), Druridge Pools, Ellington (Warkworth Lane), Grindon Lough, Lynemouth Flash, Newton (Long Nanny), Wansbeck (Castle Island) and Woodhorn Flashes.

#### **Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus*

Breeding reports came from Ridley Common where, on 1st, 25 pairs, many with young were noted (ASJ) and from Derwent Reservoir on 14th, where a brood of three new chicks was seen (IFo). At Coanwood 26+ pairs were seen on 15th (PRM) and at Howdon on 22nd two pairs were noted (CB). The highest count was of 150 making up a post-breeding flock at Derwent Reservoir on 28th (IFo) while 112 were counted in the Aln Estuary on 30th (MKi). At Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) on 16th 24 birds were seen (TD), 12 were at Castle Island on 15th (DM), and ten were in the Coquet Estuary on 22nd (RPo). Smaller counts came from Blanchland Moor (Acton Farm), Cramlington (Arcot Manor), East Allen Valley (The Hagg), Grindon Lough and Shield on the Wall.

#### **Golden Plover** *Pluvialis apricaria*

Only three records received, all from the coast. Four were counted at Newbiggin, Beacon Point on 27th (STH), three at Boulmer on 22nd (BS) and a single at St Mary's on 26th (JBu).

#### **Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola*

Four birds were at Boulmer on 21st (BS) and a single was at Holy Island Harbour on 9th (IK).

#### **Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula*

The only record that involved breeding was of a chick that perished after prolonged rain at Colt Crag Reservoir on 10th (MR). The highest count came from the Blyth Estuary where, on the 1st, 258 birds were seen feeding on the south side (GB). On the same day 169 were reported from the Coquet Estuary (SW) and 114+ were at Low Newton scrape (PRM). Over 100 birds were at Budle Bay on 2nd (GPK) and 10 were at Holy Island, Sandham Bay on 8th (IK). Smaller counts came from Cocklawburn, Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Farne Islands (Inner Farne), Grindon Lough, Haughton Strothers, Holy Island causeway and Holy Island Harbour.

#### **Little Ringed Plover** *Charadrius dubius*

A total of three broods were reported from three different sites. Records not involving any apparent breeding were made from a further five sites.

#### **Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus*

Two birds were seen fling W at Ellington on 23rd (TB). Singles were reported from the Blyth Estuary on 30th, Budle Bay on 4th, East Chevington on 3rd, Longhoughton Steel on 13th, St Mary's Island on 26th and the Tweed (New Water Haugh) on 5th.

#### **Curlew** *Numenius arquata*

A downy chick was seen feeding at Great Whittington (South) on 16th (ALT). Over 13 pairs were seen at Coanwood on 15th (PRM), eleven nesting pairs were at Ridley Common on 1st (ASJ), two pairs were at Greenlee Lough on 20th (PRM), a nesting pair were at Great Ryle on 4th (CW), a pair was present all month at Allensford, South Snods (IFo), a pair were at Grindon Lough on 7th (PRM), and a pair were defending presumed young at East Allen Valley, The Hagg on 7th (RPo). SSWT counted a monthly total of 82 (73N, 9S) with 65N on 26th. Boulmer had a count of 61 on 21st (BS), 18 were at Yarrow Slake on the Tweed at Berwick on 19th (MHu) and 15 at Newbiggin, Beacon Point on 27th (STH). Smaller counts came from Bellister, Blanchland Moor (Acton Farm), Derwent Reservoir, Greenhaugh (Sundaysight), Hauxley NWT, Howdon, Newbiggin (Quarry Cottage), Otterburn (Ottercops Moss), Shotleyfield (Airy Holm Reservoir), St Mary's Island, Tynemouth and Widdrington,

#### **Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica*

The summering non-breeders, still in winter plumage, totalled at 90 at Holy Island harbour on 9th (IK), three were present all month at Boulmer (BS), two were roosting at Kitty Brewster on the Blyth Estuary on 1st (GB) and two were at Newton, Football Hole in non-breeding plumage on 23rd (TB). Singles were seen at Druridge Pools, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower and St Mary's Island.

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

Reflecting the increasing occurrence of this species throughout the year, the first June records for SSWT were made with 23S on 23rd. Druridge Pools had a count of 22 on 30th (TB), 16 were at Low Newton scrape on 23rd (GPK) and eleven were at Cresswell Pond on 22nd (TB). Ten birds frequented Monks' House Pool on 22nd (GPK) and smaller counts were made at Budle Bay and Warkworth Gut.

#### Photograph title correction from May

The Godwit is a Bar-tailed.

**Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*

Probable summering groups were reported from a number of locations with 32 at Boulmer on 21st (BS) and 16 at Football Hole (Low Newton) on 23rd (TD). Two to seven were seen at the Farne Islands, Hauxley NWT, Low Newton beach, Low Newton scrape, North Blyth Staithes, Sandham Bay (Holy Island) and Seahouses.

**Knot** *Calidris canutus*

Late northbound or potential summering birds were scattered along the coast north of Druridge Bay. The River Coquet estuary attracted 11 on 1st (SW) and ten were at Warkworth Gut on 3rd (NFO). Others, mainly non breeding plumage birds, were reported with nine at Cresswell Pond on 25th (TRD/JD), eight at Holy Island harbour on 5th (TRD), four at Druridge Pools on 4th (IF) and four at Beal Point (Lindisfarne) on 9th (TRD). One-two were seen at Boulmer, Chiburn mouth (summer plumaged birds), the Farne Islands, Holy Island causeway and St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island).

**Ruff** *Calidris pugnax*

Two lingered at Druridge Pools on 30th (TB).

**Curlew Sandpiper** *Calidris ferruginea*

Two summer-plumaged birds were at Holy Island causeway on 10th (TRD/JD) and singles were at Budle Bay on 1st (GPK) and Holy Island causeway on 7th (NFO).

**Sanderling** *Calidris alba*

What must have been a spectacular sighting at Sandham Bay (Holy Island) was 50 summer-plumaged birds on 8th (IK). Groups were reported in the Low Newton area with the maximum being 36 on the beach on 4th (NFO) and the last being 13 on 13th at the Long Nanny Estuary (MSH/TAC). Elsewhere, 22 were counted at Boulmer on 9th, 15 at Snab Point (Cresswell) on 3rd (TB), ten at Annstead (Seahouses) on 6th (GB) and a single breeding-plumaged bird at Derwent Reservoir on 4th (IFo).

**Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*

Much reduced numbers as expected reported from the coast this month with 40 at Budle Bay on 5th and also Holy Island causeway on 10th (GPK/TRD/JD). A minimum of 25 were at Low Newton scrape on 1st (PRM) and eight were nearby on the beach on 9th (SW). The River Blyth Estuary held 19 on 1st (GB), the maximum reported at Cresswell Pond was five on 29th, six were at Sandham Bay (Holy Island) on 8th and two were at Druridge Pools on 4th and Cocklawburn on 7th. Inland, seven migrants were grounded by heavy rain at Derwent Reservoir on 8th with two being reported there on 4th (IFo). At Grindon Lough the highest number seen was seven on 16th (MRS).

**Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola*

More reports were received this month with three seen at Slaley Forest on 10th (AJH) and two roding birds at Harwood Forest on 1st (STE). Single birds were reported from Beanley Plantation, Bellister, Derwent Reservoir, Eglingham, Langleeford and Widehope.



A Woodcock from the window of Tim Dean's Car  
Harthope Valley  
9th June

**Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago*

A much reduced number of reports this month with five displaying birds at Ridley Common on 1st (ASJ) and five at Pit House Fell (Slaley) on 29th (DM). Two were displaying at Castron on 15th (JD) and two at Catcleugh on 26th (CW).

**Red-necked Phalarope** *Phalaropus lobatus*

The female first noted on the last day of May at Grindon Lough was reported up to 16th (SJH/PRM/MRS).



**Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos*

Birds were reported from breeding areas and the first returning birds were noted at the coast on the last few days of the month. Eleven pairs were noted in the River Breamish valley during the month (ASJ), four pairs were at Catcleugh Reservoir on 19th (PRM) and pairs were noted in the Upper Breamish valley on 1st and Greenlee Lough on 20th (MJC/PRM). Four including a large chick were at Warden on 30th (SW), four at Derwent Reservoir, two each at Airy Holm Reservoir, Bellister and Wark with singles noted at Rothbury and Whitfield Moor. Returning migrants were at the coast with five at Warkworth Gut on 30th (CSa), two at Stag Rocks on 29th and two at St Peter's basin (Newcastle) on 30th.

**Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*

Two were at the Budge fields, Druridge on 13th and 24th with one on 25th (ADMc) and a single was at Ogle Bridge on 8th and 12th (AHB).

**Redshank** *Tringa totanus*

Summering or returning birds were present at the River Blyth Estuary with 25 on 30th (LJM). Other coastal records were nine at Hauxley NWT on 17th (HRS) with singles at Castle Island on 16th and New Water Haugh and Yarrow Slake on the River Tweed on 19th. At Grindon Lough, 12 were seen on 1st reducing to three by 20th (PRM/MRS/SJH/AJH). Four were seen at Derwent Reservoir on 14th and two at Plenmeller Common on 20th.

**Wood Sandpiper** *Tringa glareola*

One at Low Newton scrape on 6th (TRD) may have been a late spring migrant and probable returning birds were at Holywell flash pool with three on 25th (MN/TB) with a single at Druridge Pools on 29th (TRD/STH/IFo).

**Spotted Redshank** *Tringa erythropus*

A small influx of summer-plumaged adults was noted with one at Grindon Lough on 11th-12th (SJH/PRM), one at Monks' House Pool on 23rd (KE), one at Druridge Pools and another at Cresswell Pond on 30th (TB/MSH/CB).

**Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*

One was at Druridge Pools on 1st (SW) and one arrived from the north at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) before having second thoughts and returning north without landing on 27th (RS).

**Kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla*

The only significant movement reported was 650/hour N into a strong northerly wind on 11th at Berwick Pier (MHu). At coastal breeding colonies approximate counts of 800, 400 and 200 birds came from the Farne Islands, Howick/Cullernose Point and Coquet Island respectively (TRD/BS). Inland, at the Newcastle City colonies, where many chicks were seen or heard in the nests, nest counts were 331 on the North Tower of the Tyne Bridge, 52 on the Newcastle quayside buildings, 50 on the Newcastle side of the Tyne Bridge and 79 on the Dean Street railway bridge (DM). Concentrations elsewhere were a maximum of 370 in the regular gull roost at Calot Shad in the Tweed Estuary (MHu) and 70+ at the Long Nanny.



A Kittiwake at Tynemouth on 10th June by Alan Jack

**Black-headed Gull** *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

At the Plenmeller Common colony a count of 1,800, including many juveniles, were noted on 23rd (SJH), 60-80 were at Derwent Reservoir (DM) and on the River Coquet at Warkworth (MKi) with 20-30 at Castle Island and Hauxley NWT.



Black-headed Gull chicks on 8th June on Inner Farne by Tim Dean

**Little Gull** *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

Up to five birds, all immatures of varying ages, frequented the Cresswell Pond/Druridge Pools/East Chevington area with singles on 4th-9th increasing after mid-month from two to five, mainly seen on the East Chevington N Pool. Single immature birds were noted elsewhere at Budle Bay, Longhoughton Steel and Monks' House Pool on various dates throughout (*many observers*).

**Mediterranean Gull** *Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus*

Up to five immature birds remained at Newbiggin on 27th (STH) with one at Cresswell Pond on 28th (TB) and a single adult at the Plenmeller Common site (SJH).

**Common Gull** *Larus canus*

Three were at Derwent Reservoir and one at Druridge Pools (DM/PRM).

**Great Black-backed Gull** *Larus marinus*

Thirteen were recorded at Boulmer (BS), six at Berwick, Spital (MHu) and one or two at Castle Island and Grindon Lough (DM/PRM).

**Iceland Gull** *Larus glaucooides*

A 1st-summer was at Boulmer on 25th (BS).

**Herring Gull** *Larus argentatus argenteus*

An unusually high gathering was noted in Holy Island harbour on 9th when 350 were present (IK), 86 were in the roost at Berwick, Spital (MHu), 63, the majority adults, flew S at Bamburgh Stag Rocks on 4th (DF) and 24 were at Castle Island (DM). Three occupied nests were seen at Bassington Drive, Cramlington (LJM), one AON was near Walkergate Metro station (CDH) and the first hatched chicks were recorded in the Blyth Estuary on 15th (LJM).

**Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus fuscus graelsii*

At Bamburgh Stag Rocks 22 flew S on 4th (DF) and up to 15 were at Derwent Reservoir during the month (IFo). Elsewhere, eight were at New Water Haugh, Berwick (MHu), six flew N at Seaton Sluice on 11th (SSWT) and one to six were at Castle Island, Grindon Lough, Greenlee Lough, Howdon and Jesmond Dene (DM/MRS/MJCo/PRM/CB).

**Sandwich Tern** *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

The only sizeable count at Seaton Sluice was 150 S in two hours on 20th (SSWT). Approximately 200 were counted on the Farne Islands and also Coquet Island on 6th-7th (TRD) and numbers at East Chevington on dates throughout were 15-52 (TRD/PRM). Elsewhere, counts of 41 came from St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) (IK), 20 at St Mary's Island (KWY) with one to six present at seven other localities.



**Little Tern** *Sternula albifrons*

The NT wardens at the Long Nanny site reported an encouraging 30-33 nests and 60-64 eggs on 3rd and 5th (SRB/TRD). In Budle Bay, 23 were present on 17th (CGK/GPK) and at other sites, Annstead, Boulmer, East Chevington and Low Newton one to six were noted (DF/PRM/BS/ADMc).

**Roseate Tern** *Sterna dougallii*

Surprisingly few records, comprising five seen on Coquet Island on 6th (TRD), one at the Arctic Tern colony at the Long Nanny on 5th (TRD) and one on Inner Farne on 23rd (PRM).



Roseate Terns on Coquet Island Beach by Tim Dean on 6th June

An Arctic Tern

The Long Nanny

26th June

Alan Jack







Auks from Tim Dean's visit to  
Staple Island

8th June

Top: a Razorbill

Left: a Bridled Guillemot

Below: a Puffin



**Common Tern** *Sterna hirundo*

At breeding sites, an estimated 200 birds were on Coquet Island on 6th (TRD), at least 50, including 28 sitting birds, were on the North Blyth staithes (STH) with four nests on the raft at Whittle Dene Reservoirs (PRM). Up to five were regularly seen at East Chevington with one to four noted at Colt Crag Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Ellington, Holywell Pond, Howdon, Leazes Park lake, Monks' House Pool and Warkworth.

**Arctic Tern** *Sterna paradisaea*

The NT wardens at the Long Nanny colony reported 1,467 nests on 5th (TRD), ca.1,500 birds were counted on Inner Farne on 7th and 50 on Coquet island on 6th (TRD). Smaller numbers elsewhere included 22 at Hauxley NWT (HRS), 20 at Lindisfarne NNR (TRD) and 16 at East Chevington (PRM).

**Great Skua** *Stercorarius skua*

The only record was a single moving N at Seaton Sluice on 12th (SSWT).

**Arctic Skua** *Stercorarius parasiticus*

A poor month with only three records, one moving S at Seaton Sluice on 6th (SSWT), one N at Seahouses on 7th (TRD) and one N at Cresswell, Snab Point on 11th (TB).

**Auk** *sp*

At St Mary's Island, 285 moved mainly N in one hour on 26th with 85 N in half an hour on 24th (MSH).

**Common Guillemot** *Uria aalge*

Large movements were recorded at Seaton Sluice on 11th when 1,710 flew N in four hours and on 14th with 2,360 moving N in one hour early morning (SSWT); at Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) 'scores' passed N & S in 1-2 hours on 8th (ADM) and at Bamburgh Stag Rocks 230 were counted flying N on 4th with 52 N in one hour on 11th (DF). Up to ten were recorded elsewhere at Berwick (Meadow Haven and Spittal Bay), Coquet Island, Cullernose Point, Holy Island and Newbiggin.

**Razorbill** *Alca torda*

During the large Auk movements of 11th and 14th, some 730 moved N in four hours on 11th with 800 N in one hour early morning on 14th (SSWT). On the Farne Islands ca.100 were counted on 7th (TRD), 24 flew N in one hour at Bamburgh on 11th (DF) and up to five were seen at Cullernose Point, Druridge Bay and Holy Island.

**Puffin** *Fratercula arctica*

Movements N were noted on 10th-11th at Annstead with 450 in one hour (DF), Seaton Sluice with 110 N in four hours (SSWT) and Bamburgh with 85 in one hour (DF); a smaller passage was noted at St Mary's Island on 26th with 52 N in one hour. On other dates, one to five were at Berwick (Needle's Eye), Cullernose Point and Newbiggin.

**Rock Dove** *Columba livia*

152 was the high count roosting around the war memorial in Old Eldon Square (Newcastle) on 8th, 60 at Stakeford Road Bridge and 18 at Stakeford Rail Bridge on 16th (DM) with 53 at Blyth Quayside on 15th (LJM) and seven the peak at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 2nd.

**Stock Dove** *Columba oenas*

On 5th 30 were at Brier Dene Farm (IJ), 18 at Howdon on 26th (CB) with four at Jesmond Dene on 23rd (MJCo) and three at Grindon Lough on 7th (PRM). One to two were at seven other locations.

**Woodpigeon** *Columba palumbus*

Eight adults during the month at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) with a juvenile on 21st and 23rd (RS) and six at Jesmond Dene on 23rd (MJCo).

**Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto*

A peak of eight were at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) (RS) during the month with one nest building at Humshaugh on 29th (SW).

**Cuckoo** *Cuculus canorus*

Nine, of which eight were singing males, were at Harwood Forest on 1st (STE), four singing males at Upper Breamish on the same date (MJC), three at Derwent Reservoir on 4th (IFo) with two singing at Simonside and Holystone on 9th, Slaley Forest on 10th, Druridge Bay, Harthope Valley and Wanneys (Foulaw Forest) on 16th. Singles were at 21 other widespread localities.

**Barn Owl** *Tyto alba*

All reports were of singles with the Cresswell bird seen on four dates from 3rd to 29th and one at Druridge Pools on 8th and 16th. One was at Monks' House Pool on 6th and 14th, at Howick on 8th, Holy Island on 15th and Housesteads on 27th.

**Tawny Owl** *Strix aluco*

One seen on 5th fed three young at Howick on the 15th (JAR). Three hooted at Harwood Forest on 1st (STE), one at Longdyke (Shilbottle) on the same date and at Bellister on 4th Chatton on 7th, in the observer's garden at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 16th and Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 24th.

May bulletin section title was missing. It should read

**May Little Owl** *Athene noctua*

Breeding pairs were confirmed at Startup and Berwick Hill in the first week of the month with a juvenile at Berwick Hill Bridge on 1st (AHB) and singles reported all month from Druridge, near Matfen on 4th (ALT/HD/DM) and Paxhill (nr Allenheads) on 16th (SJH).

**Little Owl** *Athene noctua*

The regular pair were at Shiremoor during the month with one regular at Druridge being seen all month and perched in the round window on the farm on four dates. The only other was one at Middle Stobswood on 18th.

A Little Owl checks out Iain Johnstone  
Brier Dene  
14th June



**Long-eared Owl** *Asio otus*

Three calling juveniles were heard by four observers around midnight on 29th / 30th at a site in the SE of the county.

**Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus*

One was at the Snook (Holy Island) on 15th (ADM) and at Whitfield Moor on 16th (SW).

**Nightjar** *Caprimulgus europaeus*

A pair displayed at Harwood Forest on 1st (STE), two at Slaley Forest on 10th (AJH), and two to three there on the 29th (DM/GB/PJA) with one giving excellent views at Beanley Plantation on 7th (TRD/JD).

**Swift** *Apus apus*

More than 150 fed at Earsdon on 10th (MN), 112 moved S at Seaton Sluice on 16th / 17th (SSWT), 50+ at St Mary's Island on 1st, 40 at Backworth and Druridge Pools on 17th, 30 at East Chevington on 3rd & 30th with the same number at Arcot Pond on 21st. 16-20 were at Belford and Humshaugh with one to seven at six other locations passage south noted at St Mary's Island on 25th.

**Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis*

Just three sightings of singles at Caistron on 15th (JD), a first June record at Seaton Sluice on 19th (SSWT) and Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth) on 20th.

**Great Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos major*

A pair with two fledged juveniles were at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 29th (DM) and a pair attended a nest at Colt Crag Reservoir on 5th (MR). Juveniles were noted at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 13th, Slaley Forest on 18th and Tynemouth on 30th. Singles were at eight other locations.

**Green Woodpecker** *Picus viridis*

Two were heard at Letah Wood (Hexham) on 8th (AJH) with singles yaffling at Milkhope Lake (Blagdon) on 3rd (LJM) and Rothbury on 23rd (JD).

**Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*

Three birds were noted at Holy Island on 15th (ADM) and Castle Island on 16th (DM/PJA) and two birds were at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 16th (TD). One to two were at West Hartford throughout the month (TB) and a male was seen at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) throughout the month. Single birds were also noted at Brenkley, Brier Dene Farm, Ellington, Fieldhead (Longhorsley), Howick, Lynemouth Flash, Usway Burn (Upper Coquetdale), Whittle Dene Reservoirs and Widdrington Moor Lake



A Kestrel Study by Mike Henry

**Hobby** *Falco subbuteo*

An adult flew S over East Chevington North pool mobbed by a Common Tern *Sterna hirundo* on 18th (TB/AA). Then it was seen flying S at Druridge Coal Road (ADMC).

**Peregrine** *Falco peregrinus*

Two birds, an adult and a fledgling, were sitting near the nesting ledge at a confidential site on 16th (ALT), and up to two birds were seen at Ellington throughout the month (TB). Single birds were at Budle Bay on 9th (GPK) and at Derwent Reservoir on 28th (IFo).

**Ring-necked Parakeet** *Psittacula krameri*

One was in the Shoe Tree at Jesmond Dene on 9th (MJCo). One flew S calling over the A1 at Denton (Newcastle) on 15th, the first record for this BBS square (SRB).

**Red-backed Shrike** *Lanius collurio*

A male was found in the dunes at Druridge Bay on 2nd (SRB) and was last reported giving good views on 9th (TB).

**Jay** *Garrulus glandarius*

Two were nest building in Harwood Forest on 1st (STE) with two at Harthope Valley on 8th, Thrunton on 16th and Ellington on 30th. Singles were at Ashington on 3rd, West Hartford on 7th, Jesmond Dene on 9th and Winnows Hill (Slaley) on 29th.



**Magpie** *Pica pica*

On 9th four were at Jesmond Dene (MJCo) with four fledged juveniles at Alexandra Park (Cramlington) on 28th and one adult plus juvenile at Howick on 10th.



A Magpie in a Tynemouth garden by Colin Bradshaw on 29th June

**Jackdaw** *Corvus monedula*

A high count of 70 came from Howdon on 22nd (CB) with up to 40 at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) during the month but only one juvenile on 26th (RS). Seven were at various locations in Jesmond Dene on 9th.

**Rook** *Corvus frugilegus*

Just one report of a pair feeding two juveniles at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) all month (RS).

**Carrion Crow** *Corvus corone*

At Calot Shad (Tweed Estuary) 56 fed on molluscs at low tide on 12th (MHu) with 45 at Marden Farm (Tynemouth) on 19th (MN) and 29 including several young birds at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 27th (STH). Eight were at Jesmond Dene on 30th with three fledged juveniles at Alexandra Park (Cramlington) on 24th and one caught a Meadow Pipit in flight at Shield on the Wall on 5th.

**Raven** *Corvus corax*

Two adults and two juveniles were at Black Lough (Widehope) on 20th (IRD), three including at least one juvenile at Slaley Forest on 18th (TB), two at Hedgehope on 27th with singles at Breamish Valley on 9th, Coanwood on 15th, Grindon Lough on 16th and Catcleugh Reservoir on 19th.

**Coal Tit** *Periparus ater*

A family party with five juveniles was in Valley Park (Cramlington) on 20th (DM) and one was at Jesmond Dene Nature Area on 9th (MJCo).

**Marsh Tit** *Poecile palustris*

Two were in a mixed tit group at Ghyllheugh (Todburn) on 23rd (NFO) with one taking food to a nest site at Fontburn area on 1st and singles also at Linden Hall (Longhorsely) on 19th, Birks (Todburn) on 22nd, Rothbury on 29th and Warkworth on 30th where one died after striking a window on 15th.

**Willow Tit** *Poecile montanus*

A family party of five was at Whemley (Longhorsely) on 25th (AB/LB), two at Linden Hall (Longhorsely) on 19th (NFO) and at Airy Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield) on 28th (IFo). Singles were at Linden Hall (Longhorsely) on 13th and Prestwick Carr on 1st.

**Blue Tit** *Cyanistes caeruleus*

On 17th a family party with seven juveniles was at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) (DM) and a pair fed at least two young at The Hagg (East Allen Valley) on 7th (RPo) with one feeding young in a wall hole at Howick on 11th (JAR). Two family parties were at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 1st and a party at Barns Park (Cramlington) on 15th with one at Jesmond Dene on 9th.

**Great Tit** *Parus major*

Just one report of two at Jesmond Dene (Newcastle) on 23rd (MJCo).

**Bearded Tit** *Panurus biarmicus*

A pair were with two juveniles at East Chevington North Pool on 4th and 7th with three juveniles noted on 10th, 14th and 16th (ADM/TB).

**Skylark** *Alauda arvensis*

More than 20 were at Simonside including eight singing on 9th (ASJ), eight were over an arable field at Broomhill on 6th with four there on 4th (RPo) and seven singing at St Mary's Island on 14th.



A Skylark at Otterburn by Alan Jack on 9th June

**Sand Martin** *Riparia riparia*

80 struggled to feed in rain at Derwent Reservoir on 13th (IFo). 40 were in the colony at Upper Breamish on 1st (MJC), 14 at West Ord (Berwick) on 25th, seven at Cheswick Dunes on 27th with three holes noted in a sand pit (MHu) and six at Derwent Reservoir NR on 29th.

**Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

On 7th 12 were at The Hagg (East Allen Valley) (RPo) and more than ten at Greenlee Lough on 20th (PRM). Four pairs nested in outbuildings at Arcot Hall Golf Club, one pair at new housing at Cramlington Manor on 2nd and a pair fed young in a stable yard nest at Howick on 12th with two at Arcot Manor Pond on 16th (DM/JAR).

**House Martin** *Delichon urbica*

More than 30 were at Greenlee Lough on 20th (PRM) with five nests at Harwood Gate (Harwood Forest) on 5th, 15 active nests on north shore cliffs at Holy Island on 9th (MJC) and five breeding pairs at the Boat House Colt Crag Reservoir on 26th (MR). One to five were at Crooked Oak (Carterway Heads) Airy Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield), Derwent Reservoir, South Snods (Allensford) and arriving very late at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 6th.



House Martins by Iain Johnstone



**Cetti's Warbler** *Cettia cetti*

Singing birds were noted at East Chevington until at least 21st and at Druridge Pools on 4th (ADM/PRM *et al.*).

**Long-tailed Tit** *Aegithalos caudatus*

A large count of 32 came from Howick on 30th (JAR), while 15 were at Budle Bay and 14 at New Water Haugh (Tweed) on 14th and 2nd respectively. Broods of fledged young included six at Cramlington (Craggside School) and at Tynemouth and three at Howick and three to four birds were noted at Flodden Field and Jesmond Dene.

**Willow Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Numbers remained high at Colt Crag Reservoir, where up to 18 were singing during the month (MR). Ten were in song at Derwent Reservoir on 29th and eight at Wanneys (Fourlaws Plantation) on 16th. Counts of four to six came from Castle Island, Coanwood, Druridge Pools and Howdon, the latter including three singing birds, when up to eight have been noted in previous years. Three were reported from Broomhill and Low Newton and one to two at a further eight localities.

**Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita*

The highest count was seven at Jesmond Dene on 23rd (MJCo), followed by five singing males at Humshaugh on 30th. Four birds (two singing) were at Low Newton on 1st, three were in song at Valley Park (Cramlington) and Wanneys (Fourlaws Plantation), two at Howdon and singles at Holy Island (a late migrant on 16th), Little Mill and Whittle Dene Reservoir.

**Wood Warbler** *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

One was at Derwent Gorge on 3rd (IFo) and another was singing in an apparently new area at Cartington on 2nd (TRD/JD).



A Wood Warbler at Cartington (Rothbury) on 2nd June by Janet Dean

**Sedge Warbler** *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Up to four were noted at Druridge Pools and Holy Island on 8th and 15th (PRM/ADM). Three were singing at Low Newton and three at Greenlee Lough, while two were reported from Monks' House Pool and singles at Arcot Grange, Brier Dene Farm, Colt Crag Reservoir, Cresswell Pond, Linden Hall, Linton Ponds, Needle's Eye, QEII CP and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

**Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Peak counts included ten at East Chevington on 4th (IF), five (three singing) at Low Newton on 1st and four singing birds at Bates Minewater Treatment Works (Blyth) on 15th. Three were singing at Holy Island Lough on 5th and at QEII CP on 9th, while there were counts of two from Cresswell Pond (pair feeding young), Linton Ponds (singing) and Monks' House Pool. Singles were also reported from Arcot Pond, Backworth Pond, Castron and Woodhorn Flashes.

The May section should read

**Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

The Great Park Newcastle supported a healthy population of 12 singing males from 7th-15th (LAR), while .....

**Marsh Warbler** *Acrocephalus palustris*

A singing male was heard and seen on occasions at Cresswell Pond on 8th (PRM).

**Icterine Warbler** *Hippolais icterina*

A bird was seen and heard briefly at East Chevington on 11th (TRD/JD).



**Grasshopper Warbler** *Locustella naevia*

Two were heard at Arcot Pond on 30th, Cresswell Pond on 19th, East Chevington on 18th and Harwood Forest on 1st, while singles were noted at Castle Island, Catcleugh Reservoir, Cramlington (Beacon Lane), Druridge Pools, Linden Hall, Midgeholme, Monks' House Pool and Yarrow Haugh (Tweed).

**Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla*

Counts of six singing males came from Colt Crag Reservoir on 17th and Derwent Reservoir on 10th (MR/IFo). At the former site a pair was feeding young in the nest on 10th. Four were singing at Jesmond Dene, three at Dilston, Druridge Pools and Howden and singles at three Cramlington localities. Two were at Haughton Strother and singles at Catcleugh Reservoir, Greenlee Lough, Grindon Lough, Howick, Low Newton, Marden Quarry and Midgeholme.

**Garden Warbler** *Sylvia borin*

One to two were reported from Airy Holm Reservoir, Castron, East Ord, Fontburn, Harthope Valley, Harbottle, Linden Hall, Longdyke, Mitford, Nunnykirk, Wark (North Tyne) and Wingates Moor.

**Lesser Whitethroat** *Sylvia curruca*

Singles were noted at Castle Island, Druridge Pools, Howdon, Todburn (Slaley) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

**Whitethroat** *Sylvia communis*

12 at Brier Dene Farm on 5th was the highest count (IJ). Up to five were noted at Druridge Pools during the month, a pair accompanied three juveniles at Needle's Eye on 29th, four + were at Elford, four at Castle Island, three at Howdon and one to two at a further 14 localities, including a late migrant at Holy Island on 9th.

**Goldcrest** *Regulus regulus*

Singing males were noted at Kenton on 24th and Valley Park (Cramlington) throughout; further singles were reported from Derwent Reservoir and Jesmond Dene.

**Wren** *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Three family parties were noted at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 15th (DM), an adult and four juveniles were at Howick on 11th and four birds at Jesmond Dene on 30th.

**Nuthatch** *Sitta europaea*

A family party of four was at Nunnykirk on 16th (TRD/JD), three were at Jesmond Dene on 23rd, two at Ellington on 2nd and singles at Arcot Hall GC, Bothal, Breamish Valley, Rothbury, Valley Park (Cramlington) and Wark (North Tyne).

**Treecreeper** *Certhia familiaris*

A family party of four was at Colt Crag Reservoir on 17th (MR). Singles were noted at Bothal, Harthope Valley, Howick and Widehope.

**Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris*

Post-breeding gatherings were noted from mid-month, with 150 at St Mary's Island on 15th (KWY), 120 at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 29th and 80 at Derwent Reservoir on 15th. A Pegswood BBS produced 45 on 2nd and 25 visited feeders at Tynemouth on 28th.

**Ring Ouzel** *Turdus torquatus*

A pair and a second male were noted at Hawsen Burn (Harthope Valley) on 21st (NFO).

**Blackbird** *Turdus merula*

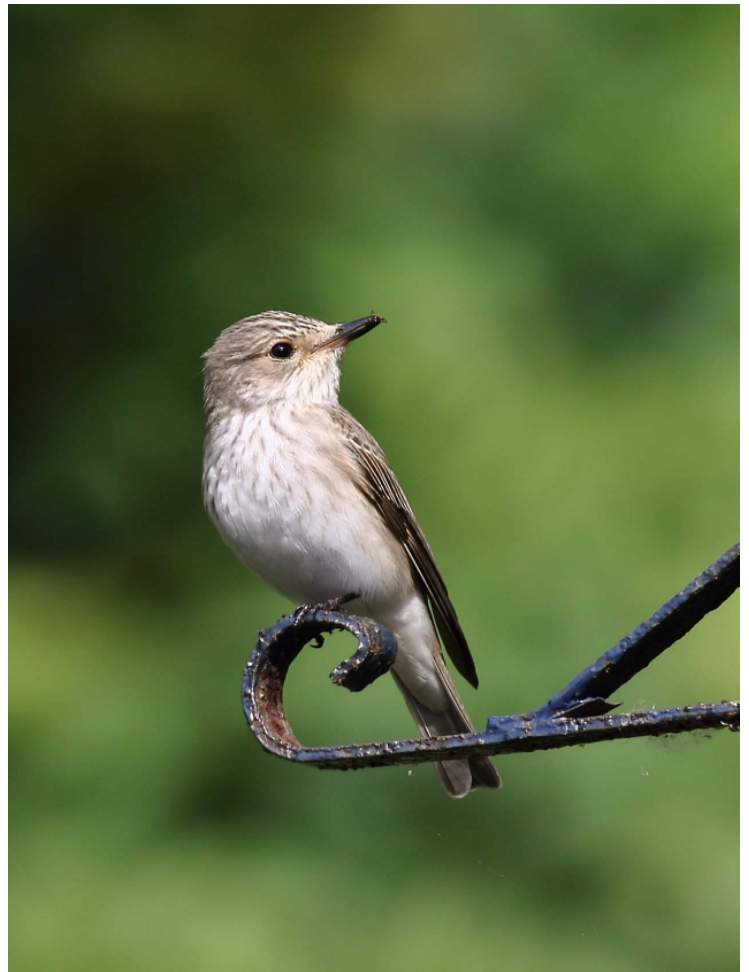
A Pegswood BBS produced a count of 25 on 2nd (TD), while five were noted in Jesmond Dene.

**Song Thrush** *Turdus philomelos*

Five pairs were identified in the Breamish Valley (ASJ), while three birds were noted in Jesmond Dene, two were singing at Howdon and at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) and one at Fulbeck (Morpeth).

**Mistle Thrush** *Turdus viscivorus*

Family parties of five were at Colt Crag Reservoir on 5th and Leazes Park on 17th. Elsewhere, pairs were reported from Alexandra Park and Southfield Green (Cramlington), Coanwood, Hepple and Slaley Forest and one bird at Jesmond Dene.



A Spotted Flycatcher at Nunnykirk  
by Alan Jack on 9th June

**Spotted Flycatcher** *Muscicapa striata*

Three birds were in song at Linden Hall on 7th (NFO) and a pair was feeding young in the nest at Whitfield Moor by 16th. Two were noted at Nunnykirk and at Slaley Forest. Singles included probable migrants at Budle Point on 2nd, Howick on 3rd, Tynemouth on 8th and Holy Island (Snook) on 24th and in inland breeding areas at Coanwood, Colt Crag Reservoir, Harbottle, Harthope Valley, Kirkhaugh, Lilburn and Ottercops Moss.

**Robin** *Erithacus rubecula*

Three in Jesmond Dene was the only report (MJCo).

**Pied Flycatcher** *Ficedula hypoleuca*

The only reports this month came from Derwent Gorge where two males were noted on 3rd and a pair on 4th (IFO).

**Redstart** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Evidence of successful breeding was received from several sites, with a pair feeding three young at Longhorsley (Old Church Wood) on 23rd (AB/LB), three juveniles at Burnfoot (South Tyne) on 21st and a female with two juveniles at Whittingham on 28th; in addition a pair were noted carrying food at Linden Hall on 23rd. Up to three were noted regularly at Derwent Reservoir during the month and one to two were reported from Cartington, Colt Crag Reservoir, East Allen Valley, Eglington, Fontburn, Harthope Valley, Haughton Strother, Humshaugh, Stamfordham, Thrunton Woods and Wark (North Tyne).

**Whinchat** *Saxicola rubetra*

A total of 16 breeding pairs were noted in the Breamish Valley during the month (ASJ) and there were six birds (four territories) at Hawsen Burn on 21st. In Upper Coquetdale, two adults and two juveniles were at Shilmoor, two singing males at Barrow Burn and one at Usway Burn. Singles were also reported from Cartington, Harwood Forest, Whittingham and Widehope.



A Whinchat  
in the Harthope Valley  
9th June  
Tim Dean

**Stonechat** *Saxicola rubicola*

Confirmed breeding was reported from many sites, with seven at Cheswick Dunes on 27th including three juveniles (MHu). Six juveniles were at Budle Bay, a family party of six at Pithouse Fell (Slaley) and family parties of five at Breamish Valley and Longframlington Common. Further breeding was noted at Hawsen Burn, where a pair was carrying food and another pair accompanied two juveniles. Pairs with two juveniles were at Cartington, Holy Island and Simonside and two males and two juveniles at Slaley Forest. An adult and newly fledged juvenile was at Newbiggin GC and two juveniles were at St Mary's Island. Elsewhere one to two adults were reported from Carey Burn, Cocklawburn, Druridge Pools, Greenlee Lough, Long Nanny, Low Newton, Monks' House Pool and Winter's Gibbet (Harwood).

**Wheatear** *Oenanthe oenanthe*

A pair and four juveniles were at Whittingham on 14th (CW). Elsewhere, one to two were noted at Druridge Bay, Hallypike Lough, Hawsen Burn, Housesteads, Upper Breamish, Upper Coquetdale and St Mary's Island.

**Dipper** *Cinclus cinclus*

Two were seen in the Harthope Valley on 8th and 28th (TRD/AA/LB). Five singles were seen at a further five sites.

**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*

66 were counted at Pegswood on 2nd and 40+ at Wark on 28th (TD/PRM). 20+ were in a Marden Estate garden all month, with young being fed in nests (ASJ). Six came in to Tynemouth garden feeders on 28th CB).

**Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus*

16 at Tynemouth on 28th, comprised three fledged broods (CB). Ten+ were seen at Elford on 4th (MSH). A pair reared four young for the first time in a Marden Estate garden but two were taken by a Sparrowhawk. One to six were at seven other locations.

**Dunnoek** *Prunella modularis*

Two in Jesmond Dene on 9th was the only report this month. (MJCo).

**Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava flavissima*

Two were seen carrying food at on Broomhill on 4th, two were also seen at Whittle Dene, Boulmer and Colwell during the month. Singles were noted at six other sites.

Yellow x Blue Headed Wagtail .

A pair was seen carrying food at Broomhill on 4th and 15th (RPo).

**Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*

Five birds, a pair feeding three fledged young, were noted at Colt Crag on 5th and four, a pair feeding two fledged young at Breamish Valley on 15th (MR/ASJ). Singles or a pair were seen at Harthope Valley on several dates during the month. Two at Baybridge, Bothal and Jesmond Dene. Singles were also at a further eight sites, including somewhat unusually in summer, Newcastle Central Station and Grainger St, Newcastle city centre (DM).

**Pied Wagtail** *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

Four juveniles were at St. Mary's Island on 22nd (ASJ). An adult with three fledged juveniles was at Colt Crag on 26th (MR). One with three fledgelings at Howick on 4th(JAR). Two broods of fledgelings also seen at Holy Island on 3rd (IK).

**Meadow Pipit** *Anthus pratensis*

Only two reports this month, with 27, including juveniles being fed, at St. Mary's on 16th and, in suburban habitat, four nesting pairs in grass at Whitley Bay sea front during the month. Display was noted up to the month's end (ASJ).

A Meadow Pipit

St. Mary's

Alan Jack

2nd June

**Tree Pipit** *Anthus trivialis*

Eight males were displaying at Wandylaw on 22nd and four at Widehope on 23rd (ASJ/TRD/JD). Three were at Thrunton Woods on 7th and Slaley on 18th (NFO/STH). One to two were observed at a further nine woodland sites.

Addition to May Bulletin**Water Pipit** *Anthus spinoletta*

Summer-plumaged individual at St Mary's wetlands 9th-10th (AC).



**Rock Pipit** *Anthus petrosus*

Ten were noted on Holy Island on 15th included two juveniles (ADM). Three pairs were seen on the Farne Islands on 23rd four birds on Inner Farne and one on Staple Island on 7th (PRM). A pair nesting at Cullercoats during the month, the male display flighting. One was at Blyth South Harbour on 7th (ASJ/LJM).

**Chaffinch** *Fingilla coelebs*

The only report this month is of six in Jesmond Dene on 9th (MJCo).

**Bullfinch** *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Garden feeders at Rothbury attracted around 14 all month but a peak of 24 occurred on 7th as family groups arrived (TRD/JD). Elsewhere, four were at Howdon on 24th, three in Jesmond Dene on 23rd and two at Warkworth Lane, Linton, Tynemouth and Cramlington. Singles at Wark and Benton.

**Common Rosefinch** *Carpodacus erythrinus*

A briefly singing male was at Druridge Pools on the evening of the 8th (PRM).

**Linnet** *Carduelis cannabina*

80 were at Boulmer on 17th, a flock of 60 at St. Mary's on several dates, where eight males were singing and 54 at Cheswick dunes on 27th (JAR/ASJ/MHU). One to nine were seen at a further eight sites.



A Linnet at Hauxley on 3rd June by Alan Jack

**Lesser Redpoll** *Carduelis Caberet*

20 to 25 were seen at Wannies on 16th (IK). Ten were noted at Addcombe (Rothbury) on 10th, five at Harthope on 21st and at Linden Hall on 22nd four at Longframlington on 20th (NFO). One to three at Grindon and Coanwood (PRM).

**Crossbill** *Loxia curvirostra*

Few were reported this month, with two seen at Debden, Colt Crag and Catcleugh during the month and singles at Thrunton Woods and Linden Hall.

**Goldfinch** *Carduelis carduelis*

Around 40 were noted at St. Mary's consisting of several family groups, feeding on thistle heads (ASJ). Five were at Coanwood on 15th (PRM). Singles were at three other sites.

**Siskin** *Carduelis spinus*

At Humshaugh, two were present 17th and 22nd (SW). Single birds were at two other sites.

**Yellowhammer** *Emberiza citronella*

13 were singing in the Linden Hall/Todburn/Wingates area on (NFO). Four were at Beacon Hill (Cramlington) on 1st, Broomhill on 6th and Longhorsley on 25th. One was at Whittle Dene on 7th.

**Reed Bunting** *Emberiza schoeniclus*

11 were singing at St. Mary's on 2nd and five at East Cramlington on 22nd (ASJ/LJM). Four singing at Low Newton on 1st and two pairs at Broomhill on 6th (PRM/ RPo). A pair with two fledged young were at Needle's Eye (Berwick) on 29th (MHu). One to two were at ten further sites during the month.

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

Two present at Queen Elizabeth Country Park, Ashington on 16th (CDH).

**Wood Duck** *Aix sponsa*

Drake seen at Holywell Pond on 26th (TB).

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

A hybrid drake was again seen at East Chevington on 3rd (ADMc).

**Birds of Unknown Origin**

No sightings

**LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS**

A.H.Banks, S.R.Barrett, T.Blake, G.Bowman, C.Bradshaw, A. & L.Brunt, J.Bucknall (JBu), T.A.Cadwallender, M.J.Carr, M.J.Cook, (MJCo), A.Curry, T.Daley, T.R.& J.Dean, I.R.Douglas, S.T.Elliott, K.Evans, I.Fisher, D.F.Forshaw, I.Forsyth (IFo), C.D.Hampton, M.Hepple (MHp), A.J.Hewitt, S.J.Hingston, M.S.Hodgson, S.T.Holliday, M.Hutcheson (MHu), A.S.Jack, I.Johnson, M.G.Kerby (MK), I.Kerr, M.Kirby (MKi), C.G.Knox, G.P.Knox, P.R.Massey, L.J.McDougall, D.Mckeown, A.D.Mclevy, A.D.Mould, M.Natrass, N.F.Osborne, R.Poyer (RPo), M.Richardson, J.A.Roper, C.Saunders (CSa), M.R.Smith, B.Steel, R.Stevens, A.L.Todd, S.Westerberg, T.Wiffen (TWi), C.Wright, K.W.York.

Berwick Wildlife Group, Hauxley 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).

North Northumberland Bird Club (R Poyer and J Lumby), Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

Thanks to David Sanders of NNBC for providing data.

**Apologies for any accidental omissions**

Proof reading was by Mike Smith.

Mail distribution by Paul Stewart.

Tom Brewis is Data Manager.

Edited by Steve Barrett [NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com](mailto:NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com)

**RECORD SUBMISSION**

Please email records for the month to [ntbc.records@googlemail.com](mailto: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](mailto: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. 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 [ntbcorg@gmail.com](mailto:ntbcorg@gmail.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 [ntbcorg@jobentleyplus.com](mailto:ntbcorg@jobentleyplus.com) or [ntbcorg@gmail.com](mailto:ntbcorg@gmail.com)

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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://www.ntbc.org.uk)

## BIRDS IN NORTHUMBRIA 2019

**Author(s) needed** – One or more authors are needed to write the following important texts:

**Water Rail – Greenshank**

**Long-tailed Tit – Whitethroat.**

Might appeal to someone new to BiN (but 'old hands' also welcome!).

Guidance notes and help provided. Not essential to begin before spring 2020, but some authors will be starting in August 2019 (with the first six months' 'paste-ups' from 2019 bulletins).

Please contact Andy Mould on 0191 2664265, or mobile 0780 362376

or email: [highroller10@btinternet.com](mailto:highroller10@btinternet.com).



# Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2019 No 7

MONTHLY SUMMARY July 2019

1st September 2019



## CONTENTS

Records Committee Vacancy

Bird book bargain sale

## CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Whooper Swan	Single adult on River Tweed on 24th.
Ruddy Shelduck	One at Derwent Res on 1st and at Airy Holm Res on 12th. One at Cresswell on 24th.
Baikal Teal	The drake was still being seen up to 9th at Druridge Pools.
Garganey	Single juvenile at Cresswell Pond on 23rd and Druridge Pools on 27th.
Scaup	Unseasonal record of male at Widdrington Moor lake on 30th.
Great Northern Diver	Further summer records of one off Budle Pt on 10th and 26th.
Sooty Shearwater	Single sighting of one at Seaton Sluice on 27th.
Red-necked Grebe	Single north past Whitley Bay on 6th.
Spoonbill	One at Cresswell and Druridge from 1st to 11th and one at Fenham Flats on 8th.
Great White Egret	One at East Chevington on 21st and then at Hauxley from 30th.
Red Kite	Three pairs bred in county. Many individual sightings.
Crane	One at Bothal Pond on 26th.
Pacific Golden Plover	Excellent find on 21st at Holy Island with sightings through to 29th.
Curlew Sandpiper	One in summer plumage at Boulmer on 11th to 14th.
Caspian Gull	The returning adult was present at Amble Harbour again from 29th.
Sooty Tern	The presumed returning bird flew north past various sea watch points on 9th.
White-winged Black Tern	A juvenile was well watched on 28th and 29th at East Chevington.
Bearded Tit	Continued sightings at East Chevington with up to two juveniles seen.

## 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 season starts in September.

**Fontburn - by Chris Wright.** 12th September. See you there.

## FIELD TRIPS

Contact Steve Anderson [seaswan@btinternet.com](mailto:seaswan@btinternet.com)

### Sunday 15th September, Musselburgh

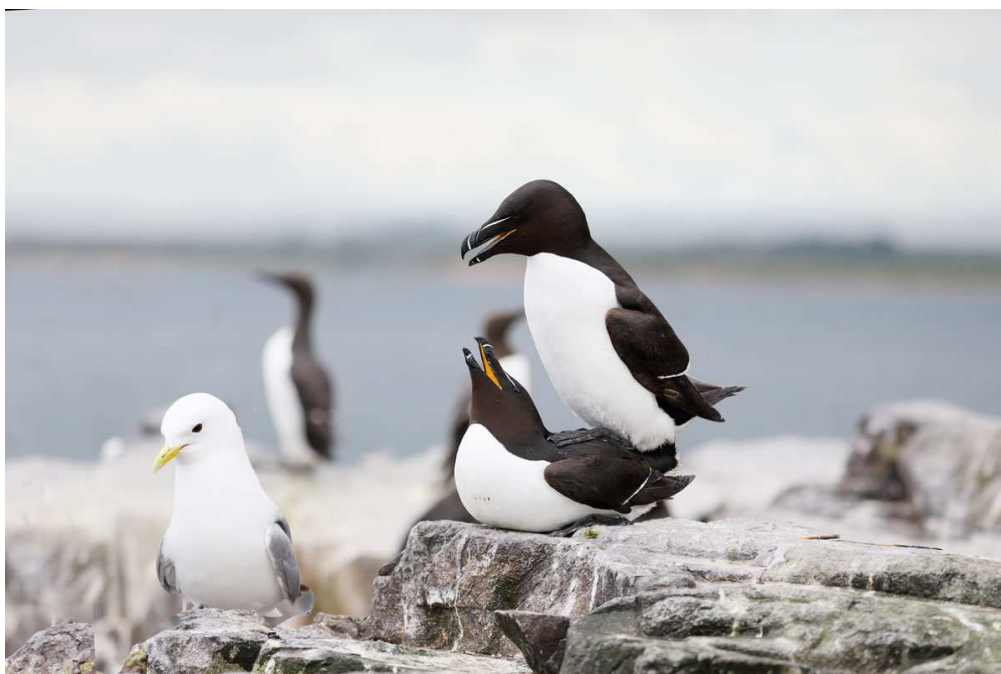
Sea duck, grebes waders.

For further details contact Steve Anderson by Friday 13th.

Razorbills on Inner  
Farne

Colin Bradshaw

19th July



**CLASSIFIED LIST****Canada Goose** *Branta canadensis*

Peak counts involved 224 at Hauxley NR on 7th (HRS), 178 at Castle Island on 2nd (DM/PJA), 175 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 2nd (MR), 144 at Derwent Reservoir on 10th (IFo), 52-84 at Calot Shad (Tweed Estuary), Druridge Pools, Killingworth Lake and Newcastle Leazes Park (including two half-grown young), and 12-35 at Bothal Pond, Grindon Lough, the Wansbeck Estuary and Yarrow Slake. Four to nine were also at Arcot Pond, Howdon Wetland and Kielder Water.

**Barnacle Goose** *Branta leucopsis*

Three unseasonable birds were at Druridge Pools on 1st (MKi).

**Greylag Goose** *Anser anser*

34 flew S at East Ord on 25th (MHu). Counts of 300 at Airy Holm Reservoir on 12th (IFo) and 152 at Hauxley Reserve on 7th (HRS) were the largest concentrations, followed by 57 at the Tweed Estuary on 15th (TBr), and 12-33 at Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Grindon Lough, Kielder Water, Killingworth Lake, Marden Quarry, Newton Links and Plenneller Common. One to eight were also at Big Waters, Bothal Pond, Castle Island, Newcastle Leazes Park and Yarrow Slake. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/date
Long Nanny Estuary	2-3	--	AJR. Total of 22 birds on 8th.
Cocklawburn Pond	1	5	MHu. On 16th

**Mute Swan** *Cygnus olor*

Numbers of moulting birds at Calot Shad (the Tweed Estuary) reached a peak of 480 on 4th (MHu). Counts of 28-55 came from Castle Island, East Chevington, Howdon, Killingworth Lake, New Water Haugh and Yarrow Slake, 14 were at Bothal Pond, and seven on the sea off Meadow Haven on 14th (MHu). Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/date
Ladyburn Lake	1	5	LJM. On 16th
Wansbeck Business Park, Ashington	1	5	LJM. On 16th
West Ord	1	1	MHu. On 14th

**Whooper Swan** *Cygnus cygnus*

An unseasonable adult bird was at New Water Haugh (River Tweed) on 12th (MHu).

**Shelduck** *Tadorna tadorna*

One flew N and 15 S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), and five flew S at Whitley Bay on 15th (IJ). Numbers at Budle Bay peaked at 249 on 4th (MSH), 26 were at the Coquet Estuary on 27th (RPO), 13 at Castle Island on 2nd (DM/PJA), seven at Goswick Sands, and singles at Arcot Pond and Druridge Pools on single dates. More unusual was a juvenile at Derwent Reservoir from 24th-30th (IFo). Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods/crèches	No. of young	Observer/date
Amble Braid	6	20	MK on 12th. Includes brood of 9 from May?
Blyth Estuary	1	11	GB/LAR on 27th. Includes brood from June?
Boulmer	1+	32	TRD/JD. Single pair of adults with 32 young on 11th
Cresswell Pond	1	10	SRB. Pair and 10 young on 5th. Down to 9 young by 21st.
Tyne Estuary	1	7	MK. Pair with 7 large young on 2nd
Castle Island	1	6	DM/PJA. Small ducklings on 2nd
Hauxley Reserve	1	4	MK. On 12th
Grindon Lough	1	2	PRM. Adult female and 2 juveniles on 10th (locally bred?)

**Ruddy Shelduck** *Tadorna ferruginea*

Single adult females were at Derwent Reservoir on 1st-2nd (IFo) and Airy Holm Reservoir on 12th-13th (IFo). One was also at Cresswell Pond on 24th (TB).

**Baikal Teal** *Sibirionetta formosa*

The drake remained at Druridge Pools between 1st-7th (MKi/IDR/JF *et al.*).

**Garganey** *Spatula querquedula*

Single juvenile birds were at Cresswell Pond on 23rd (NFO) and Druridge Pools on 27th (GB/LAR).

**Shoveler** *Spatula clypeata*

Six were at Monks' House Pool on 27th (IDR/JF/JCD), five at the Coquet Estuary on 26th (IDR/JF/JCD), and two to three at Bothal and Swallow Ponds, and Druridge Pools. More unusual was one at Derwent Reservoir on 24th (a very scarce species at this site; IFo).

**Gadwall** *Mareca strepera*

31 were at Caistron on 6th (JD), 12 at Castle Island on 2nd (DM/PJA), and four at Big Waters and Bothal Pond. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/date
Bothal Pond	3	23 (10,7,3)	TD/TF/JFa. 10 fresh young on 15th and further broods of 7 and 3 on 21st
Castle Island	1	7	DM/PJA on 2nd
Lynemouth	1	6	GB. Large young on 27th
Hauxley Reserve	1	4	HRS on 7th

**Wigeon** *Mareca penelope*

Nine flew N at Boulmer on 13th (BS) and one N at Seaton Sluice on 5th (SSWT). 14 (adults) were at Derwent Reservoir on 7th (IFo), 13 at Grindon Lough on 5th (PRM), 11 at Budle Bay on 12th (smaller numbers present all month; CGK/GPK), eight at Druridge Pools on 6th (CB), six at Plenmeller Common on 5th (PRM), and singles at Castle Island and Cresswell Pond.

**Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*

Peak counts were 135 at Big Waters on 27th (GB), 93 at Derwent Reservoir on 13th (IFo), 74 at Newcastle Leazes Park on 3rd (DM), 50-53 at the Tweed Estuary (TBr) and on the River Tweed between A1 and Border (TBr), and 18-44 at Airy Holm Reservoir, Bothal and Middle Ord Ponds, Castle Island, Druridge Pools, Marden Quarry, Newcastle Exhibition Park, and West Ord. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/date
Derwent Reservoir	2	16 (10,6)	IFo. New brood of 6 on 10th and brood of 10 (2-3 days old) on 20th
Druridge Pools	2	12 (8,4)	MSH. Brood of 8 on 1st and recent brood of 4 on 14th
Castle Island	2	11 (7,4)	DM/PJA. Small young on 2nd
Newcastle Exhibition Park	2	9 (7,2)	DM. New broods on 3rd
'Northumberlandia', Cramlington	1	8	STH on 17th
Grindon Lough	1	6	PRM on 5th
Bothal Pond	1	3	TD. New brood on 21st
Wansbeck Business Park, Ashington	1	3	LJM on 16th
Newcastle Leazes Park	1	2	GB. New brood on 17th
West Ord	1	2	MHu on 14th

**Teal** *Anas crecca*

The monthly total (from 8th) at Seaton Sluice was 57 N and 25 S (SSWT). Peak counts were 22 at Derwent Reservoir on 27th (IFo), 19 at Grindon Lough on 5th (PRM), 17 at Boulmer (on rocks) on 20th (BS), 16 at Druridge Pools on 6th (CB), and eight at Howdon Wetland. One to four were also at Arcot, Cresswell and Middle Ord Ponds, Big Waters, Grindon Lough, Hauxley Reserve and Plenmeller Common.

**Pochard** *Aythya ferina*

30 were at Holywell Pond on 28th (MSH), four at Hauxley Reserve on 31st (NFO), three at Widdrington Moor Lake on 30th (BS), and one to two at Bothal Pond, Druridge Pools and Killingworth Lake. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/date
Woodhorn Flashes	1	5	AA. Female with 5 well-grown young on 5th

**Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula*

Seven flew N at Seaton Sluice on 7th-8th (SSWT). Peaks were 47 at Widdrington Moor Lake on 21st (MSH), 26 at Druridge Pools on 2nd (LJM), and 20-21 at Bothal Pond (TD), Caistron (JD) and Killingworth Lake (LJM), and ten to 19 at Castle Island and Hauxley Reserve. One to four were also at Airy Holm and Derwent Reservoirs, Cocklawburn Pond, Grindon Lough, Jesmond Dene and Newcastle Leazes Park. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/date
Druridge Pools	1	8	LJM. Brood walking between the 'Oddie' and south-facing hides on 2nd.
Woodhorn Flashes	1	8	AP on 15th. Dropped to 6 young later in the month.
Bothal Pond	1	7	TD/TF/JFa. Down to 6 young by 21st
Wansbeck Business Park, Ashington	1	7	LJM on 16th
Holywell Pond	1	6	MSH on 28th
Monks' House Pool	1+	5	MSH on 4th
Branton GP	1	3	TRD/JD on 18th
Newcastle Exhibition Park	1	2	GB. Small young on 16th but predated within a week
Longhoughton Quarry Pond	1	1	BS on 21st



**Scaup** *Aythya marila*

A drake was at Widdrington Moor Lake on 30th (BS).

**Eider** *Somateria mollissima*

121 were at North Blyth on 26th (STH). 101 were off Seaton Sluice on 22nd (SSWT) and ten at Boulmer. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods/crèches	No. of young	Observer/date
Holy Island (North Shore)	3	18 (9,5,4)	MJC on 14th. As June?
Beadnell	1	2	IDR/JF/JCD. 2 juveniles with 2 adults on 27th

**Velvet Scoter** *Melanitta fusca*

Five flew N at Seaton Sluice between 13th-17th (SSWT) and one N at Tynemouth on 28th (DRW).

**Common Scoter** *Melanitta nigra*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was a notable 4,558 N and 397 S, including 1,541 N and four S on 8th (a new July day record at the site; SSWT). Elsewhere, at least 275 flew N at Tynemouth on 13th (MK/DRW), 200 N at Newbiggin on 9th (NFO), 142 N at Beadnell Point on 8th (DF), 99 N at Annstead between 8th-10th (DF), 57 N at Whitley Bay between 14th-31st (IJ) and 30 S at St Mary's on 31st (MSH). A minimum of 900 were off Druridge Pools on 24th (IDR), and 200-400 were noted off Druridge-East Chevington on various dates between 5th-29th (IDR/MN *et al.*), while 94 were at Cheswick on 8th (MHu) and ten at Birling Carrs. Two drakes and a duck were well inland at Colt Crag Reservoir on 17th (MR).

**Goldeneye** *Bucephala clangula*

Four juveniles were at the regular breeding site on 18th. Singles were at Druridge Pools on 1st (MKi), the River Tweed between A1-border on 25th (TBr) and West Ord on 7th (MHu). Two drakes and three ducks were at the regular breeding site on 4th May (DM/ALT/HD).

**Goosander** *Mergus merganser*

A notable 50 flew N and 45 S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), and ten flew N at Tynemouth on 13th (DRW). Peak counts were 100 at Budle Bay on 13th (CGK/GPK), 90 at the Tweed Estuary on 15th (TBr), 47 at Meadow Haven, Berwick on 17th (MHu), 24-36 at Amble, the Blyth Estuary, Boulmer, and the River Tweed between A1-border, and 16 at West Ord. Five to nine were also at Berwick Little Beach, Fenham Flats and New Water Haugh, four at St Mary's, and one to two at Airy Holm Reservoir, Arcot Pond, Beadnell, and Hauxley Reserve. A female accompanied a single (75% grown) juvenile at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd (IFo).

**Red-breasted Merganser** *Mergus serrator*

Four flew N at Seaton Sluice on 6th (SSWT) and two N at East Chevington on 7th (IF). A pair were at the Tweed Estuary on 7th (MHu). Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/date
Budle Bay	1	4	CGK/GPK. Female with a brood of 4 young on 5th, dropping to 3 young by 7th (still present at end of month).

**Red Grouse** *Lagopus lagopus*

18 were at Simonside on 23rd (PG) and breeding records came from the MoD range at Otterburn with two female and three juveniles there on 21st (JR) and Simonside again with a female and three juveniles on 19th (TRD/JD).

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

One adult with at least three very small chicks were at Longwiton on 23rd (PG).

**Grey Partridge** *Perdix perdix*

A small covey of four were at Cochrane Pike (Ingram) on 15th (CW) and one to two were seen at Chibburn Steads (Druridge), Hartley and Morpeth Bypass.

**Quail** *Coturnix coturnix*

Four records, all of single calling birds, from west of the reservoir at Elwick (MJC), Fontburn (CW), an oil-seed rape field at Ord Moor (Berwick) (MHu) and Whittingham (CW).

**Pheasant** *Phasianus colchicus*

Four were at Arcot Pond on 30th (DM) and a female with two half-grown young were there on 21st (STH). Two were at Castle Island and a single was at Druridge Pools NR.

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

The monthly total passing Seaton Sluice was above average for the time of year with 15N and eight S (SSWT). Six were offshore of Druridge Pools on 24th (IDR) and four were in full summer plumage at Birling Carrs (Warkworth) on 4th (CSa). Three headed N past Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 22nd (IJ).

**Great Northern Diver** *Gavia immer*

Following on from last month's report a single remained in the Budle Point area until at least 26th (GPK).

**Fulmar** *Fulmarus glacialis*

The only sizeable count logged at Seaton Sluice was 70N in three hours on 27th (SSWT). The peak at Annstead was 29N on 2nd with lower amounts on several other days at nearby locations (DF) and smaller numbers reported from Boulmer and St Mary's.

**Sooty Shearwater** *Puffinus griseus*

The first bird of the year was watched heading N past Seaton Sluice on 27th and was the only record (SSWT).

**Manx Shearwater** *Puffinus puffinus*

After three years of low sightings during July, more respectable numbers returned to the North Sea. The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 1631 (1514N and 117S) in 120 hours, with the daily peak being 501N on 7th (SSWT). This movement was reflected in reports from many observers with Annstead peaking at 223N in one hour and 35 mins on 2nd (DF), 212N past Whitley Bay in two and a half hours during the evening of 6th (BS), 100+ N at Newbiggin on 2nd (TF/JFa) and many other double-digit sightings during that first week. Smaller counts were made as passage reduced towards the end of the month.

**Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

The peak count at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) was at least 18 (four pairs with 10+ young) on 21st (TD), whilst Ladyburn Lake (Druridge Bay CP) hosted five adults and five juveniles on 23rd (LJM). Breeding was also confirmed at Arcot Pond, Linden Hall and Northumberlandia (Cramlington) and one to five birds were at Big Waters NWT, Boulmer, Castron, Capheaton Lake, Colt Crag Reservoir, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Hauxley NWT, Holywell Pond, Killingworth Lake, Middle Ord Pond, Monks' House Pool and Swallow Pond.

**Red-necked Grebe** *Podiceps grisegena*

One flew N past Whitley Bay with a group of Guillemots on 6th (BS).

**Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus*

Widdrington Moor Lake peaked at 14 on 11th (TB), five at Big Waters NWT on 26th including two on nests (GB) and two adults with two juveniles were at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) all month (TF/JFa/TD). Other breeding records of adult birds with single juveniles came from East Chevington, Killingworth Lake and Swallow Pond. Two juveniles were at Arcot Pond, but were not considered to have bred there (LJM). Two to four were at Airy Holm Reservoir all month (IFo), two adults were offshore of Druridge Pools NR (IDR) and a single bird at Derwent Reservoir on 1st was the first since May (IFo).

**Spoonbill** *Platalea leucorodia*

The adult at Cresswell Pond/Druridge Pools from last month continued to entertain watchers until at least 11th (Mki/AA/SRB *et al.*) and was briefly joined by a juvenile on 3rd (CH). Another bird was at Fenham Flats on 8th (TF/JFa).

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

Numbers at the R. Tweed peaked at 22 in the estuary on 15th (TBr) followed by 20 at Yarrow Slake on 17th (MHu). 12 were at Howdon on 14th (CB), Widdrington Moor Lake held ten on 21st (MSH) and five was the peak at Colt Crag Reservoir on 17th (MR). Breeding was confirmed at Warkworth Weir with one juvenile visible from a nest and four adults nearby on 16th (LJM). One to five birds were at Castle Island, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), the Coquet Estuary, Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools NR, Exhibition Park, Hauxley NWT, Holy Island, Howick, Jesmond Dene and Wark (North Tyne).

**Great White Egret** *Ardea alba*

One was at East Chevington North Pool mid-evening on 21st (AC) with likely the same bird at Hauxley NWT on 31st (NFO).

**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*

The usual summer swell of numbers was evident throughout the county. Beal peaked at ten on 29th (DF) and the max count at Budle Bay was eight present on 10th (CGK/GPK). Seven were at Elwick on 23rd (MJC) and six in the R. Coquet Estuary on 27th appeared to be a family group (IDR/JF/JCD). A party of three at Cresswell Pond on many dates may well have been a breeding family from Druridge (TRD/MN/TB *et al.*) and one to three birds were also at Alnmouth, Beacon Point, Derwent Reservoir (only the third record and first of 2019, (IFo)), Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Fenham Flats, Foxton, Long Nanny, New Water Haugh (R. Tweed), North Seaton (R. Wansbeck), Seaton Sluice, Sleek Burn, Warkworth Weir, West Ord, Woodhorn and Yarrow Slake (Berwick).

**Gannet** *Morus bassanus*

Steady passage was reported this month with some high counts on several days. Seaton Sluice peaked at 1,200N in one hour on 14th and 1,500N and 20S in three hours on 7th (SSWT). Berwick Pier had 410 per hour S in the early morning of 4th (MHu) with sightings from Bamburgh of 592N and 421S on 3rd and Annstead peaking at 561N and 61S in just over an hour on 8th (DF). Numbers reduced somewhat towards the end of the month with reports from several other locations including a feeding frenzy of around 20 off Stag Rocks, possibly on Mackerel, which also attracted many large gulls, auks and cormorants (SRB).

**Shag** *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

As is usual at this time of year, reports were few with only five at the Meadow Haven (Berwick) roost on 14th (MHu) and only a solitary bird sighted all month from Seaton Sluice Watch Tower. One was also seen heading N at Boulmer.

**Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Passage was reported from Annstead with 25N and eight S on 2nd, 15N and eight S on 10th, and from Bamburgh with 32N at Stag Rocks on 9th (DF). The monthly peak at Derwent Reservoir was 15 on 20th (IFo) and 12 were at the Meadow Haven (Berwick) roost on 14th (MHu). Eight were at Castle Island during a WeBS count on 2nd (DM) and five to six were reported from several other locations.

**Osprey** *Pandion haliaetuss*

Three adults were at Kielder, one off Tower Knowe and two off Leaplish on 18th (PRM). Single birds were reported from Budle Bay on 7th (GPK) Colt Crag Reservoir on 8th, 17th and 28th (MR), Derwent Reservoir on 18th 7 22nd (IFo), Bardon Mill on 21st (MDu) and at Ryal (ALT).

**Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus*

Only single birds this month with an adult female hunting juvenile Starlings *Sturnus vulgaris* at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) (Bst). Single birds were at Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Cramlington, Druridge Pools NR, Ellington, Horton, Howick, Humshaugh, Jesmond Dene, Lynemouth, Rothbury and Weldon Bridge.

**Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*

East Chevington had three birds present on 4th (IRD) and single sightings involving an adult male, 1st year male and females on several dates. Two birds, a juvenile and a probable adult female, were at Holywell Pond NR on 28th (MSH). A male was at Budle Bay on 5th (GPK), a male was also at Warkworth Lane Ponds (Ellington) on 14th (TB). Females were noted at Widdrington Moor Lake on 24th (TB), Druridge Pools on 25th (MN) and juveniles were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 25th (SW) and at Chare Ends (Holy Island) on 26th(If).

**Red Kite** *Milvus milvus*

Three pairs were confirmed breeding in the County. Two broods of three and one of a single chick successfully fledged. Two to three pairs were present during breeding season in other areas but nests were not located. Two birds flew S over Harthope Valley on 12th (AA) and two were at Derwent Reservoir on 19th (IFo). Singles were seen at Akeld (Wooler), Buston Links (Alnmouth), Carterway Heads, Derwent Reservoir, Hexham, Newton, Kiln Pit Hill, Shotleyfield, Snods Edge, West Minsteracres, Whittle Farm and at Whittonstall.

**Common Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*

At Seaton Delaval three birds flew W over Delaval Hall on 29th (TB), two were at Kielder Water on 18th (PRM) and at Old Quickenning Cote on 21st (JR). Singles were reported from 11 sites including a bird which was present from spring until 21st (SRB ) in Woolsington (Newcastle).

**Water Rail** *Rallus aquaticus*

Seven birds including juveniles were at East Chevington on 29th (IF) with one to three seen or heard there on several dates. One to two birds were at Arcot Pond on 30th (DM) and single birds were at Big Waters NWT, Cresswell Pond, and Druridge Pools.

**Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*

The highest counts came from Exhibition Park (Newcastle) with a peak of 13+ birds present on 22nd (GB), Big Waters NWT with 12+ birds on 27th (GB), 12 at Exhibition Park on 3rd (DM) and 11 at Druridge Pools NR on 7th (IDR/JF). One - nine birds were at Arcot Grange (Cramlington), Big Waters NWT, Castle Island, Cocklawburn Pond, Druridge Bay CP, Druridge Pools, Hauxley NWT, Jesmond Dene (Newcastle), Leazes Park (Newcastle), Monks' House Pool and Northumberlandia (Cramlington).

**Coot** *Fulica atra*

52 birds were at Bothal Pond on 11th (IRD) and 59 were noted there on 26th (TD), 43 were at Big Waters NWT on 31st (GB), 33 were at Killingworth Lake on 7th (LJM) and 20 at Big Waters NWT on 16th (GB). One to twelve birds were at Druridge Pools, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Leazes Park (Newcastle) and Monks' House Pool

**Crane** *Grus grus*

On 26th an adult was standing next to an immature Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* on the West bank of Bothal Pond for 15 minutes before flying off W calling (TD).

**Oystercatcher** *Haematopus ostralegus*

A total of 685 (102N, 583S), with 453S between 24th-30th, was reported from Seaton Sluice (SSWT), while 112 flew S at Tynemouth on 28th (DRW). Coastal sites produced 68 at high-tide roost at Berwick on 26th (MHu), 30 at the Blyth Estuary on 13th (MSH), and 28 on the Coquet Estuary on 27th (RPo). Derwent Reservoir had 24 on 8th and 39 on 12th (IFo). Four pairs with two large young were noted at Boulmer on 14th (BS), where two pairs had raised young. Lower counts came from Castle Island (Wansbeck), Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Tweed Estuary (Calot Shad), Wark (North Tyne), Hauxley, Shotleyfield (Airy Holm Reservoir), Big Waters, Grindon Lough, Kielder Water, Holy Island, Cramlington (Southfield Green and Craggside School), and Arcot Lane.



**Avocet** *Recurvirostra avosetta*

Most of the records came from Cresswell Pond, where 12-15 adults were seen on 1st (MKi, MSH), 2nd (TF/JFa) and 5th (SRB). Numbers dwindled thereafter from eight to five by the end of the month, with no reports of any juveniles.

**Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus*

At Newbiggin golf course on 1st, a pair were noted with four chicks, of which only one was surviving by 11th. Derwent Reservoir had the largest counts, rising from 200 on 5th to 1000 by 25th (IFo). Cresswell Pond had between 38-97 on 1st-2nd (MKi, DM/PJA), 200-225 on 11th (MN, STH/IFo), down to 75 on 27th (GB). Grindon Lough had 22 on 5th, rising to 139 on 10th and 160 by 17th (PRM). The Tweed Estuary had 178 at New Water Haugh on 11th and 118 at Yarrow Slake on 12th (MHu), and 88 on 15th (TBr). 44 were at St Mary's Island on 2nd, rising to 300 by 30th (ASJ). 55 were counted at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) on 5th (TF/JFa) and 138 on 15th (TD), and there were 110 at Holywell Pond (ASJ). The Coquet Estuary had 66 on 25th (MKi), 100 on 26th (IDR/JF/JCD) and 240 on 27th (RPo). Other reports came from Castle Island (Wansbeck), Druridge Pools, Plenmeller Common, Morpeth (near Hebron), Howdon and Monks' House Pool.

**Golden Plover** *Pluvialis apricaria*

Holy Island had the highest totals, with 800 on 15th (ADM/SR) rising to 1,400 by 27th (IDR/JF/JCD). St Mary's Island had 55 on 2nd rising to 490 by 30th (ASJ). 60 were at Hartley on 6th (KWY). There were 138 at Newbiggin, Beacon Point, on 13th (TF/JFa) and 12 on 18th (NFO). Boulmer had 353 on 27th (BS) and 250 on 30th (TRD/JD). Smaller counts came from East Chevington, Cresswell Pond and the Coquet Estuary, while singles were reported from Plenmeller Common, Amble Braid, Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) and Druridge Pools.

**Pacific Golden Plover** *Pluvialis fulva*

An adult bird was present amongst Golden Plovers on Crooked Lonnen (Holy Island) from 22nd to 29th (ADM, TF/JFa, MJC, IDR/JF/JCD, GPC, AC).

**Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola*

Two to three were at Boulmer on 9th-11th (BS, CSa). A single bird was at Druridge Pools on 24th (IDR) and four were reported from Budle Bay on 30th (BFO).

**Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula*

The highest count of the month came from East Chevington, where there were 23 at the burn mouth on 29th (ASH/MN). Derwent Reservoir had four adults present on 5th and throughout the month (IFo), while Colt Crag Reservoir had three adults and a fledged juvenile on 8th (MR). There were four at Hedgeley GP on 2nd (TRD/JD), one at Beadnell on 27th (IDR/JF/JCD), two at Boulmer on 30th (TRD/JD) and seven at the Coquet Estuary on 31st (RPo).

**Little Ringed Plover** *Charadrius dubius*

Single birds were reported from a wide range of sites in the county, with evidence of breeding elsewhere.

**Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus*

A new record for July total of 404 was reported from Seaton Sluice, including 225S between 25th-26th (SSWT). There were 13 at Boulmer on 27th (BS), 10S at Tynemouth on 28th, with 11 at Beal (DF) and 15 at Budle Point (NFO) on 29th. Smaller counts came from Druridge Pools, St Mary's Island, Cresswell Pond, Stag Rocks, Bamburgh, Holy Island, Budle Bay, Elwick, Kitty Brewster estate on the Blyth Estuary and Hauxley. Singles were at Quarry Cottage, the Coquet Estuary and Ellington.

**Curlew** *Numenius arquata*

Seaton Sluice had a monthly total of 75N and 22S (SSWT). The highest count came from the Tweed Estuary, with 136 at Yarrow Slake on 12th (MHu). The Coquet Estuary had 51-101 between 27th-28th (RPo) and Hauxley had 90 on 26th (EC/JSB) and 81 on 31st (NFO). There were 64, including two juveniles, at Plenmeller Common on 5th (PRM) and 70 at Alnmouth on 7th (MKi). 81 arrived at St Mary's Island on 15th (ASJ) and 50 were at Cresswell Pond on 18th (MN). There were 76 at the high tide roost at Berwick on 26th (MHu). Smaller counts came from Derwent Reservoir, Castle Island (Wansbeck), Stag Rocks, Bamburgh, Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough, Cochrane Pike, Ingram, Rockcliffe, Whitley Bay, Big Waters, Howdon, and Horse Pastures, south of Quarry Cottage.



A Curlew at St.Mary's on 14th July by Alan Jack

**Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica*

Birds in breeding plumage were reported from the Holy Island flock, where the numbers rose from 100–200 on 14th–15th (IK, ADM) to 500 on 27th (IK). Smaller counts (ten and below) came from the Coquet Estuary, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower, Boulmer, Amble Braid, Tynemouth, and Newbiggin.

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

A monthly total of 67S was recorded from Seaton Sluice Watch Tower (SSWT). Druridge Pools provided the highest count, with 102 on 2nd (DM/PJA). There were 24 at Budle Bay on 5th and 50 by 24th (GPK). East Chevington had a maximum of 20 on 21st (SRB). Smaller numbers were recorded at Boulmer, Grindon Lough, Castle Island (Wansbeck), Colt Crag Reservoir, Low Newton scrape, Cresswell Pond, the Coquet Estuary and Holywell Pond.

**Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*

Return passage was underway with Seaton Sluice Watchtower recording birds from 17th with a total of 29N and 99S to the month end (SSWT). Other sites where birds were reported were Hauxley NWT with 34 on 31st (NFO), Boulmer with 27 on 4th (BS), North Blyth staithes had 17 on 26th (STH) and ten were at St Mary's Island on 25th (IJ). One to six were seen at Amble, Beadnell, Cheswick Black Rocks, Cresswell Pond, Kitty Brewster (River Blyth Estuary) and the River Coquet Estuary.

**Knot** *Calidris canutus*

The first returning birds seen at Seaton Sluice were on 18th with a monthly total of 18N and 279S, with 258S recorded between 18th–25th (SSWT). At Budle Bay, the first returners were noted on 19th with six reported increasing to 112 by 24th (GPK). Movement was observed at the River Coquet Estuary with the first two noted on 11th (CSa) increasing to 40 by 26th (IDR/JF/JCD) reducing to eight by 29th (CSa). Elsewhere, 11 were at Cresswell Pond on 23rd (NFO), reducing to three by 31st (GB/NFO). One to five were reported from Boulmer, Druridge Pools, Fenham Flats and Tynemouth.

**Ruff** *Calidris pugnax*

Birds were present at the regular haunt of Druridge Pools all month with one on 1st and a maximum of three (two adults and one juvenile) seen on 31st (MKi/TRD/NFO *et al.*) One was at Cresswell Pond on 7th and 27th (TB/GB), two at Budle Bay on 29th (GPK) and a single at Low Newton scrape on 8th (NFO).

**Curlew Sandpiper** *Calidris ferruginea*

A summer-plumaged adult was at Boulmer from 11th–14th (TRD/JD/BS).

**Sanderling** *Calidris alba*

The monthly total seen at Seaton Sluice was 92N and 114S with passage noted from 17th (SSWT). At Budle Bay, at least 110 were present on 26th, one at St Mary's Island on 14th increased to 87 (all adults) on 30th (ASJ/MSH). In Druridge Bay 11 were on the beach at East Chevington on 16th with 65 on the beach near Druridge Pools by 28th (TRD/JD/IDR/JF *et al.*). Two were at each of Beacon Point (Newbiggin), Boulmer and Cocklawburn.

**Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*

The only significant movement at Seaton Sluice was 50S on 24th out of a total of 63S between 24th–26th (SSWT). Numbers at Budle Bay increased from 14 on 19th to 400 on 24th and then 600 on 26th (GPK/CGK). The highest number reported from Boulmer during the month was 200 on 27th (BS). Reports from the River Coquet began on 25th with the peak count being 110 on 27th and 29th (MKi/RPo/CSa) Numbers built up at Cresswell Pond with four on 1st (MSH) and approximately 100 on 31st (NFO). At nearby Druridge Pools, 14 were seen on 9th (NFO) with a high of 60 reported on 25th (MN). Smaller numbers were 13 at Beal on 29th, six at the River Blyth Estuary on 27th and two at Berwick Little Beach on 26th. Inland, four were at Grindon Lough and Derwent Reservoir, three at Hedgeley GP and one at Colt Crag Reservoir.

**Purple Sandpiper** *Calidris maritima*

Six early returning birds were in summer plumage at the regular site of Stag Rocks on 22nd (DF), plus singles at Newbiggin on 18th (NFO) and Tynemouth pier on 19th (MK).

**Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola*

The sole report was of one at dusk at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 18th (NFO).

**Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago*

Birds were reported from Druridge Pools from 7th with the highest count being 12 on 11th (STH/IFo/GB *et al.*). Two were seen at Cresswell Pond on 27th and Derwent Reservoir on 29th. Singles were seen at Castron and Grindon Lough.

**Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos*

At Seaton Sluice five flew S between 20th–28th (SSWT). Three were at Castle Island (River Wansbeck) on 2nd (DM) but no more were reported until 20th when 19 were counted (TF/JFa) increasing to a notable 39 on 27th (AC). Return passage was also evident at other sites with 11 arriving on the back of a rain shower at Budle Bay on 26th (GPK), ten at Hedgeley GP on 4th (TRD/JD) and ten at Druridge Pools on 26th (IDR/JF/JCD). Derwent Reservoir attracted a high of nine on 6th (IFo), eight were at Colt Crag Reservoir on 8th and eight were on rocks at Tynemouth on 27th (MR/MK). On the River Coquet from Warkworth-Amble, the maximum reported was seven on 1st (MKi). Elsewhere, six were at St Mary's Island on 24th (ASJ) and five at East Chevington north pool on 28th (TB). One to three were at thirteen mainly coastal localities but pairs were still in upland areas at Kielder water on 18th (PRM) and Slaggyford (South Tyne) on 20th (AJR).



**Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*

Return passage was noted at Druridge Pools throughout the month with singles reported on most dates but two were noted on 11th (TF/JFa/MSH *et al.*). Two were at Kirkley Mill (River Pont) on 23rd (AHB). Singles were also at Ashington (River Wansbeck), Berwick Hill Bridge (River Pont), Bothal Pond, Castle Island, Colt Crag Reservoir, Hedgeley GP, Holywell Pond and Woodhorn Flashes.

**Redshank** *Tringa totanus*

Like other wader species, passage was recorded at Seaton Sluice with 89N and 394S during the month (SSWT). At Budle Bay, 15 on 4th increased to a maximum of over 300 by 24th (CGK/GPK). The highest count from the River Coquet Estuary was 220 on 27th (RPo), 136 were counted at Berwick Coastwatch on 26th (MHu), 97 at the River Blyth Estuary on 6th (BS) and 60 were at Black Law (Lindisfarne NNR) on 14th (IK). In the River Tweed Estuary 46 were present at Calot Shad on 14th (MHu), 25 at the River Tweed Estuary on 15th (TBr) and 16 at Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 14th (MHu). One-ten were at Berwick Little Beach, Castle Island, Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough, Howdon, Monks' House Pool and New Water Haugh (River Tweed).



Redshank at St. Mary's on 14th July by Alan Jack

**Wood Sandpiper** *Tringa glareola*

This attractive wader was noted at Druridge pools all month with two on 5th increasing to four (three adults, one juvenile) by 28th (MK/AA/MJC *et al.*). Two were at Hedgeley GP on 28th (NFO) and singles at Derwent Reservoir, East Chevington, Grindon Lough, Holy Island (flying S) and Tynemouth (flying S).



A Wood Sandpiper

Hedgeley GP

by Neil Osborne

31st July



**Spotted Redshank** *Tringa erythropus*

Summer-plumaged adults were observed at Druridge Pools from 1st-25th (CH/CB/IDR *et al.*). Singles were seen at Cresswell Pond from 7th-31st (TB/STH/IFo *et al.*) with two on 29th (ASH) one which was colour ringed. One was at Beal (Lindisfarne NNR) on 29th (DF).

**Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*

Passage birds were well reported with six at the favoured location of Beal on 29th (DF). Three were at Castle Island (River Wansbeck) on 10th (TF/JFa) and also at Budle Bay on 24th (CGK/GPK). Two were at Holy Island on 28th (GPK) and Hedgeley GP also on 28th (NFO). Singles were reported from Alnmouth, Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Foxton, Goswick Sands (Lindisfarne NNR), Low Newton scrape, New Water Haugh (River Tweed), River Blyth Estuary, Seaton Sluice and St Mary's Island.

**Kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla*

The only significant movement was 300/hour S at St Mary's Island on 3rd (MSH) and 139 flew N at Annstead on 10th (DF). Gatherings of up to 170 were noted in the Tweed Estuary on a number of dates throughout (MHu)

**Black-headed Gull** *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

At least 400 were at St Mary's Island on 31st (MSH) and smaller gatherings of 200-300 were at Yarrow Slake (Berwick) (MHu) and in the Tweed Estuary (TBr) with 100-200 in the Blyth Estuary, Castle Island, Hauxley NWT and in the Plenmeller colony where more than 115 juveniles were counted on 5th (LJM/HRS/PRM). Elsewhere, up to 90, including many juveniles, started to return to their coastal wintering quarters and were counted at ten localities between Berwick and Druridge Pools and also at Bothal Pond, Cramlington and Jesmond Dene (*many observers*).

**Little Gull** *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

A monthly total of four flew N at Seaton Sluice (SSWT), four 1st-summers were at Cresswell Pond on 2nd (TF/JFa) and four adults flew N at Boulmer on 14th (BS). Elsewhere, on dates throughout the month, one or two adults/immatures were recorded at Annstead Point, Beacon Point (Newbiggin), Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Tynemouth, Warkworth Weir and offshore at sea (*many observers*).

**Mediterranean Gull** *Ichthyaetus melanocephalus*

At Seaton Sluice the usual late-summer influx was witnessed with a largest monthly total of 19 recorded, mainly adults with the first juvenile on 29th (SSWT). From mid-month, Widdrington Moor Lake was frequented regularly by up to at least 50, mainly adults (BS/NFO/), and at Newbiggin, 17 were present on 13th (STH), 14-15 at Cresswell Pond on 15th (TF/JFa) and Cresswell, Snab Point on 6th (ASJ) with ten at Druridge Pools on 28th (IDF/JR). Up to five birds were recorded at many other sites, including Alnwick, Bothal Pond, Boulmer, Budle Bay, East Chevington, Ellington, Elwick, Holy Island, St Mary's Island and Tynemouth (*many observers*).

**Common Gull** *Larus canus*

The numbers of returning birds started to build up with 130 recorded at Druridge Pools on 28th (IDR/JF), 39 adults at Budle Bay on 20th (DF) and 10-20 at Boulmer, the River Coquet Estuary and on the River Tweed (BS/TBr/ IDR/JF/JCD). One to four were noted at five other localities.

**Great Black-backed Gull** *Larus marinus*

In the Coquet Estuary up to 80 were present on 25th-26th (MKi/IDR/JF/JCD) and single birds were at Cramlington and Grindon Lough (DM/PRM).

**Herring Gull** *Larus argentatus argenteus*

At St Mary's Island, 81 adults flew N in 40 minutes on 3rd (MSH) and a noticeable influx was recorded at Boulmer the following day when more than 1,000 were present (BS). On 14th-15th 400 were recorded at Budle Bay and in the Tweed Estuary (CGK/GPK/TBr) and in the Blyth Estuary 257 were counted on 9th (LJM). Smaller gatherings of 12-54 were seen at Castle Island, the Coquet Estuary, Druridge Pools, Jesmond and Newbiggin including 37 newly fledged juveniles at Blyth Power Station on 9th (LJM); seven juveniles were also on factory roofs at Cramlington, Bassington Drive on 21st and seven broods totalling 14 young were on the North Blyth Staithes on 12th, the most ever recorded there (LJM). An adult in Amble Harbour on 29th (TRD/JD) had been ringed, Green C35, as a breeding adult on Coquet Island in 2017 and was thought to be breeding there again this year (Chris Redfern).

**\*Caspian Gull** *Larus cachinnans*

The returning Polish-marked adult, PKCS, first recorded in Amble Harbour in July 2013, was seen again in the harbour on 29th (CSa/TRD/JD/TB).

**Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus fuscus graelsii*

The largest concentration was 48 at Newton Links on 8th (AJR) with smaller groups of 10-20 at Byrness, Colt Crag Reservoir, Cresswell Pond and Old Quickening Gate (JR/SRB/MR). At Castle Island, 25 were present (DM), nine were in the gull roost at New Water Haugh on the River Tweed (MHu), seven at Derwent Reservoir (IFo) and one to four at Grindon Lough, Jesmond Dene, Jesmond (school playing field), Monks' House Pool and Newbiggin. A pair at Cramlington had two recently fledged young on 28th suggesting local breeding in that area (DM).

**Sandwich Tern** *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

Large feeding movements were recorded regularly throughout at Seaton Sluice with rates of up to 150 per hour moving mainly S, with the first juveniles noted on 10th (SSWT) and at St Mary's Island 200 moved S in one hour on 21st (ASJ). In the evening of 13th, at least 150 arrived from the north to roost on the rocks at St Mary's Island (MSH) and at Berwick, Meadow Haven on 17th, 66 were in a low-tide gull roost (MHu) with 50 in the Beacon Point roost at Newbiggin on 13th (TF/JFa). Smaller counts of 10-30 came from Boulmer, Calot Shad (Tweed Estuary), Cocklawburn, Druridge Pools, East Chevington and Goswick Sands with one to four at five other localities. Three unusual sightings were up to four feeding on the Tyne some seven miles inland on three dates from 18th-25th (CGK).

**Little Tern** *Sternula albifrons*

Seventeen were counted at the Long Nanny colony on 7th (TB) but other records were few, comprising group of four N seen at Seaton Sluice and Newbiggin on 14th (AP/SSWT), three on Fenham Flats, Lindisfarne on 8th (TF/JFa) and at Boulmer on 24th (BS) with singles at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 21st (AP) and Beadnell on 27th (IDR/JF/JCD). At the Long Nanny colony 25 young had fledged by 16th (IF) but the final total for the colony is yet to be confirmed although a far more successful breeding season than in recent years looks probable (MSH via NT Rangers).

**Sooty Tern** *Onychoprion fuscatus*

This was the third county record of an extremely rare visitor. The first sighting of the bird, an adult flying N, came from the Seaton Sluice watch point at mid-morning on 9th (SSWT) and ten minutes later the bird, still moving N, was seen at Newbiggin Church Point where it passed close inshore to be seen by two extremely lucky observers (JFa/NFO). Slightly later it was seen again briefly further north at Cullernose Point (TRD *et al.*) and then subsequently at Annstead Point.

**Roseate Tern** *Sterna dougallii*

Seven passed Seaton Sluice, five N, two S, during the month with the first juvenile seen on 22nd (SSWT). Five were seen offshore from Druridge Pools on two dates (IDR) and five were seen regularly offshore from Boulmer and at nearby Longhoughton Steel at the end of the month (BS). Three, comprising two adults and a juvenile, were at Beacon Point, Newbiggin on 18th (NFO) increasing to three adults and two juveniles on 26th (AA). One or two were recorded elsewhere during the month from Budle Bay, East Chevington and Tynemouth. Preliminary results from RSPB Coquet Island suggests another excellent breeding season with 122 pairs laying eggs, which is the highest total since 1970. Food was in plentiful supply which meant that 161 chicks were hatched and were ringed (TC).



A Roseate Tern  
Coquet Island  
Colin Bradshaw  
19th July

**Common Tern** *Sterna hirundo*

The largest movement at Seaton Sluice was 105 S in two hours on 20th (SSWT) and the maximum count was a gathering of 220 on the beach at East Chevington on 16th (TRD). At the North Blyth staithes 56 adults were counted at the breeding colony on 9th (LJM) and on 26th 56 were again counted there plus 48 young, many almost ready to fledge (STH). Counts elsewhere included 25-30 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) and St Mary's Island and 10-20 at Alnmouth, Boulmer, the Coquet Estuary, Druridge Pools and Hauxley NWT. Other single-figure groups were at Bothal Pond, Cresswell Pond, Swallow Pond and Holywell Pond, where two pairs bred successfully on the island.

**Arctic Tern** *Sterna paradisaea*

Few were recorded at Seaton Sluice except for one movement N of 76 in one hour on 26th (SSWT). The high-tide roost at Beacon Point, Newbiggin held 155 on 13th (TF/JFa) and a group of at least 50 at Boulmer on 27th included many juveniles (BS). Other sightings included 20 offshore at Druridge Pools, ten at Alnmouth and five at Tynemouth; two unusual records comprised a single flying E at Derwent Reservoir on 6th (IFo) and another single at Woodhorn Flashes on 27th which was found dead there the following day (GB/AP).

**White-winged Black Tern** *Chlidonias leucopterus*

A juvenile was found at East Chevington North Pool late in the day on 28th (MK) which remained there only until the following day to be seen by a number of enthusiasts (TRD/JD/TB/IF *et al.*).

**Black Tern** *Chlidonias niger*

A juvenile was at the East Chevington North Pool on 25th (TB/MN) and possibly the same bird moved N offshore at Druridge Pools on 28th (IDR/JF). An adult flew N at Seaton Sluice on 29th (SSWT).

**Great Skua** *Stercorarius skua*

Another poor month for sightings at Seaton Sluice where only 11 were noted, almost all moving N (SSWT). Apart from four flying N at Annstead Point on 13th (CGK.GPK) all other reports were of single birds flying N on 2nd-3rd at Annstead Point, Stag Rocks and East Chevington (DF/AJR) and 28th-31st at Newbiggin, St Mary's Island and Tynemouth (DRW/JR/MSH).

**Arctic Skua** *Stercorarius parasiticus*

Low numbers again passed Seaton Sluice this month with only 17 seen in 102 hours watching (SSWT). The only other records were three moving N at Tynemouth on 7th (DRW), two at Annstead Point on 6th (GPK) and a single seen at sea on 25th (IJ).

**Auk** *sp*

There was an unusually large movement of Auks for July at Seaton Sluice where 1,800 Guillemots/Razorbills flew N in three hours on 7th (SSWT).

**Common Guillemot** *Uria aalge*

At Cheswick Sands a large gathering of 158 was recorded on 6th (CH) and elsewhere up to 53 were at Cocklawburn, Saltpan Rocks on 2nd (MHu); 20 at Hartley fed close inshore (KWY), ten were offshore at Druridge Pools (IDR) with up to four at three other localities.

**Razorbill** *Alca torda*

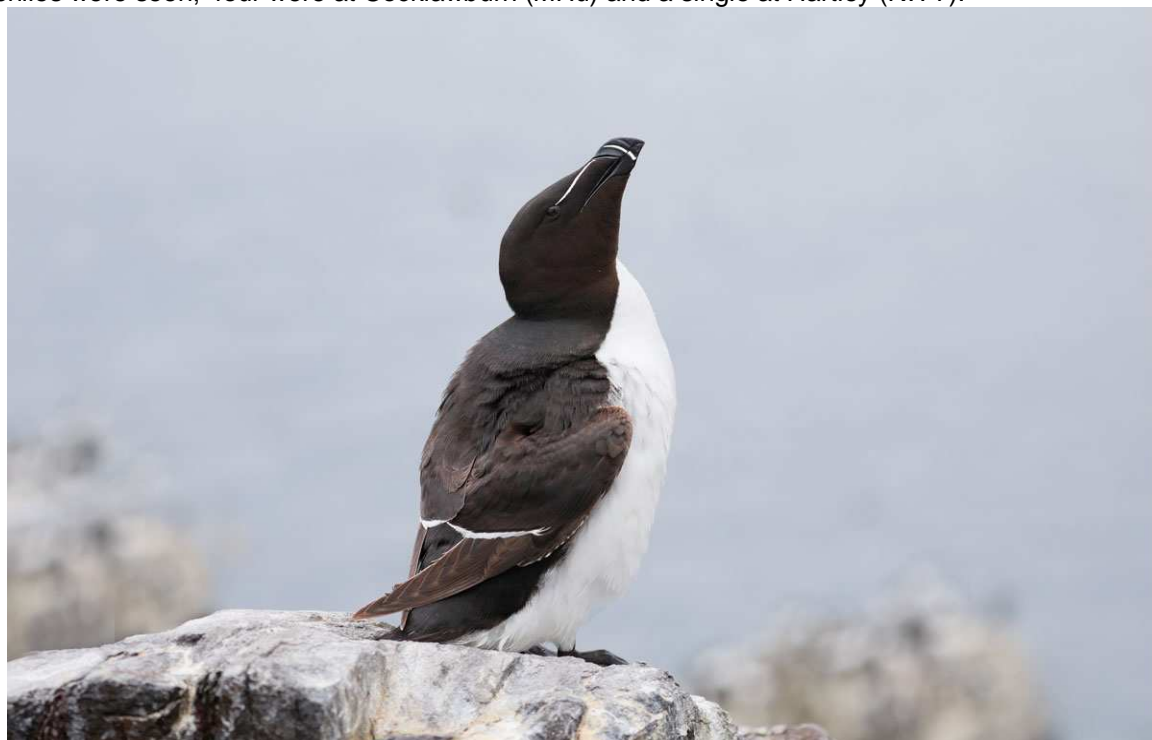
At the Dunstanburgh Castle cliffs, 134 were on the sea on 9th (AA) and ca.40 were there on the sea and ledges on 11th (EC/JSB) although no juveniles were seen; four were at Cocklawburn (MHu) and a single at Hartley (KWY).

A Razorbill poses

Inner Farne

Colin Bradshaw

19th July





**Puffin** *Fratercula arctica*

During the significant Auk movement on 7th, 500 moved N in three hours at Seaton Sluice (SSWT), 128 moved N at Tynemouth on the same day (DRW). On 9th 256 flew N in two hours at Bamburgh (DF) and 44 moved N at Tynemouth on 13th (DRW). On the sea below the cliffs at Dunstanburgh Castle at least 45 were present on 9th (AA).



A Classic Puffin image from Inner Farne by Colin Bradshaw on 19th July

**Rock Dove** *Columba livia*

At Stakeford Railway Bridge there were 25 on 2nd (DM/PJA), nine was the peak at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 28th (DM) and singles at Jesmond Dene and Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin).

**Stock Dove** *Columba oenas*

Five were found around Jesmond Dene on 8th (MJCo), four at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 14th (TB) with three there on two other dates and at Cresswell Pond, Ellington, Kielder with a calling male at Longhoughton Quarry on 21st.

A Stock Dove

Howdon

Colin Bradshaw

15th July

**Woodpigeon** *Columba palumbus*

Ten was the peak count during the month at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) (RS) and nine at Jesmond Dene on 21st (MJCo).



**Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto*

Ten at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) (RS) was the only report.

**Cuckoo** *Cuculus canorus*

An adult was at Bamburgh on 4th (BRS), an un-aged bird at Holy Island on 24th (CSa) and a juvenile at Weetslade C P on 27th (MFa).

**Barn Owl** *Tyto alba*

At Howick on 9th a pair tended two young at a nest box (JAR) with adults feeding young at a natural nest site there on 12th. All other reports were of single birds regularly at Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools and Hemscott Hill at Fenham le Moor on 8th, Morpeth on 11th, Warkworth Lane (Ellington) on 14th, Widdrington Moor Lake on 20th, Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 22nd and carrying food just east of Harlow Hill on 28th.

**Tawny Owl** *Strix aluco*

Two were calling at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 12th were likely juveniles (TD) with two calling at Wallington Hall on 19th (SW) . A juvenile was at Harwood Gate (Harwood Forest) on 2nd with singles at Grindon Lough on 5th, Howick on 8th, Mitford on 10th, Sandy Lane (Wideopen) on 15th, Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 22nd / 23rd and Airy Holm Reservoir on 30th.

**Little Owl** *Athene noctua*

All reports were of a single bird regularly at Druridge from 1st to 11th (MKi *et al.*).

**Long-eared Owl** *Asio otus*

One was at East Chevington on 7th (IF) with a recently fledged juvenile seen hunting over the golf course at Newbiggin by the Sea on 25th seen again there on 30th (AP).

**Nightjar** *Caprimulgus europaeus*

Four churring males were regularly present at Wanneys during the month (IK) whilst on 3rd at Winnows Hill (Slaley) churring began at 22.00 hours and continued till after 23.30 with good flight views of two birds (AJ/TW/AJN).

**Swift** *Apus apus*

A total month's count was of 521 at Seaton Sluice Watch Tower with peaks on 90N and 67S on 26th (SSWT). 130 per hour flew south at Budle Bay on 10th and 82 north in 1hr 15minutes at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on the same date (GPK/DF). Feeding flocks of 120 were at St Mary's Island on 10th (ASJ), at least 110 over Belford on 25th (DF), 70 at nesting colony in Whitley Bay on 22nd and 65+ regularly at Crowhall Farm (Holywell). 50 were at Marden Quarry on 3rd, Bothal Pond on 9th, Wooler on 23rd and Amble on 26th with 10 to 40 at eight other locations and one to nine at 11 more.

**Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis*

Two were at Colt Crag Reservoir on 17th (MR) and Ellington Dene on 29th (MJC) with singles at Low Angerton on 5th, Derwent Reservoir & Bothal on 15th, Howick & Jesmond Dene on 21st, Elwick on 23rd and on 30th on the Coquet at Felton and Rothbury.

**Great Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos major*

An adult male and two juveniles were at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 17th (TB) with two at Barns Park (Cramlington) on 29th and Arcot Pond on 30th (DM). Singles were at five other locations.

**Green Woodpecker** *Picus viridis*

No reports

**Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*

Seven birds were seen on Holy Island on 23rd (MJC) and two birds were at Whittonstall also on 23rd (TB). One - two were noted at West Hartford all month (TB) and single birds were seen at Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Ellington, Hartley, Hebron, Howick, Morpeth, Plessey Checks (Cramlington), Seaton Sluice Watch Tower and Widdrington Moor Lake.

**Merlin** *Falco columbarius*

Holy Island had two birds present on 23rd (MJC). Singles were observed at Winnows Hill (Slaley) on 3rd (LJM), Ingram on 15th (CW), Colt Crag Reservoir on 17th (MR), Holy Island on 27th (IDR/JF/JCD) and at Boulmer on 30th (TRD/JD).

**Hobby** *Falco subbuteo*

On 8th an adult took and carried away an adult Swallow *Hirundo rustica* at Derwent Reservoir (IFo), and an adult flew low S over Cresswell Pond on 14th (TB).

**Peregrine** *Falco peregrinus*

One to two were seen on most days at Ellington/Chugdon Wood (TB). A male flew high W over Humshaugh village on 3rd (SW) and a bird was at Colt Crag Reservoir on 10th (MR).

**Ring-necked Parakeet** *Psittacula krameri*

Two were at St Peter's Basin (Newcastle) on 12th (CGK) and one over the Royal Grammar School (Jesmond) on 17th and 29th (GB).

**Jay** *Garrulus glandarius*

A family party of five were at Great Bavington on 2nd (SW), four at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 13th (TB) with one to two at five other widespread localities.

**Magpie** *Pica pica*

Five were at Jesmond Dene on 8th (MJCo) and a pair with one juvenile were feeding on roadside at Newbiggin between 18th and 30th (RS).

**Jackdaw** *Corvus monedula*

The evening roost at Big Waters Car Park numbered 200 on 16th (GB) with 150 including many juveniles at Castle Island on 2nd (DM/PJA) and 44 at Howdon on 3rd (CB). A pair fed two juveniles at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) throughout the month and five were at Jesmond Dene on 28th with an aberrant plumaged predominantly brown bird at Northburn (Cramlington) on 29th (LJM).

**Rook** *Corvus frugilegus*

No reports

**Carrion Crow** *Corvus corone*

Six were at Jesmond Dene on 8th (MJCo) and a pair with two juveniles at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) throughout the month (RS).

**Raven** *Corvus corax*

On 21st four were at Thirlmoor Hill (Otterburn Ranges) (JR) and at Middle Hill (Upper Coquet) on 31st (AJR) with three at Dudlees (Otterburn Ranges) on 21st (JR). Singles were at Grindon Lough on 10th, Doddington Moor on 20th and Harbottle on 30th.

**Coal Tit** *Periparus ater*

There was only one report of singles at Fisherman's Lodge and the Nature Area (Jesmond Dene) on 8th (MJCo).

**Marsh Tit** *Poecile palustris*

Two were present daily on garden feeders at Rothbury during the month (TRD/JD) with one regularly at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) from 13th to 29th (NFO) and at Wallington on 5th (TRD/JD).



A Marsh Tit  
Rothbury  
Tim Dean  
19th July



**Willow Tit** *Poecile montanus*

Four were at Airy Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield) on 10th (IFo), two at Big Waters NWT on 31st (GB) with singles at both locations on 16th and regularly at Linden Hall (Longhorsley). Singles were also at Felton, St Mary's Island, East Cramlington Pond, Longhoughton Quarry, Mitford and Ponteland where a juvenile, possibly bred locally, was caught and ringed.

**Blue Tit** *Cyanistes caeruleus*

There was just one report of a single at Jesmond Dene on 14th (MJCo). Nestboxes at Low Carritheth housed three pairs that laid 26 eggs, of which 17 young hatched, and all fledged (JR).

**Great Tit** *Parus major*

Eight pairs used nestboxes at Tasset laying 58 eggs with 54 young hatching and all fledging, with three pairs using Low Carritheth boxes laying 26 eggs of which 14 young hatched and again all fledged (JR). Three were at Jesmond Dene on 8th (MJCo).

**Bearded Tit** *Panurus biarmicus*

Three, of which two were juveniles, were at East Chevington south pool on 20th (MN) with a single juvenile on 7th and one heard at north pool on 11th (IF/STH/IFo).

**Skylark** *Alauda arvensis*

At least 20 were at Newton Links on 8th and 5+ at Holy Island on 23rd (AJR) with two at Hebron on 10th and a single at Lightwater on the same date.

**Sand Martin** *Riparia riparia*

More than 120 were at Grindon Lough on 17th (PRM), 80 sitting on the sand at Howick on 23rd (JAR) and 80 low over Derwent in heavy rain on 27th with 70 there on 9th (IFo). At West Ord (Berwick) 11 occupied nest holes with 28 birds on 7th (MHu) with five to 15 at five coastal locations.

**Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

On 30th 200 gathered at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) including many juveniles with 32, mostly juveniles, on 15th (RS), 58 feeding over Cocklawburn pond at 7am on 23rd (MHu), 50 at St Mary's Island on 19th (ASJ), 44 roosting on fence at Yarrow Slake (Berwick) on 25th and 24 at Longhorsley on 24th. One to ten were at seven widespread localities.



A Swallow on Holy Island on 23rd July by Mike Carr

**House Martin** *Delichon urbica*

At Colt Crag Reservoir 25 were present on 10th (MR), 21 at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 31st (GB), 15 at Beadnell on 27th, 12 at Newbiggin on 14th and ten at Druridge Pools NR on 28th. Only five nests were at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 5th with fledging noted on 29th (DM). Nesting was noted at Arcot Grange and on 26th two under-cliff nests were found at Little Beach (Berwick) (MHu).

**Cetti's Warbler** *Cettia cetti*

A single bird was again noted at East Chevington to 20th, with two noted here on 29th (IF/ STH/IFo/MN).

**Long-tailed Tit** *Aegithalos caudatus*

A 'tribe' of 24 was at West Hartford on 26th, up to 15 were noted at Ellington during the month and five juveniles were attracted by fat balls in a Fulbeck (Morpeth) garden on 24th.

**Willow Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochilus*

With birds falling silent post-breeding, reports were sparse. Counts of four from Whitfield and Yarrow Slake on 21st and 25th respectively included a bird in sub-song at the latter locality. Two were noted at Bamburgh and Kielder Water and singles were at Druridge Pools, East Ord and Grindon, the latter singing on 10th.

**Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita*

Ten were at New Mills (Berwick) on 25th (TBr) and eight at Airy Holm Reservoir on 16th. Elsewhere, one to three were reported from Bamburgh, Druridge Pools, East Ord, Jesmond Dene, Lickar Dene (Berwick) and Whitfield.

**Sedge Warbler** *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

At East Chevington six were ringed on 7th and 46 on 29th (IF). A good breeding season was reported from Castron where there were 11 on 6th and a further 11 were at Whiteadder Water (Berwick) on 25th. Six were at Arcot Pond on 30th, three + and five + at Bamburgh on 4th and 16th respectively, three on the River Tweed from the A1 to the border and singles at Howdon, Spittal (Berwick) and Rothbury.

**Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

At East Chevington five were ringed on 7th and 39 on 29th (IF). Three family parties were noted at Ladyburn Lake on 23rd, up to four were noted at Cresswell Pond and singles at Big Waters on 31st and Druridge Pools on 28th (Tf/JFa).

**Grasshopper Warbler** *Locustella naevia*

The regular Cramlington Study Area produced a minimum of 26 territories, of which 13 were in the Arcot Pond area and seven at West Hartford (STH *et al.*). Singles were also reported from Bamburgh, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Hartley, Havannah NR, Linden Hall and Warkworth Lane.

**Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla*

There were three at Jesmond Dene on 8th and three juveniles at Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 21st (MJCo/KWY). Singles were reported from Exhibition Park, Grindon Lough and Wark (North Tyne).

**Garden Warbler** *Sylvia borin*

Three were reported from Airy Holm Reservoir on 10th (IFo) and singles at Ellington on 26th and Lickar Dene (Berwick) on 3rd.

**Lesser Whitethroat** *Sylvia curruca*

The regular Cramlington Study Area produced 11 territories this year (STH *et al.*), while another was heard singing over a garden wall in Tynemouth on 15th.

**Whitethroat** *Sylvia communis*

In the Cramlington area family parties were noted at Barns Park on 29th and Valley Park on 7th (DM). Three were singing at Howdon on 12th, two were at Airy Holm Reservoir on 10th and singles at East Chevington on 29th and Spittal (Berwick) on 10th.

**Goldcrest** *Regulus regulus*

A family party was noted at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 8th (DM), two adults and two juveniles were at Ellington on 19th and one was at Jesmond Dene on 8th.

**Wren** *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Five singing males were at Druridge Pools on 28th (IDR/JF); three birds were noted at Jesmond Dene on 8th and a singing male at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) throughout.

**Nuthatch** *Sitta europaea*

One to two were noted at Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Derwent Gorge, East Ord, Rothbury and Whitfield.

**Treecreeper** *Certhia familiaris*

Singles were reported from Airy Holm Reservoir, Jesmond Dene, Leazes Park and Warkworth Lane.

**Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris*

Post-breeding gatherings continued to increase with a peak count of 750 (including many juveniles) going to roost at Big Waters on 16th (GB). The peak count at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) was 300 on 18th, while 200 were at Derwent Reservoir on 5th and 160 at Ord Moor (Berwick) on 14th. Counts of 15-20 came from Druridge Bay CP and Tynemouth.

**Blackbird** *Turdus merula*

Four at Jesmond Dene on 8th was the only report this month (MJCo).

**Song Thrush** *Turdus philomelos*

Three were in Jesmond Dene on 8th (MJCo), two singing at Exhibition Park on 3rd and two at Howdon on 23rd.

**Mistle Thrush** *Turdus viscivorus*

23 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 8th was the largest gathering (MR). A flock of 11 flew over a Rothbury garden on 29th; four (including three juveniles) were at Longhorsley on 31st and two at Leazes Park on 17th.

**Spotted Flycatcher** *Muscicapa striata*

Three were at Whitfield on 21st (SW). Counts of two came from Beanley Wood on 11th, Colt Crag Reservoir (one juvenile) on 17th and Stamfordham until 20th, the latter possibly a failed breeding pair. Singles were also reported from Capheaton, Humshaugh, Linden Hall, Otterburn, Simonside, Wallington Hall and Wark (North Tyne).

**Robin** *Erithacus rubecula*

Two at Jesmond Dene and one at Hebron were the only reports this month.

**Pied Flycatcher** *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Two juveniles were at Whitfield on 21st (SW).

**Redstart** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Reports of juveniles came from Beacon Hill (three) on 16th (TD) and singles at Budle Point and Derwent Reservoir on 5th. Adult males were noted at Tynemouth on 27th and Warton (Coquetdale) on 19th.

**Whinchat** *Saxicola rubetra*

Six juveniles were at Old Quickening Cote (Upper Coquetdale) on 21st. Five birds were at Cochrane Pike (Ingram) on 15th and a male at Hethpool on 17th.



A Whinchat at Long Nanny on Holy Island by Mike Carr on 21st July



**Stonechat** *Saxicola rubicola*

Peak counts were five (three Juveniles) at Hethpool (College Valley) on 17th (TRD/JD), four (three juveniles) at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 28th, four (two juveniles) at Cocklawburn Pond on 16th, two juveniles at Cresswell Pond on 13th, a pair at Saltpan Rocks (Cocklawburn) on 16th, two at Holy Island on 27th and at Simonside on 23rd and one at East Chevington on 29th.

**Wheatear** *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Four at Simonside on 23rd was the only report this month (PG).

**Dipper** *Cinclus cinclus*

Two were at Ellington Dene on 29th. Singles were at four other sites.

**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*

62 to 70 were at Cullercoats Harbour all month (ASJ). 20 were at Beacon Lane (Cramlington) on 19th (STH). 15 and six were at garden feeders in Cullercoats and Tynemouth respectively during the month.

**Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus*

45 were seen at Briar Dene Farm on 2nd (MNC). 36 to 42 were noted at Chugdon Wood on 14th and 28th (TB). 25 spent the month at Mitford(PG). 20 regularly attended garden feeders at Tynemouth during the month. One to six were observed at a further 11 sites.

**Dunnoek** *Prunella modularis*

Family groups were seen at Seaton Sluice, St. Mary's Wetland and a Marden Estate garden this month (ASJ). Two were at Jesmond Dene on 8th.

**Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava*

Three were seen at Boulmer on 11th with two there on 13th (CSA/BS). Singles were at only five other sites, including unusually, Tyneview Park offices (Benton)(KWY).

**Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*

Three were in Jesmond Dene on 14th (MJCo). Singles were at six sites.

**Pied Wagtail** *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

19, including 13 juveniles fed among seaweed at St. Mary's Island on 25th, with ten plus present all month (ASJ). Eleven were at Castle Island on 2nd (DM/PA). Two juveniles at Northumberlandia (Cramlington) on 15th, increased to eight by 21st (LJM). A pair feeding two juveniles was at Newbiggin in the latter half of the month (RS). Two were at two other sites.

**Meadow Pipit** *Anthus pratensis*

Ten were noted on Holy Island on 27th and at St. Mary's during the month, where display was noted until 15th. Four + were at Newcastle Town Moor on 24th one seen carrying food on 18th (GB). Pairs were still feeding young in the nest at St. Mary's on 20th and at East Chevington on 29th (ASJ/MSH).

A Meadow Pipit

St. Mary's

14th July

by Alan Jack



**Tree Pipit** *Anthus trivialis*

A single report this month as males fell silent. One was at Netherwitton on 3rd (TRD/JD).

**Rock Pipit** *Anthus petrosus*

Two birds were seen at North Blyth on 26th and a single at Cullercoats on several dates (STH/ASJ).

**Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelebs*

Few reports, with a pair and three young at garden feeders at Marden all month, three at Hebron on 10th and two at Druridge Pools and Jesmond Dene.

**Bullfinch** *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

A family party plus another pair at Howdon on 12th, totalled seven birds (CB). One to two were at seven other sites.

**Greenfinch** *Carduelis chloris*

Up to 12, including juveniles, were feeding at St. Mary's on several dates (ASJ). Three +, including a juvenile, were at Newcastle Town moor on 26th (GB). Three males were at Newbiggin on the same date (RS). Two were at Jesmond Dene on 14th.

**Linnet** *Carduelis cannabina*

A feeding flock of around 90, with many juveniles gathered at St. Mary's, was seen during the first week (ASJ). A flock of 50 was at Derwent Reservoir on 1st (IFO). Elsewhere, one to six were at four sites.

**Lesser Redpoll** *Carduelis caberet*

Two were at Grindon on 11th and Kielder on 18th this month, a single bird was also at Grindon on 10th (PRM).

**Crossbill** *Loxia curvirostra*

Few were reported this month. Three were at Simonside on 19th and two were at Blakehopeburnhaugh on 21st and a single there on 28th.

**Goldfinch** *Carduelis carduelis*

60+ fed at St. Mary's on 26th and 34 were at Berwick on 29th (ASJ/TBr). 30 were at Newbiggin on 21st (RS). One to six were at six other sites.



A Goldfinch  
St. Mary's  
23rd July  
by Alan Jack

**Siskin** *Carduelis spinus*

12+ were at Kielder Water on 18th (PRM).

**Yellowhammer** *Emberiza citronella*

19 were seen at Low Cocklaw on 29th (TBr). One to three were at seven further sites, included singing males.

**Reed Bunting** *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Seven were at St. Mary's on 18th (ASJ). Three were along the Tweed near Berwick on 25th (TBr). One to two were at five sites, including singing males.

A male Reed Bunting

at St. Mary's

14th July

Alan Jack

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

Eleven adults were at Derwent Reservoir on 5th with one there the next day which stayed until 10th (IFo). Now breeding sporadically in UK.

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

Two hybrids were at Hauxley on 7th (HRS)

**Birds of Unknown Origin**

No sightings

**IST OF CONTRIBUTORS**

A.Allen, A.H.Banks, S.R.Barrett, T.Blake, J.S.Booth, G.Bowman, C.Bradshaw, T.Brewis (TBr), A. & L.Brunt, M.J.Carr, M.N.Coates, M.J.Cook, (MJCo), A.Curry, T.Daley, J.C.Day, T.R. & J.Dean, I.R.Douglas, M.Ducklett, J.Fairclough, M.Fairlees, T. & J.Farooqi (TF / JFa), I.Fisher, D.F.Forshaw, I.Forsyth (IFo), P.Gilbert, A.S.Hart, C.Hartley, M.Hepple (MHP), A.J.Hewitt, M.S.Hodgson, S.T.Holliday, M.Hutcheson (MHu), A.S.Jack, A.Janes, I.Johnson, M.G.Kerby (MK), I.Kerr, M.Kirby (MKi), C.G.Knox, G.P.Knox, P.R.Massey, L.J.McDougall, D.Mckeown, L.J.McDougall, A.D.Mclevy, A.D.Mould, M.Natgrass, A.J.Newson, N.F.Osborne, R.Poyer (RPo), A.Priest, A.J.Richards, J.Richardson, M.Richardson, S.Rippon, I.D.Robson, J.A.Roper, C.Saunders (CSa), B.Steel, R.Stevens, A.L.Todd, D.R.Watson, T.Watson, S.Westerberg, C.Wright, K.W.York.

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), Helen Snaith (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).

North Northumberland Bird Club (R Poyer and J Lumby), Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

Thanks to David Sanders of NNBC for providing data.

## Apologies for any accidental omissions

Proof reading was by Mike Smith.

Mail distribution by Paul Stewart.

Tom Brewis's Data Manager role has been taken on by Clive Hammond. Welcome! and thanks Tom.

Edited by Steve Barrett [NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com](mailto:NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com)

## RECORD SUBMISSION

Please email records for the month to [ntbc.records@googlemail.com](mailto: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](mailto: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. 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 [ntbcorg@gmail.com](mailto:ntbcorg@gmail.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 [ntbcorg@jobentleyplus.com](mailto:ntbcorg@jobentleyplus.com) or [ntbcorg@gmail.com](mailto:ntbcorg@gmail.com)

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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://www.ntbc.org.uk)

### COUNTY RECORDS COMMITTEE

Graeme Bowman will complete his four-year spell on the committee in December 2019. 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 resumé 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](mailto:t.r.dean@btinternet.com)

### BARGAIN BIRDING JOURNALS

I have acquired a few too many birding journals recently and have the following available to Club members:

Full run of 26 volumes of **Birding World** (unbound), £30;  
**British Birds** (unbound) inc Indexes 1999-2008 and 2010, £20;  
**RSPB Birds** ca..80 issues from 1966, free;  
**Birdwatch** mags, ca.140 issues up to 2004, free.

Contact Steve Holliday on 07786 213699, early pick up preferred.

Thanks

Steve



A Puffin on Inner Farne

Colin Bradshaw

19th July

# Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2019 No 8

MONTHLY SUMMARY AUGUST 2019

6th October 2019



## CONTENTS

Vicar's Garden Holy Island

## CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS HIGHLIGHTS

Ruddy Shelduck	A group of eight arrived on 12th at East Chevington. Seen at several other sites.
Red-crested Pochard	An eclipse drake was at Big Waters on 27th.
Garganey	Only singles noted at Holywell Pond and Cresswell Pond.
Quail	One still present at Elwick on 10th.
Storm Petrel	Two were ringed at Druridge on 2nd.
Spoonbill	One at Druridge Pools on 1st.
Great White Egret	One from last month at Hauxley stayed and then moved to Castle Island on 27th.
Crane	One at Otterburn on 9th. Known to be in area since June.
Black-winged Stilt	A juvenile at Druridge Pools on 31st was first in county since 1993!
Curlew Sandpiper	Singles at Cresswell Pond and Druridge Pools.
Little Stint	Singles at Druridge Pools, Cresswell Pond and Coquet Estuary.
Little Gull	Only singles from four sites during month. Marked decline in numbers.
Mediterranean Gull	New county record of 194 at Newbiggin on 8th.
Caspian Gull	The returning adult was present at Amble Harbour again all month.
Sandwich Tern	Notable ringing recovery at Bamburgh on 31st. Ireland in 2008 and S Africa in 2018.
Black Tern	Several sightings during month.
Pomarine Skua	Dark phase adult past Seaton Sluice on 4th.
Long-tailed Skua	Sub-adult past Seaton Sluice on 17th.
Black Guillemot	One past Seaton Sluice on 30th.
Bearded Tit	Up to three seen at Cresswell Pond and East Chevington.
Cetti's Warbler	One still at East Chevington on 8th.
Rose-coloured Starling	A fine adult was found at Seaton Pt, Boulmer on 23rd staying until end of month.



A Sparrowhawk seen from John Littleton's conservatory in Woosington

## 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 is in September. See you there;

## October 10th Taiwan

Taiwan isn't a destination on most birders' radars but why not? 30 odd endemics and on the Pacific flyway, it offers great birding in a safe and friendly country. Iain Robson will tell all.

And the club AGM will be held.



**FIELD TRIPS**

Contact Steve Anderson [seaswan@btinternet.com](mailto:seaswan@btinternet.com)

**CLASSIFIED LIST****Canada Goose** *Branta canadensis*

A minimum of 585 were at Colt Crag Reservoir on 23rd (MR). Peak counts elsewhere involved 210 at Grindon Lough on 16th (PRM), about 200 at Haughton Strother GP on 31st (SW), 176 at Airy Holm Reservoir on 29th (IFo), 151 at Hauxley Reserve on 16th (HRS), 104-120 at the Aln Estuary (MKi), Cresswell Pond (TB) and Foxton Bend (DM *et al.*), 67-86 at/over East Cramlington and New Water Haugh, and 30-45 at Bothal Pond, Castle Island, Druridge Pools, Newcastle Leazes Park, QEII CP Lake and West Ord. Two to 13 were also at Newcastle Exhibition Park and Prestwick Carr.

**Barnacle Goose** *Branta leucopsis*

Singles were at Colt Crag Reservoir on 23rd (with Canada Geese; MR), Haughton Strother GP on 31st (SW) and QEII CP Lake on 3rd and 8th (LJM/BS).

**Greylag Goose** *Anser anser*

11-12 flew S at Hauxley and Humshaugh, and three S at Elswick on various dates. About 800 were at Haughton Strother GP on 31st (SW), about 500 at Budle Bay on 28th (DF), 400 at East Chevington on 10th (MN), 360-390 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 20th (MR) and New Water Haugh on 4th (MHu), about 250 at Druridge Pools on 2nd (DM/PJA) and 176 at Yarrow Slake (MHu). Groups of 50-74 were at the Aln Estuary, Holywell Pond, Mickley Square and Prestwick Carr, and 11-40 at/over the Aln Estuary, Cramlington, Grindon Lough and Low Cocklaw. Four were at Hauxley Reserve.

**Pink-footed Goose** *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Two were at Budle Bay on 25th (CGK/GPK).

**Mute Swan** *Cygnus olor*

A total of five flew N at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). A total of 320 were noted at Calot Shad, the Tweed Estuary on 14th (MHu), 54 were at East Chevington on 10th (MN), 46 at QEII CP Lake on 3rd (LJM), 27-35 at Castle Island (STH) and Killingworth Lake (LJM), and ten to 17 at Bothal and Linton Ponds, Fenham Flats and Meadow Haven. Three adults were trapped by a wire fence when walking from the north pool to the south pool at East Chevington on 17th, and had to be given assistance (IK).

**Shelduck** *Tadorna tadorna*

Six flew N and five S at Seaton Sluice on 1st SSWT), 52 were at Fenham Flats on 17th (ASJ), 22 at the Blyth Estuary on 13th included one adult (LJM), and 12 were at the Coquet Estuary on 11th (RPO). Two broods of eight and six large young were at Castle Island on 6th (STH), a female accompanied seven large young at Cresswell Pond on 6th (TB) and an adult escorted four large young at the Coquet Estuary on 24th (DM *et al.*).

**Ruddy Shelduck** *Tadorna ferruginea*

Three were at the Coquet Estuary on 10th (RPO). Eight were at East Chevington on 13th (AA/SRB) and were noted there on several dates between 15th-18th (TB/AJ *et al.*). The same group of eight was then noted at Hauxley Reserve on 21st (RMH), and the Coquet Estuary (RPO) and Maiden's Hall Lake (TF/JFa/MSH/RPO) on 27th. Singles were at Colt Crag Reservoir on 21st (MR) and Haughton Strother GP on 31st (SW).

**Mandarin** *Aix galericulata*

One was on the River Coquet at Warkworth on 8th (CH).

**Garganey** *Spatula querquedula*

A drake in eclipse plumage was at Holywell Pond on 17th (KWY) and a juvenile was at Cresswell Pond on 27th (TF/JFa).

**Shoveler** *Spatula clypeata*

Five flew N and one S at Seaton Sluice between 22nd-28th (SSWT), and five flew NW at Stag Rocks on 5th (DF). 18 were at Hauxley Reserve on 28th (RMH), seven at Grindon Lough on 29th (PRM), six at Holywell Pond on 17th (KWY), and five were at East Chevington on 8th (TRD/JD). Three to four were also at Big Waters, Bothal and Linton Ponds, Druridge Pools and Marden Quarry, and one to two at Low Newton scrape and Prestwick Carr.

**Gadwall** *Mareca strepera*

Peak counts were 75 at Linton Ponds on 4th (CDH), 55 at Bell's Pond on 31st (ASJ), 45 at Caistron on 3rd (JD), 21 at Hauxley Reserve on 16th (HRS), and 15-18 at Big Waters, and Bothal and Holywell Ponds. Eight were at Marden Quarry and three at Cresswell Pond and Grindon Lough.

**Wigeon** *Mareca penelope*

17 flew N at Seaton Sluice on 1st (SSWT), and 11 moved N at Snab Point on 27th (TF/JFa). 18 at Budle Bay on 12th increased to 40 by 22nd, 80 by 26th and 220+ by 30th (DF/CGK/GPK), and 18 at Grindon Lough on 3rd rose to about 45 by 16th and about 120 by 29th (PRM/MRS). A small influx brought 44 to Derwent Reservoir on 30th (IFo), 17 were at Fenham Flats on 10th, and one to six at Big Waters, Branton GP, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Hauxley Reserve and Low Newton scrape.

**Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*

Two flew N at Seaton Sluice on 1st (SSWT). Largest concentrations were 190 at Big Waters on 8th (GB), 180 at Budle Bay on 23rd (GPK), 102 at Hauxley Reserve on 16th (HRS), 50-87 at Bothal and Linton Ponds, Castle Island, Colt Crag and Derwent Reservoirs, Grindon Lough and Newcastle Leazes Park, 28-40 at Airy Holm Reservoir, Newcastle Exhibition Park and Prestwick Carr, and 15 at Bakethin Reservoir. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/ notes
Newcastle Leazes Park	1	7	GB. Third adult size young on 7th.
Castle Island	1	6	STH. Brood of third grown young on 6th

**Pintail** *Anas acuta*

Singles were at Grindon Lough on 8th and 16th (PRM), Colt Crag Reservoir on 28th (MR) and Budle Bay on 30th (GPK).

**Teal** *Anas crecca*

A total of 2,256 N and 421 S was a new August record total at Seaton Sluice and included a record August day count of 821 N and 105 S on 25th (SSWT), and 20-26 flew N at Berwick and Snab Point. Peak gatherings were about 180 at Grindon Lough on 29th (PRM), 122 at Derwent Reservoir on 29th (IFo), 113 at Druridge Pools on 25th (MSH), 50-60 at Boulmer, Budle Bay and East Chevington, and 24-47 at Bothal Pond, Longhirst Flash, Marden Quarry, Newbiggin and St Mary's Island, and ten at Hauxley Reserve.

**Red-crested Pochard** *Netta rufina*

A drake in eclipse plumage at Big Waters on 27th was seen to fly off N with two Pochards during a thunderstorm (AIB/GB/AJJ).

**Pochard** *Aythya ferina*

Holywell Pond held a peak of 34 on 3rd (KWY). Numbers elsewhere were much more moderate; five at Bothal Pond on 4th (TD), three at Widdrington Moor Lake on 8th (TRD/JD), and one to two at Big Waters, Colt Crag and Derwent Reservoirs, and Haughton Strother GP.

**Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula*

Five flew N and one S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). Peak concentrations were 94 at Widdrington Moor Lake on 14th (BS), 49 at Haughton Strother GP on 31st (SW), 35 at Caistron (JD) and Holywell Pond (KWY), 23-26 at Druridge Pools, Killingworth Lake and Marden Quarry, and 12-15 at Bothal Pond and Grindon Lough. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/ notes
Hauxley Reserve	2	14 (8,6)	MSH/HRS. Brood of 6 on 6th and brood of 8 on 16th
Linton Ponds	2	10 (8,2)	CDH. Recently hatched broods on 4th
Bothal Pond	1	7	TD on 4th
Woodhorn Flashes	1	7	GB on 1st
Killingworth Lake	1	5	LJM on 6th
Bakethin Reservoir	1	1	PRM. Partly grown juvenile on 30th

**Scaup** *Aythya marila*

A 'pristine' drake was at Widdrington Moor Lake on 8th (TRD/JD). One (a female where stated) was at Cresswell Pond on several dates between 22nd-31st (IRD/TRD/MN *et al.*), and a female was at Hauxley Reserve on 28th (RMH).

**Eider** *Somateria mollissima*

Five flew N and 28 S at Seaton Sluice during the month, including 21 S on 3rd (SSWT). 224 were at Holy Island harbour on 11th (IK), 138 at Holy Island North Shore on 25th (MJC), 49-50 at Seahouses (ADM/SR) and Spittal-Cocklawburn (TBr/MMcN), and 14-28 at Boulmer, Howick, Newbiggin and Stag Rocks.

**Velvet Scoter** *Melanitta fusca*

Singles flew N at Seaton Sluice on 3rd and 21st, and one was offshore there on 20th (SSWT). Two (adult female and juvenile) were off East Chevington on 18th (NFO).

**Common Scoter** *Melanitta nigra*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 938 N and 258 S (SSWT), and four to seven flew N at Newbiggin and Snab Point. About 150 were off Druridge on 8th and 28th (TRD/JD), 44 at Spittal-Cocklawburn on 16th (TBr/MMcN), 35 at Rockcliffe, Whitley Bay on 2nd (IJ), and two to four at Boulmer and Stag Rocks. A group of 35 scoter (sp.) flew S at Howick on 10th (JAR).

**Goldeneye** *Bucephala clangula*

21 were at the regular breeding site on 12th (NFO), and two at a nearby site on 19th (TRD/JD).

**Goosander** *Mergus merganser*

A total of 28 moved N and 19 S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), and two flew N at Newbiggin on 1st (JR). Peak counts were 56 at Spittal on 9th (MHu), 32 at Yarrow Slake on 1st (MHu), 27-28 at the Blyth and Coquet Estuaries (LJM/RPo), and ten to 17 at Boulmer, Caistron, Cocklawburn and Holy Island. Five to eight were also at Beanley, Hauxley Reserve, Rothbury, Seahouses and Windyhaugh, three to four at Budle Bay, Derwent Reservoir, Howick, Kielder Water, Low Newton, Stag Rocks and Warkworth, and one to two at Druridge, Felton, Newbiggin and St Mary's.

**Red-breasted Merganser** *Mergus serrator*

At Budle Bay, an adult female accompanied three well-grown young all month (CGK/GPK).

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

An adult and nine young were at Preston Towers on 5th (NFO) and two were near Newham on 24th (DM).

**Grey Partridge** *Perdix perdix*

A pair with 11 young were at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 23rd (RS), ten were at Cresswell Pond on 22nd (IRD) and at Newbiggin GC on 24th. Six juveniles were at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 6th (TB), four at Low Cocklaw and two at Boulmer.

**Quail** *Coturnix coturnix*

A single bird was calling from fields along the Fenham Flats shoreline at Elwick on 10th (BS).

**Pheasant** *Phasianus colchicus*

One was at Arcot pond on 26th (DM).

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

The monthly total passing Seaton Sluice was average for the time of year with six N and eight S (SSWT). Singles were seen at Stag Rocks and Druridge.

**Storm Petrel** *Hydrobates Pelagicus*

Iain Robson's overnight ringing sessions at Druridge Bay Links trapped/ringed one on 2nd (TF/JFa) and two on 3rd (DM).

**Fulmar** *Fulmarus glacialis*

The only sizeable count logged at Seaton Sluice was 40N in two hours on 4th. Otherwise very little movement was noted (SSWT). The peak at Annstead was 23N on 2nd (DF), 19 headed N at St Mary's Island in one hour early evening also on 2nd (MSH) and 16 headed N past Church Point (Newbiggin) in the afternoon of 1st (JR). One to eight birds were at Berwick Little Beach, Boulmer, Hauxley NWT and Newton Point.

**Sooty Shearwater** *Puffinus griseus*

Seaton Sluice Watch Tower reported "another dismal August showing – the seventh year running with less than five records" with two flying N on 1st being the only sighting (SSWT). A further individual was watched heading N close inshore at St Mary's Island the following day (JBu).

**Manx Shearwater** *Puffinus puffinus*

After a promising July, numbers reduced again with the observers at Seaton Sluice reporting an "extremely poor" monthly total of 153N and 11S in 111 hours of watching. The majority of records (150N) were between 1st-4th with none recorded after 20th (SSWT). All records from elsewhere were of sightings between 1st-3rd with 17N at Annstead, 15N at St Mary's Island, ten at Rockcliffe and one to six from three other locations.

**Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

The peak count at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) was 22 on 3rd (TF/JFa) with 21, including 11 immatures, still present on 25th (TD). 11 were at Hauxley NWT on 16th (HRS), Colt Crag Reservoir held eight on 28th (MR) and one to seven were at the Aln Estuary, Arcot Pond, Bakethin Reservoir, Boulmer, Caistron, East Chevington, Exhibition Park (Town Moor), Grindon Lough, Houghton Strothers, Holywell Pond and Newton Pool. Breeding records came from Bank's Pond (Dinnington), Big Waters NWT, Killingworth Lake, Linton Ponds and Middle Ord Pond (Berwick).

**Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus*

The very popular site of Widdrington Moor Lake peaked at 18 birds on 28th, a mix of adults and young (TRD/JD), whilst Killingworth lake held a total of six with three adults nurturing broods of two and one on 6th (LJM). Two adults and two juveniles were at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) during the month (TF/JFa) and one to three were at seven other sites including breeding reports from Big Waters NWT and Holywell Pond.

**Spoonbill** *Platalea leucorodia*

One was at Druridge Pools on 1st (MN).

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

Numbers at the R. Tweed peaked at 28 at Yarrow Slake on 1st, with 21 there on 15th (MHu). 12 were at Howdon on 9th (CB), nine were at Hauxley NWT on 16th (HRS), the watch tower at Seaton Sluice recorded one N and seven S during the month including four S distantly over the sea on 5th (SSWT) and six were at Colt Crag Reservoir on 7th (MR). One to three were at Bakethin Reservoir, Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Exhibition Park, Hareshaw Common and Linton Ponds.



**Great White Egret** *Ardea alba*

The individual that arrived at Hauxley NWT at the end of last month remained until at least 24th, only wandering on 2nd when it was seen at East Chevington North Pool (MN/EC/JSB/RMH *et al.*). It was likely the same bird seen at Castle Island on 27th (AC).



A Great White Egret at Hauxley NR by Alan Jack on 13th August

**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*

Numbers gradually built up during the month with a peak of 18 at Holy Island causeway on 25th being the "highest ever count" from there by one regular observer (ADM). Budle Bay held good numbers all month with a peak of 13 on 24th (CGK/GPK/DF *et al.*), a creek at Longbridge End (Lindisfarne NNR) attracted seven birds all together on a rising tide on 4th (CH), then 13 were counted there on 24th (DM) and the Coquet Estuary peaked at five by the end of the month (RPo). One to four were at 14 other, mainly coastal, locations throughout the county however several individuals ventured a few miles inland at times.

**Gannet** *Morus bassanus*

Mirroring behaviour of several other pelagic species, the highest passage numbers were recorded at the start of the month with very little movement reported in the last two weeks. Up to 850N per hour passed Saltpan Rocks (Cocklawburn) on 2nd and c.600 per hour headed S past Berwick Pier in the morning of 9th (MHu). Annstead peaked at 330N on 3rd (DF) with 250N per hour on 1st-2nd being the peak at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). Numbers tailed off after the first week with the only movements of note being from Annstead with 76N on 13th and 93N in one hour on 17th (DF).

**Shag** *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

At Seaton Sluice the first autumn record was on the 21st and a total of 13N and 34S were seen passing thereafter to the end of the month (SSWT). The Meadow Haven (Berwick) roost peaked at 34 on 28th (MHu), ten were at Stag Rocks on 6th (ADM) and one to nine were at Berwick Little Beach, Dunstanburgh and Saltpan Rocks (Cocklawburn).

**Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Passage numbers built up by the second half of the month at Seaton Sluice, with a peak of 49N and 34S on 22nd, but no indication of any real movement (SSWT). An evening roost at Blyth Harbour held 110 birds on 29th (STH), 56 were in the Coquet Estuary on 27th (RPo), Holy Island Harbour hosted 44 on 11th (IK), and birds numbered into double figures at Annstead, Castle Island, Colt Crag Reservoir, Derwent Reservoir, East Chevington, Hauxley NWT, Meadow Haven, Newbiggin and Warkworth Gut. One to six were also at Airy Holm Reservoir, the Aln Estuary, Bakethin Reservoir, Boulmer, Haughton Strothers, Kielder Water Dam and Riding Mill.

**Osprey** *Pandion haliaetus*

Three birds were at Colt Crag Reservoir on 12th and singles there on 1st, 5th and 14th (MR). Two were seen at Derwent Reservoir on 29th and single birds on seven other dates during the month (IFo *et al.*) and two were also at Holy Island Causeway on 24th (LAR/DM/AI & GB) and a single bird on 25th (MJC/TF/JFa). Single birds were also at Big Waters on 1st and 2nd, Fenham-le-Moor on 11th, Kielder Water on 13th and 30th, Fenham Mill on 17th, Budle Bay on 24th, Bakethin Reservoir on 30th and at Haughton Strothers on 31st.

**Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus*

A family party of five birds, two adults and three juveniles were seen almost daily until 26th (AP) and three birds consisting of an adult female and two juveniles were at Ellington on 9th (TB). Two birds were noted at Holy Island on 25th (MJC/ADM) & 26th (ADM) and two were also at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 28th (TBr). Single birds were at 19 sites during the month.



A Sparrowhawk in a Woolsington garden by John Littleton

**Goshawk** *Accipiter gentilis*

An immature was seen at Colt Crag Reservoir on 20th (MR).

**Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*

Three birds, an adult female and two juveniles, were at East Chevington on 10th (MN) and three were seen going to roost there on 31st (TF/JFa). Up to two birds were noted at East Chevington on several dates. Singles were at Boulmer, Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Low Newton, Newbiggin-by-the-Sea, Seaton Sluice Watchtower and Widdrington Moor Lake.

**Red Kite** *Milvus milvus*

Six individuals were found on moorland from Whitley Chapel to Harwood Shield on 8th (AJ/ASH/AJN/TW) and single birds were also noted at West Minsteracres on 5th (IFo) and at Airy Holm Reservoir (near Shotleyfield) on 28th (IFo).

**Common Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*

Six different individuals were seen between the 10th and 20th at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) (TBr). Four birds were at Comb (nr Falstone) on 5th (JR) and three birds were at Holywell Pond on 3rd (KWY) and at Hedgeley GP on 4th (MJC). Two birds were seen at Allenheads, Druridge Pools, Holywell Pond, Kielder Water Dam, Seaton Delaval and at Valley Park (Cramlington). Singles were reported from eight sites.

**Water Rail** *Rallus aquaticus*

At East Chevington on 13th three or more birds were calling (TB), with singles there on 4th, 8th, 9th and 28th (TF/JFa/TRD/JD). The only other record came from a single at Cresswell pond on 9th (TF/JFa).

**Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*

Exhibition Park (Newcastle) had the highest count with 15 on 28th (GB) followed by 11 birds at Linton Ponds on 4th (CDH). Nine were at Hauxley NWT on 16th (HRS); eight were seen at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 10th. Seven were at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 10th and six were at Druridge pools on 31st (PRM). One to five birds were at Byker (Newcastle), Charlton Mires, Druridge Pools, Foxton Bends (Alnmouth), Haughton Strothers, Leazes Park (Newcastle), St Mary's Wetland and West Sleekburn.



**Coot** *Fulica atra*

The highest count came from Haughton Strothers with 52 birds on 31st (SW), followed by 49 at Big Waters NWT on 9th (GB), 48 at Linton Ponds on 4th (CDH), 47 at Bothal Pond on 27th (TD) and 31 were at Killingworth Lake on 6th (LJM). One to fifteen birds were at Derwent Reservoir, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Grindon Lough, Leazes Park (Newcastle), Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) and at Newton Pool.

**Crane** *Grus grus*

On 9th an adult was in a sheep field between the A696 and the River Rede just SE of Otterburn Battlefield car park (PRM).

**Oystercatcher** *Haematopus ostralegus*

A monthly total of 843 (126N, 717S) was reported from Seaton Sluice (SSWT), while the maximum monthly count from Budle Bay was 170 (CGK/GPK). There were 117 on the rocks at Annstead, Seahouses on 2nd (DF), 94 at Longhoughton Steel on 14th (MKi) and 85 on the Aln Estuary on 15th (MKi). Cocklawburn had 84 on 2nd and 32 on 6th (MHu), while Howick had 55 at roost on 2nd (JAR) and Boulmer had 54 on 12th and 24th (MJC). Lower counts came from Newbiggin, Hauxley NWT, St Mary's Island, Derwent Reservoir, Holy Island, Bamburgh and North Shields Fish Quay. One or two birds were reported from widespread locations in Newcastle upon Tyne and across Northumberland.

**Black-winged Stilt** *Himantopus himantopus*

A juvenile was present at Druridge Pools on 30–31st (MN, TF/JFa, PRM, IF, TRD, DMcK/PJA/ASJ *et al.*). This was the first recorded in the county since 1993, when another single bird showed up at Druridge Pools.



Black-winged Stilt Druridge Pools by Tim Dean 31st August

**Avocet** *Recurvirostra avosetta*

There were six at Cresswell Pond on 1st (MN) and 5th (MJC) and one by 7th (NFO).

**Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus*

Derwent Reservoir had the largest counts, rising from 700 on 1st to 1,400 by 28th (IFo). Grindon Lough had 85 on 3rd (MRS) with a peak of c.500 by 16th (PRM), while the Coquet Estuary had 320 on 15th and 500 by 22nd (RPo). There were peak counts of 406 at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) on 22nd (TF/JFa), 320 at St Mary's Island on 20th (ASJ), and 300 at Cresswell Pond on 14th (MSH, IRD). Prestwick Carr had c.150 on 13th, rising to 251 by 26th (GB) and Yarrow Slake, Berwick, had 126 on 1st, rising to 240 by 26th (MHu). There were 230 at Caistron on 3rd (JD). Reports of smaller numbers came from Cocklawburn, Haughton Strothers, Boulmer, the Aln Estuary and Druridge Pools, with counts below 20 at Shield on the Wall, Hauxley and Howdon. The only indication of movement recorded at Seaton Sluice was nine birds flying S between 17th and 21st.

**Golden Plover** *Pluvialis apricaria*

St Mary's Island had the highest total, with 890 on 26th (ASJ), and Boulmer had 850 on 22nd (BS). There were c.600 at Longhoughton Steel on 23rd (MJC) and 600 at North Shore, Holy Island, all in winter plumage, on 25th (MJC, IC). Beacon Point, Newbiggin, had 382 on 23rd (STH), while Grindon Lough had 330+ by 29th (PRM). There were 145 at Howick on 6th (JAR), 146 at Derwent Reservoir on 28th (IFo) and a maximum of 130 at Cresswell Pond on 14th (IRD). Smaller counts came from Winshields, the Coquet Estuary and Low Newton scrape, with reports of fewer than ten birds from Beal, Cocklawburn and Prestwick Carr.



**Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola*

The highest count of the month came from Holy Island, with 400 on 25th (TF/JFa). Fewer than ten birds were reported from Annstead, Seahouses on 13th (DF) and Boulmer on 24th (MJC), with one or two still in breeding plumage at Longhoughton Steel on 14th (MKi) and Newbiggin on 1st and 9th (GB, AP).

**Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula*

There was a maximum of 76 birds on the Blyth Estuary on 26th (BS), with 43 noted on warehouse roofs at South Harbour on 27th (LJM). The highest count at Boulmer was 49 on 26th (MKi). Annstead, Seahouses had 46 on 17th (DF) and Beacon Point, Newbiggin had 31 on 29th (AP). There were c.30 on the Holy Island causeway on 24th (DMcK/AIB/GB/LAR) and 28 on St Mary's Island on 17th (KWY). Beal had 21 on 17th (DF). Reports of fewer than 20 birds came from Cocklawburn, Stag Rocks, Bamburgh and Low Newton scrape. Seaton Sluice Watch Tower recorded 11S on 18th. Fewer than ten were reported from Yarrow Slake and Little Beach, Berwick, Hauxley NWT, the Coquet Estuary, and Bothal Pond (Coney Garth). An unusual report of late breeding came from Buston Links, Alnmouth, where an adult bird with a newly hatched chick was seen on the beach on 12th (STH).

**Little Ringed Plover** *Charadrius dubius*

There was a maximum of four at Colt Crag Reservoir on 7th (MR), with single birds reported from Derwent Reservoir (MN, IFo, RMH), Druridge Pools (NFO, TRD/JD), Cresswell Pond and Low Newton scrape (TRD/JD), Hauxley NWT (HRS).

**Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus*

The August total from Seaton Sluice was 152 (12N, 139S), with a maximum 45S on 9th (SSWT). Elsewhere, the largest counts came from Boulmer, with 15 on 12th (MJC), St Mary's Island, with six on 10th (ASJ) and Holy Island with 6 on 25th (MJC). There were five at Beacon Point, Newbiggin on 3rd (TF/JFa) and at Ellington on 4th (TB) and at Blyth beach on 27th (GB). Lower numbers were seen at North Shields Fish Quay, Beal, the Coquet Estuary, Cheswick, Cresswell, Tynemouth and Stag Rocks, Bamburgh. Singles were reported from Rockcliffe, Colt Crag Reservoir, Howick, Budle Bay, Cocklawburn, Druridge Pools, Seahouses, East Chevington, the Blyth Estuary, Quarry Cottage, Holywell Pond, Marden Farm, Yarrow Slake, Hauxley NWT and Alexandra Park at Cramlington.

**Curlew** *Numenius arquata*

Seaton Sluice had a monthly total of 224, with 160N and 64S (SSWT). The highest count came from Boulmer, with 276 on 8th rising to 359 on 24th (MJC). There were 196 at Yarrow Slake, Berwick on 1st (MHu) and 118 at Hartley Bay, St Mary's Island on 25th (ASJ). The Coquet Estuary had 112 on 11th (RPo) and Hauxley NWT had 104 on 16th (HRS). Cresswell Pond had a maximum of 84 on 7th (NFO) and Beal had 80 on 12th (DF). There were reports of 20 or fewer birds from Annstead, Seahouses, Shotleyfield, Prestwick Carr, Derwent Reservoir and Grindon Lough.

**Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica*

The highest counts came from Holy Island, with 350 on 25th (TF/JFa), and 225 on 24th, with 30 birds still being in breeding plumage (IK). There were 17 at Boulmer on 12th and 24th (MJC). Counts of fewer than ten came from Seahouses, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower and Druridge Pools, with singles at the Tweed, Coquet and Blyth Estuaries.

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

The Coquet Estuary had the largest number, with 48 on 30th (CSA). Druridge Pools had 30 on 21st (TF/JFa) and 21 were at Alnmouth on 13th (TRD). Counts of ten or fewer birds came from East Chevington, Low Newton scrape and the Blyth Estuary. There were single birds at Cresswell Pond, Newbiggin, Grindon Lough and Budle Bay.

**Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*

Passage noted at Seaton Sluice produced totals of 11N and 71S during the month. At Boulmer, four on 18th had increased to 73 by 24th (TRD/JD/PRM/MJC). There were counts of 66 at Holy Island north shore on 25th, (MJC), 43 at Stag Rocks on 28th (DF), 36 at Annstead (Seahouses) on 2nd (DF), 21 at Low Newton on 24th (JAR) and at least 20 were at St Mary's Island on 12th (MSH). One-18 were at Amble Braid, Berwick Little Beach, Cheswick Black Rocks, Cocklawburn, Cresswell Pond, Hauxley NWT and Howick.

**Knot** *Calidris canutus*

Some notable counts as passage birds arrived in the area. Seaton Sluice had a record August passage with 128N and 42S including a record site August day count of 190S on 9th (SSWT). Over 1,000 were at Fenham Mill (Lindisfarne NNR) on 17th (ASJ) and a record August count of 700 was made at Budle Bay on 14th but only 30 noted on 30th (CGK/GPK). Counts from other parts of Lindisfarne NNR were 300 at Holy Island on 21st (TF/JFa), 284 at Elwick (Fenham Flats) on 10th (BS) and 60 at St Cuthbert's Island on 24th (IK). Birds were well distributed on the rest of the coastline with 200 at Seaton Sluice on 30th (RB/MB/SW), 53 at Boulmer on 24th (MJC), 31 at Longhoughton Steel on 14th (MKi), 27 at the River Coquet Estuary on 12th (CSa), 25 at both the River Aln Estuary on 24th and North Blyth staithes on 19th (DM/STH), with 22 at Stag Rocks on 30th (DF). One-19 were at ten locations between Howdon (River Tyne) and Berwick Little Beach.

**Ruff** *Calidris pugnax*

An influx to mainly coastal localities was noted with a flock of 19 at Fenham Mill (Lindisfarne NNR) on 17th being the largest (ASJ). At Prestwick Carr, 17 were seen on 24th (DM) and 11 were in a flooded field at Boulmer from 16th-19th (BS). Cresswell Pond and Druridge Pools held birds all month with two at Cresswell Pond on 5th (MJC) increasing to seven by 29th (MSH). Druridge Pools had six birds on 7th (NFO) reducing to one by 29th (MSH). It is likely that there was some interchange between these sites. Elsewhere, five were at Low Newton scrape for most of the month (TF/JFa/SRB) and singles were at Beal, Bothal Pond, Budle Bay, the River Coquet Estuary, St Mary's Island, Stag Rocks and Yarrow Slake.

**Curlew Sandpiper** *Calidris ferruginea*

An adult was at Cresswell Pond on 27th (TF/JFa) and a juvenile was present at Druridge Pools on 28th (TRD/JD).

**Sanderling** *Calidris alba*

The monthly passage at Seaton Sluice was 6N and 171S which was an August record. Unusually they were seen feeding on the rocks at Seaton Sluice with maximum of 28 on 18th (SSWT). Most birds were seen at St Mary's Island and Druridge Bay with 134 being the maximum at St Mary's island on 30th (ASJ) and 52 at Chevington Burn beach (Druridge Bay) on 2nd (EC). Other sites holding birds were Beacon Point (Newbiggin) with 22 on 5th (STH), 16 at Annstead (Seahouses) on 17th (DF) and two-six at Amble Braid, Berwick Little Beach, Cheswick, Cocklawburn and Stag Rocks.

Sanderling  
St Mary's  
Alan Jack  
5th August

**Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*

Well reported, although unlike other wader species, no significant movement was noted at Seaton Sluice during the month. Triple-figure counts were 300 at Budle Bay on 7th (GPK) and 145 were at the River Coquet Estuary on 8th (CSa) although this group had declined to 29 by 23rd (TF/JFa). Good numbers were briefly at Cresswell Pond early in the month, with the high being 90 on 6th (MSH) with only three being present on 21st (IJ). Similarly, at Druridge Pools 85 were present on 8th (TRD/JD) but only ten on 31st (IF). Maximum counts elsewhere were 47 at Boulmer on 12th (MJC), 35 at St Mary's Island on 17th (KWY), 27 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 3rd (TF/JFa), 21S at Beadnell on 6th (DF) and 13 at the River Aln Estuary on 15th (MKi). One to eight were seen at Berwick Little Beach, Grindon Lough, Hauxley NWT, Howdon, Low Newton and Yarrow Slake (River Tweed).

**Purple Sandpiper** *Calidris maritima*

A group of 11 at Boulmer on 12th was the highest count (MJC). At Cheswick Black Rocks, four were seen on 4th (CH). Singles were at Beacon Point (Newbiggin), Seaton Sluice and St Mary's Island.

**Little Stint** *Calidris minuta*

Three singles were seen this month at Druridge Pools on 1st (MN), Cresswell Pond from 2nd-7th (TB/MSH/NFO *et al.*) and the River Coquet Estuary on 20th (CSa).

**Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago*

Birds were recorded at Prestwick Carr from 21st-24th with the maximum count being 20 on 23rd (GB/DM). The only other significant count was 17 at Cresswell Pond on 14th (IRD). One-four were at Bothal Pond, Druridge Pools, Hauxley NWT, Holy Island, Low Newton scrape and Ridlees Cairn.

**Red-necked Phalarope** *Phalaropus lobatus*

A diligent observer picked out a single roosting with Sanderling at Newbiggin before moving S on 3rd (AP).

**Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos*

Many sightings came from coastal localities as birds moved out of breeding areas with a few remaining at inland haunts. At Seaton Sluice six flew S between 9th-28th (SSWT). The River Coquet Estuary attracted seven on 9th (TF/JFa), five remained at Hedgeley GP on 4th decreasing to one by 19th (MJC/TRD/JD) and five were also at Big Waters on 9th (GB). Four birds were at Derwent Reservoir on 1st reducing to one by 29th (IFo) and four were at Castle Island (River Wansbeck) on 6th (STH). Three birds were at each of Beal, Boulmer, Colt Crag Reservoir and Cresswell Pond at the start of the month (MJC/JAR/MR/DM). One-two were at Alnmouth, Budle Bay, Castron, Cullercoats, Druridge Pools, Foxton Bends (River Aln), Hauxley NWT, Howick and the River Blyth Estuary.

**Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*

Return passage continued through the month with three seen at Newstead Flash (Warenford) on 24th (GPK), two at Woodhorn Flashes on 1st (GB), two flew over St Mary's Island on 15th (ASJ), two at Beal Point (Lindisfarne NNR) on 25th (MJC) and two at Druridge Pools on 31st (PRM). Singles were at Boulmer, Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Foxton Bends (River Aln), Hauxley NWT, Hornccliffe (River Tweed), Holywell Pond and flash, Hedgeley GP, Linden Hall (Longhorsley), Low Newton scrape and the River Coquet Estuary.

**Redshank** *Tringa totanus*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 64N and 205S with 50S on 3rd (SSWT). The largest congregation was 231 at the River Coquet estuary on 9th (TF/JFa) and 200 were at St Cuthbert's Island (Lindisfarne NNR). Other three figure counts were 152 at Budle Bay on 12th (DF), 127 in the River Blyth estuary on 22nd (ASJ) and 100 at Yarrow Slake (River Tweed) on 5th (MHu). The maximum at Boulmer was 86 on 4th (BS), 66 were counted at Hauxley NWT on 16th (HRS), 53 were north of Amble Marina on 22nd (MKi), 52 at Annstead (Seahouses) on 2nd (DF) and a minimum of 50 at St Mary's Island on 12th (MSH). At Holy Island north shore, 38 were present on 25th (MJC), 36 were at Howdon on 5th (CB), 26 at Beal on 12th (DF) and 21 at Seaton Point (Boulmer) on 29th (MKi). One-eight were at Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough, Hauxley NWT and Prestwick Carr.

**Wood Sandpiper** *Tringa glareola*

The area benefitted from the national influx of this species with reports from seven sites of one-two birds. Two were at Holywell Pond and flash from 1st-5th (MN/KWY/AJ) and two were seen at Newstead flash (Warenford) on 26th (GPK) and Hedgeley GP on 27th (AA). Singles were seen at Beal (Lindisfarne NNR), Druridge Pools, Low Newton scrape, Prestwick Carr, Seaton Sluice (flying S with 2 Golden Plover), St Mary's Island and Wetland during the month.

**Spotted Redshank** *Tringa erythropus*

Two flew NW at St Mary's Island on 10th (ASJ), two were at Beal Point-Holy Island causeway on 25th and birds were seen at Druridge Pools with a single juvenile on 17th increasing to two juveniles on 31st (TRD/JD/PRM *et al.*) Singles were present at Cresswell Pond from 1st-29th, Budle Bay from 21st-30th and one was heard at the River Coquet Estuary on 9th.

**Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*

Well reported with a notable high of 23 seen at Beal Point-Holy-Island causeway on 25th (MJC) which had increased from nine on 3rd (DF). Budle Bay held five on 21st (CPK/GPK), four were well inland at Grindon Lough on 16th (PRM), four at Alnmouth on 18th (TRD) and four were also at West Chevington on 27th (MN). Three flew S at Seaton Sluice between 26th-28th (SSWT), three were seen at the River Coquet Estuary from 2nd-12th (CSa/TF/JFa), three were at Boulmer on 12th (MJC) and three were at Foxton Bends on 24th (DM). One-two were at Berwick Little Beach, Bothal Pond, Cocklawburn, Colt Crag Reservoir, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Hauxley NWT, Hedgeley GP, Low Newton scrape, Old Water (River Coquet Estuary), the River Aln Estuary and St Mary's Island

**Kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla*

No significant movements were recorded from Seaton Sluice (SSWT). Elsewhere, gatherings of 550, 270 and 160 respectively were counted at Dunstanburgh, Calot Shad (Tweed Estuary) and Sandstell Point (Berwick), during the early part of the month (MHu/IRD). Smaller counts of 20-22 came from Boulmer and Blyth South Harbour (LJM/TRD) with single juveniles seen at Elswick (Newcastle) and Widdrington Moor Lake.

**Black-headed Gull** *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

An estimated 2,300 were in Budle Bay on 19th (DF), 1,500+ at the Budle Point evening roost on 10th (CGK/GPK), 400 at Prestwick Carr (GB), 200-300 at Berwick (West Ord), Howdon, the River Blyth Estuary and St Mary's Island (CB/LJM/MHu/KWY) with 100-200 at a further six localities and up to 100 at six sites elsewhere.

**Little Gull** *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

A single adult moved N at Seaton Sluice on 1st (SSWT) and single immatures were recorded at Newbiggin on 6th (STH/ADMc), St Mary's Island on 21st (ASJ) and Boulmer on 22nd (BS),

**Mediterranean Gull***Ichthyaetus melanocephalus*

A record number of August sightings at Seaton Sluice was eight recorded passing S and two N (SSWT). However, another extraordinary late-summer influx occurred with a county record of 194 at the favoured Newbiggin Bay on 8th, comprising 72 adults, 89 2nd-summers and 25 1st-summers; also eight juveniles including six colour-ringed from locations in Belgium, Netherlands and Germany (CH); other large counts of 24-70 came from Newbiggin on other dates throughout (STH/ADMc/MN). Elsewhere, 52 were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 9th (TF/JFa). 16 at Cresswell Pond on 28th (MSH) with numerous other sightings of up to eight birds of all ages, on dates throughout, at Amble, Boulmer, Budle Bay, Cramlington, Ellington, Druridge Pools, Holywell Pond and St Mary's Island (*many observers*).



Mediterranean Gull at Newbiggin 3rd August by Alan Jack





Mediterranean Gull at Newbiggin 3rd August by Alan Jack

**Common Gull** *Larus canus*

The Budle Point roost held 500 on 10th rising to 1,200 on 23rd, a total noted as approximately 50% less than recorded on a similar date last year (CGK/GPK). At least 300 were at Derwent Reservoir on 24th (MN) and 220 in the West Ord (Berwick) roost on 25th (MHu).

**Great Black-backed Gull** *Larus marinus*

The maximum counts were 96 at Warkworth Gut (DM) and 70 at Boulmer (BS) with eight at Sandstell Point (Berwick), four at Budle Bay and singles inland at Grindon Lough and Kielder Water.

**Herring Gull** *Larus argentatus argenteus*

At Budle Bay an estimated 1,600 were present on 19th (DF) with 800 there in the evening roost on 23rd (CGK/GPK), 433 were at Spittal-Cocklawburn (TBr/MMcN), 301 in the Blyth Estuary (LJM), 150 at Prestwick Carr (GB) and 144 at Berwick, Hud's Head (MHu).

**\*Caspian Gull** *Larus cachinnans*

The returning Polish-ringed bird, PCKS, was again in Amble Harbour from 2nd-16th (EC/JSB/IF/TRD) and was also seen in the Coquet Estuary on 30th (CSa).

**Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus fuscus graelsii*

At Seaton Sluice 32 flew S from 16th-30th (SSWT) and at Prestwick Carr at least 50 fed on the flash pools on 20th (GB); two were at Arcot Pond and singles at Howdon and at Cresswell Pond where a colour-ringed adult, green darvik C:02, was present on 5th (MJC)

**Sandwich Tern** *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

No exceptional movements were recorded at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). At Goswick Sands, 186 were counted on 4th (CH), 76 fed over Spittal Bay (Berwick) on 20th (MHu) and up to 55 roosted on the rocks at Bamburgh Stag Rocks from 28th-30th; four colour-ringed birds were in the latter group one of which was ringed at Lady's Island, Co. Wexford on 23rd June 2008 and was seen at Pearly Beach, Western Cape, South Africa on 8th January 2018 (DF). At the month end groups of 25-30 were at Boulmer, Budle Bay and St Mary's Island (MJC/DF/ASJ) and one to eleven were at eight other localities between Berwick and Cresswell Snab Point.

**Little Tern** *Sternula albifrons*

There was only one record, an adult with a juvenile moving N at Seaton Sluice on 1st (SSWT).

**Roseate Tern** *Sterna dougallii*

Birds from the Coquet Island colony, including juveniles, were widely reported as they dispersed along the coastline with a maximum of 18 at Budle Bay on 24th and smaller numbers there throughout (CGK/GPK). Bamburgh, Stag Rocks held up to 12 at the month end, ten adults were at Budle Point on 28th (NFO) and one to seven were seen elsewhere at Alnmouth, Annstead, Boulmer, Hauxley NWT, Howick, Longhoughton Steel, Low Newton, Newbiggin and St Mary's Island (*many observers*).

**Common Tern** *Sterna hirundo*

Good numbers were reported from Seaton Sluice, especially in the second half of the month, with 60N and 207S from 26th-28th (SSWT). The maximum gatherings recorded were 134, possibly including a few Arctic terns, at Goswick Sands on 4th (CH) with 50 at Alnmouth on 18th (TRD) and 24 at Annstead on 2nd (DF). On dates throughout, one to four were at Big Waters NWT, Bothal Pond, Budle Bay, Druridge, East Chevington, Hauxley NWT and Rockcliffe.,

**Arctic Tern** *Sterna paradisaea*

Very few records from Seaton Sluice with a maximum of 23N and 2S on 18th (SSWT). A low tide roost at Cocklawburn, Saltpan Rocks held 12 on 22nd and nine were in Spittal Bay (Berwick) on 29th (MHu). A single bird was at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 24th (DM).

**Black Tern** *Chlidonias niger*

A juvenile flew N at Seaton Sluice on 2nd (SSWT) with possibly the same individual seen at Boulmer on 4th (BS) and from 8th-21st at the East Chevington North Pool where it was seen by many observers. A juvenile flew S at Cresswell Snab Point on 27th (TF/JFa), one un-aged bird moved N at Druridge on 28th and the latest sighting was a juvenile offshore gradually moving S at Berwick Little Beach on 29th (MHu).

**Great Skua** *Stercorarius skua*

Another extremely poor month for sightings at Seaton Sluice with only three moving N on 1st (SSWT). Other records were two N at Annstead on 2nd (DF) and singles N at St Mary's Island on 2nd (MSH) and at Beacon Point Newbiggin on 2nd (AP) and 24th (DM).

**Pomarine Skua** *Stercorarius pomarinus*

A dark-phase adult moved N at Seaton Sluice on 4th (SSWT).

**Arctic Skua** *Stercorarius parasiticus*

Another extremely low August total of only 12N and 15S in 111 hours watching at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). Only six other sightings were reported, all of singles moving N, at Cresswell (Snab Point), Druridge Bay, Longhoughton Steel, Rockcliffe and St. Mary's Island (IJ/MSH/MKi/NFO/TRD/JD/TF/JFa).

(Writer's note: a catastrophic decline from the hundreds which could be seen offshore along the coastline throughout every August into September some three or four decades ago).

**Long-tailed Skua** *Stercorarius longicaudus*

An uncommon sighting on 17th involved a sub-adult flying in off the sea into Collywell Bay before subsequently continuing N (SSWT/MHp).

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

The only birds noted in flight at Seaton Sluice were 13N and 4S on 1st (SSWT).

**Common Guillemot** *Uria aalge*

At Spittal-Cocklawburn, 132 were present on 16th (Tbr/MMcN). 20 adults with accompanying young were on the sea at Druridge on 8th, three were at Snab Point on 17th and an adult with young at Druridge on 13th (TRD/JD).

**Razorbill** *Alca torda*

Singles flying N at Seaton Sluice on 1st and 28th were the only ones specifically identified (SSWT). Five were at Spittal-Cocklawburn on 16th (Tbr/MMcN).

**Black Guillemot** *Cephus grylle*

An unusual record was a 1st-winter bird which flew N at Seaton Sluice on 30th (SSWT).

**Puffin** *Fratercula arctica*

The only sightings came from Seaton Sluice comprising 13N and one S between 1st and 5th (SSWT).

**Stock Dove** *Columba oenas*

The high count at Cresswell Pond was 11 on 28th with four there on 6th (JD/TB) and at Widdrington Moor Lake on 8th, Ellington on 12th and Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 31st. Two to three were at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on three dates and a single at Cresswell Pond on 13th.

**Woodpigeon** *Columba palumbus*

On 31st 48 were at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) (TRD) and two pairs were nest building at Monkseaton during the month (MSH).

**Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto*

A peak of ten were Quarry Cottage during the month (RS).

**Cuckoo** *Cuculus canorus*

Two juveniles fed on caterpillars at Prestwick Carr on 23rd (GB/PCF/AIB). One juvenile was at Beacon Point (Newbiggin by the Sea) on 1st and 2nd, singles flew across Seahouses GC. On 2nd another juvenile was at Ash Lagoon Bank (Newbiggin by the Sea) on 13th and one flew along Longsand Cliffs (Tynemouth) on 15th. A juvenile was at St Mary's Island on 18th, one at the Snook (Holy Island) on 25th, an adult at Grindon Lough on 29th and at Helmscott Hill (Cresswell) on 30th.

**Barn Owl** *Tyto alba*

All sightings were singles with one regularly around the Island at Seaton Sluice from 22nd, at West Whitehall on 13th, and at Gunnerton and Hartburn on 31st.

**Tawny Owl** *Strix aluco*

On 27th four were at Close Houses (Wallington), three at Matfen Hall on 14th (SW) with two heard all month at Howick, calling juveniles at Fulbeck (Morpeth) and a pair at Druridge Bay CP on 28th. Singles were at Druridge Pools on 2nd, Colt Crag Reservoir on 5th, Nabs Plantation (near Shilbottle) on 24th, Manor Drive (Longbenton) on 25th and regularly at Waren Caravan Park from 25th.

**Little Owl** *Athene noctua*

The only reports were of one at Longdyke (Shilbottle) on 2nd and 16th (MKi).

**Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus*

One was at the Coquet Estuary on 9th (TF/JFa) and one spent a minimum of 12 hours hunting from fence posts at one location at St Mary's Island on 25th (ASJ).

**Nightjar** *Caprimulgus europaeus*

One was at High Actonmill on 17th (SW) and one was still at Edlingham Woods on 20th (NFO).

**Swift** *Apus apus*

On 7th at Spittal Outfall (Newbiggin) around 200 birds moved S 1,500m out at sea (RS) with 45 coming in from the sea at East Chevington North Pool on the same date (AJ). 40 departed a colony at Whitley Bay on 14th (ASJ), 37 at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 18th (TB), 35 S at Dunstanburgh on 6th and at Ellington on 13th and 16th. 30 were at Gosforth Home Farm on 18th, at least 25 over Belford on 12th and 17th, 18 at Big Waters on 9th and 15 at Seahouses on 4th, Lynemouth on 15th and Hexham on 24th. There were double-figure counts from Arcot Pond, East Chevington, St Mary's Island and Lynemouth with one to eight at 22 other widespread localities. Six were at Druridge Pools on 31st with two at Boulmer and Riding Mill on the same date.

**Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis*

An adult female with three juveniles was at Gosforth Park NR on 26th and two at Ellington Dene on 1st (MJC) were the only multiple counts. Singles were at 13 inland and two coastal locations.

**Hoopoe** (*Upupa epops*)

At Ancroft on 24th one was seen on a garden lawn for five minutes at 4.15pm before flying off E (Kate Dougal).

**Great Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos major*

There was a low reporting rate with two at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 4th (DM) and Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 25th (KWY) the only multiple counts. Singles were at Barns Park and Valley Park (Cramlington), Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Wark and Coldwell.

**Green Woodpecker** *Picus viridis*

One was calling at Rothbury for the first time in months on 6th (TRD/JD) and a first-year bird was ringed at Corbridge Common on 23rd (DLe).

**Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*

Three birds were seen on Holy Island on 25th (ADM). Two birds were noted at Cocklawburn on 13th (MHu). One to two birds were at West Hartford all month and single birds were seen at Bakethin Reservoir, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Craster, Ellington and River Wansbeck (North Seaton).

**Merlin** *Falco columbarius*

Single birds were observed at Longhoughton Steel on 8th (CSa) and 23rd (JD/TRD), at Winter's Gibbet (Elsdon) on 10th (JR), Druridge Pools on 11th (TF/JFa), Boulmer on 12th (BS), and at Beacon Point and Golf Course (Newbiggin-by-the-Sea) on 15th & 28th (AP).

**Hobby** *Falco subbuteo*

There was only one record this month, an adult bird at Baybridge (Blanchland) on 17th (SW).

**Peregrine** *Falco peregrinus*

Three birds were all moving S well out to sea at Seaton Sluice Watch Tower on 1st (SSWT) and two males were noted at Derwent Reservoir on 24th (MN). One to two birds were seen on most days at Ellington (TB) and a bird was seen at Budle Bay on six dates during the month (GPK). Other single birds were at Beal, Boulmer, Chare Ends (Holy Island), Derwent Reservoir, Gosforth Business Park, Holy Island, King Edward VII bridge (Newcastle) and at Prestwick Carr.





A Mike Henry study of Peregrines

**Jay** *Garrulus glandarius*

Two were at Thrunton Woods on 13th (JD), Ellington on 20th (TB) and Colt Crag Reservoir on 28th (MR). Singles were at Arcot Pond, Valley Park (Cramlington), Chugdon Wood and Ellington, Rothbury, Low Prudhoe and Gunnerton.

**Magpie** *Pica pica*

No reports this month.

**Jackdaw / Rook**

At Belford Hall on 12th, 525 combined in flight to a roost site in the grounds (DF).

**Jackdaw** *Corvus monedula*

120 was the aggregate count in 1km radius of Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 25th (TBr). 32 fed on the roadside at Newsham on 24th (RS) and the brown plumaged bird was again in the observer's garden at Northburn (Cramlington) on 3rd (LJM).

**Rook** *Corvus frugilegus*

There was just one report - a 225 the aggregate count in 1km radius of Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 25th (TBr).

**Carrion Crow** *Corvus corone*

Again there was one report of a flock of 30 at Marden Farm (Cullercoats) on 20th (MN).

**Raven** *Corvus corax*

Six were at Grindon Lough on 29th (PRM), two at Hulne Park (Alnwick) on 7th (CSa) with singles at Dunstanburgh on 6th, Easington Grange on the same date and Grindon Lough on 8th.

**Coal Tit** *Periparus ater*

There were high counts of 20+ at Bakethin Reservoir on 30th (PRM), around 17 in a mixed flock at Corbridge Common on 23rd (DLe) with one at Craster on 28th the only other report.

**Marsh Tit** *Poecile palustris*

Two were in the garden at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 3rd with singles throughout the month (NFO). Two at Low Prudhoe on 19th (IJ) with one daily at feeders at Rothbury during the month (TRD/JD).

**Willow Tit** *Poecile montanus*

At Hauxley NWT on 21st four juveniles were trapped and ringed (RMH), two recorded at Big Waters on 8th (GB) and Mickley Square on 20th (DLe) and Newbiggin GC on 25th (STH). Two were in a garden at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 11th with singles there on five other dates during the month, present to month's end at St Mary's Island from 17th and at six other locations.

**Blue Tit** *Cyanistes caeruleus*

No reports.

**Great Tit** *Parus major*

One report of 11 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 14th (MR).

**Bearded Tit** *Panurus biarmicus*

Three were at Cresswell Pond on 2nd with two there on 1st (EC/JSB/MJC) and singles at East Chevington on 15th and 21st (NFO/TF/JFa).

**Skylark** *Alauda arvensis*

One report of one at Lightwater on 10th (PG).

**Sand Martin** *Riparia riparia*

Large counts of 520 came from Cresswell Pond on 22nd (IRD/MN) with 150+ there on the next day and 100+ on 25th (MSH). 160 were at Lynemouth on the 22nd (ASJ) and 100 + at Widdrington Lake on 29th (AJ) with 40 there on 28th and 50 at East Chevington on 7th and 10th. One to eight were at six other locations and still passing through East Chevington and Widdrington Moor on 31st.

**Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

150 S in two hours was the peak movement at Seaton Sluice watch tower (SSWT) with 80 the aggregate count in 1km radius of Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 27th (TBr), 70 - of which 50 were juveniles - at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 21st (RS), 42 on walls at Flagstaff park (Berwick) on 20th (MHu) and 40 at Riddlees Cairn on 18th and St Mary's Island on 30th. 35 were at Colt Crag Reservoir on 21st, 30 at Town Moor (Newcastle) on 10th, 23 at Whitley Bay Cemetery on 30th with two to 20 at eight other locations.

On MOD ranges at Otterburn 24 pairs laid 127 eggs including 34 eggs from 2nd clutches. 91 young fledged including 33 from 2nd broods. Six early nests failed without any re-lay (JR/NA) . Four pairs fledged 15 young at Whitley Bay Cemetery but no 2nd broods (ASJ). Two pairs were still breeding at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 31st but breeding was reported as poor in Stamfordham.



Swallows in the nest at Whitley Bay cemetery by Alan Jack on 8th August





A Swallow at Whitley Bay cemetery  
Alan Jack on 13th August

**House Martin** *Delichon urbica*

High counts of 130 were at Cresswell Village on 13th and Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 24th (ASJ/RS). 100+ were at Arcot Manor Balancing Pond on 27th (LJM), 94 at Ellington on 13th, 80 at Gosforth Home Farm on 18th, 60 at Whitley Bay Seafront on the same date and 55 at St Mary's Island on 27th. 50+ at St Mary's Wetland on 21st and at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 23rd with ten to 42 at 14 other widespread localities.



House Martins gather at Cresswell village by Alan Jack on 13th August



**Cetti's Warbler** *Cettia cetti*

The East Chevington bird was noted on 8th (IF).

**Long-tailed Tit** *Aegithalos caudatus*

22 were among a large mixed tit flock of 78 birds at Gosforth Garden Village on 18th (MJC). Elsewhere, 12+ were at Bakethin Reservoir on 30th, 12 at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 18th and ten to 11 at Cramlington (Barns Park and Northburn) and Corbridge. A family party of eight was at Cramlington (Southfield Green), six at Howick and three in a Rothbury garden.

**Willow Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochilus*

A total of 26 were trapped and ringed at Hauxley NWT on 21st and nine on 28th (RMH), while at Holy Island 16 on 25th had reduced to eight by the following day. In breeding areas 12 were at Colt Crag Reservoir on 14th, 11 at Airy Holm Reservoir on 28th and ten were trapped and ringed at Mickley Square on 4th, while ten juveniles were noted at St Mary's Island on 27th. Elsewhere on the coast, eight were at Craster on 28th, six at Budle Point on 4th and six at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 18th. Five passage birds were at Exhibition Park on 9th, five at Humshaugh on 26th and one to four at a further ten localities.

**Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita*

At Mickley Square, 12 were trapped on 4th and 12th (both nine new and three re-traps (DLe), while ringing at Hauxley NWT produced nine on 28th and six on 21st. Elsewhere, five+ were noted at Bamburgh on 23rd and there were counts of four from Bamburgh on 31st, Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 18th and Exhibition Park on 28th. Three were noted at Craster on 28th and at St Mary's Island on 11th, while one to two were reported from a further eight localities.

**Sedge Warbler** *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

At East Chevington 55 were ringed on 8th (IF). Up to four were noted at Holy Island on 25th and Prestwick Carr on 21st and at least three were at Cresswell Pond on 6th. Two were noted at Hauxley NWT on 28th and at St Mary's Island on 18th, while singles were at Big Waters on 8th and Woodhorn Flashes on 1st. Late breeding included a pair feeding young in the nest at Cresswell Pond on 14th, a bird carrying a Darter dragonfly at Howick on 24th and feeding a juvenile on 25th and a juvenile at St Mary's Wetland on 29th.

**Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

A total of 60 were ringed at East Chevington on 8th (IK). Two were at Cresswell Pond from 6th-8th and two juveniles were 'food begging' at Wansbeck BP on 20th. The final report of the month was a single with food at East Chevington on 28th.

**Grasshopper Warbler** *Locustella naevia*

Up to two were heard 'reeling' at Druridge Pools on 2nd-3rd (DM/PJA) and two were heard at St Mary's Island on 10th. Singles were also noted at Boulmer and Hauxley NWT on 4th and East Chevington on 8th.

**Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla*

At Hauxley NWT a total of 18 were trapped and ringed (11 on 21st and seven on 28th-RMH) and seven likewise at Bamburgh on 31st. Elsewhere, three were at Exhibition Park on 9th and two at Bamburgh on 23rd, Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 18th, Cramlington (Valley Park) on 3rd, Craster on 28th, Colt Crag Reservoir on 21st, Exhibition Park on 28th and St Mary's Island on 12th; one was heard at East Chevington on 28th.

**Garden Warbler** *Sylvia borin*

Singles were reported from Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 2nd, Budle Point on 10th, Airy Holm Reservoir and St Mary's Island on 28th and Bamburgh on 31st.

**Lesser Whitethroat** *Sylvia curruca*

Singles were at Hauxley NWT on 21st, Mickley Square on 25th and Craster and St Mary's Island on 28th.

**Whitethroat** *Sylvia communis*

Up to 12 (juveniles) were noted at St Mary's Wetland on 12th-15th (ASJ/MSH). Three were at Howick and two at Holywell Pond on 13th, while singles were noted at Airy Holm Reservoir on 28th, a suburban Chapel House garden on 12th, Cocklawburn on 27th, Druridge Pools on 8th, Fenham-le-Moor on 24th, Holy Island on 26th, Linden on 28th, Old Hartley on 22nd and Slaley Hall on 27th.

**Goldcrest** *Regulus regulus*

Potential coastal movement was identified late in the month, with two+ at Bamburgh on 23rd, two in the dunes at Cresswell Pond on 25th and one at Boulmer on 28th. Elsewhere one to two were noted at Cramlington (Valley Park), Exhibition Park and Wark (North Tyne).

**Wren** *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Family groups were reported from Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) from 21st-31st and Widehope on 12th.

**Nuthatch** *Sitta europaea*

Counts of four came from Allenheads, Chugdon Wood (Ellington) and Hesleyside (CB/TB/JR); three were at Wark (North Tyne), two at Comb (Falstone) and singles at Derwent Reservoir, Northumberlandia and Rothbury.

**Treecreeper** *Certhia familiaris*

There were four at Ellington Dene on 1st (MJC) and three at Leazes Park on 29th. Elsewhere, two were noted at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) and Humshaugh and singles at Bakethin Reservoir, Exhibition Park, Wark (North Tyne) and Widehope. More unusual was a very pale bird (not seen well) at Holy Island (Snook) on 26th (ADM).

**Rose-coloured Starling** *Pastor roseus*

A sometimes elusive adult was at Seaton Point (Boulmer) from 23rd-29th (CSa/TRD/JD *et al.*).



Two views of the popular (if you saw it (Ed)) Rose-coloured Starling at Seaton Point  
In flight by Janet Dean and perching by Tim Dean. 23rd August

**Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris*

The largest gathering was a roost of at least 500 at Ladyburn Lake on 28th (STH). At Big Waters, 250 were fooled into roosting behaviour on 27th by rapidly darkening skies during the onset of a thunderstorm. As the skies cleared birds left the *phragmites* reed to return to nearby fields (GB/AIB). Some 250 were also at St Mary's Island on 31st, 200 at Derwent Reservoir on 29th, 120 at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) throughout and 80 at Buston Links on 12th.

**Blackbird** *Turdus merula*

A total of 21 was found within a 1km radius of Low Cocklaw on 27th (TBr) and 14 were feeding on Rowan berries at Colt Crag Reservoir on 21st. A recently fledged juvenile was being fed by an adult at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 3rd.

**Song Thrush** *Turdus philomelos*

A party of five at Exhibition Park on 22nd included three or four fresh juveniles (GB).

**Mistle Thrush** *Turdus viscivorus*

A flock of 26 were feeding on Rowan berries at Colt Crag Reservoir on 28th (MR), 12 were at East Cramlington LNR on 26th and five at Howick on 20th.

**Spotted Flycatcher** *Muscicapa striata*

Five were at Newbiggin (Ash lagoon) on 19th (A.Priest) and three at Hesleyside on 5th, Watty Bell's Cairn (MoD) on 18th and Widehope on 12th. Two were noted at Linden Hall from 2nd-5th, at Sidwood on 5th and Exhibition Park on 22nd and 27th-28th. Young birds were heard calling at Greenlee Lough on 3rd and family parties were noted at Wark (North Tyne) on 26th.

**Robin** *Erithacus rubecula*

Six at Holy Island on 25th was the only report (ADM).

**Pied Flycatcher** *Ficedula hypoleuca*

A light coastal 'fall' produced 12 at Holy Island on 25th (MJC/TF/JFa/ADM), with at least three present here on the following day. A first-winter passed through a Gosforth Garden Village garden on 26th.

**Redstart** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Two (adult and juvenile) were at Colt Crag Reservoir on 9th and Wark (North Tyne) on 26th. Two were also at Coldwell (Humshaugh) on 31st and singles at Budle Point on 25th, Exhibition Park on 19th, Holy Island on 25th, Mickley Square on 25th, North Yardhope (MoD) on 3rd, Prestwick Carr on 13th and Warkworth Dunes on 20th.

**Whinchat** *Saxicola rubetra*

This species was well reported during the month. Six (four juveniles) were at Alwinton on 3rd (JR/NA), five at Mootlaw Quarry (Ryal) on 19th and at West Hartford on 20th and four at Amble links on 27th. At Newbiggin there were counts of one to three on five dates from 19th-28th, three juveniles were at East Chevington on 23rd and three at Holy Island on 25th and at Prestwick Carr on 23rd. In addition, one to two were reported from Arcot Pond on 20th, Berwick Little Beach on 28th, Colt Crag Reservoir on 21st, East Chevington on 15th and 31st, Holy Island on 26th, Mootlaw Quarry on 13th, Prestwick Carr on 24th-25th and St Mary's Island on 8th, 20th, 23rd and 27th-28th.

**Stonechat** *Saxicola rubicola*

Peak counts were four at Cocklawburn and East Chevington (three juveniles), two at North Yardhope (MoD) and Simonside and singles at Alwinton, Cresswell Pond and Holy Island.

**Wheatear** *Oenanthe oenanthe*

A total of eight were noted moving S over Seaton Sluice Watch Tower between 20th-31st (SSWT). Seven were noted at St Mary's Island on 29th, five at Boulmer on 31st and four at Newbiggin on 21st, Ord Moor (Berwick) on 29th and Simonside on 23rd. Counts of three came from Castle Island on 20th, Howick on 19th and Newcastle Town Moor on 7th; the latter locality held two on 5th, two on 12th one on 10th and another on 19th. One to two were reported from a further 18 localities to the end of the month.

**Dipper** *Cinclus cinclus*

Three were found roosting at a bridge at Baybridge on 17th (SW). One seen at a small brook in a Morpeth garden on 11th (TD). Another single was singing at Barrasford on 27th.

**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*

Two flocks totalling 80 were at Boulmer on 13th (TRD). 66 were at Cullercoats on 10th and 60 on 31st at Newbiggin (ASJ/RS). 55 were at Low Cocklaw on 24th (TBr). 50+ seen at Hepple on 28th and 30+ at Craster on 31st (PRM). Around 20 at garden feeders in Marden Estate all month and several at feeders in Tynemouth. A pair fledged two young from a nest at Newbiggin on 21st (RS).

**Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus*

42 fed at feeders at Hauxley on 31st and ten likewise at Tynemouth on 26th (ASJ/CB). One to five at six other sites, including four flying S at St. Mary's Island on 31st and three at Straight Lonnen on 25th (MJC).



**Duncock** *Prunella modularis*

14 were noted in a three km walk at Holywell Dene on 10th (ASJ). Three were at St. Mary's and Marden all month (ASJ).

**Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava*

Six were noted at Haughton Strother on 31st (SW). Four were moving S at Boulmer on 23rd (CSa). Three juveniles and a male were seen during the month at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) feeding then heading S (RS). One to two were seen at a further 13 sites during the month.

**Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*

Two were at Seaton Sluice on 22nd (SSWT). Singles were at seven other sites.

**Pied Wagtail** *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

56 in a loose feeding flock was a good count at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd (IFO). 46 flew S and four N during August at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). 22 (16 juveniles) were feeding on the beaches at St. Mary's Island on 30th, with 19 the following day. 15 on the nearby mini- golf course on 29th were thought to be some of the same group (ASJ). On 31st, 22 were at Boulmer and 20 at Haughton Strother (MJC/SW). A pair with five juveniles was at Longbenton on 8th (CDH).

**Meadow Pipit** *Anthus pratensis*

12 + were at Old Hartley on 22nd (ASJ/MSH). Eight were at Beal on 24th (DM *et al.*). Ten were on Newcastle Town Moor on 5th (GB). One to two were at four further sites.

**Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelebs*

The sole report was of 25 birds within a 1km radius at Low Cocklaw on 24th (TBr).

**Bullfinch** *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Nine were ringed and one retrapped at Mickley Square on 20th (DLe). Six, one juvenile, were at garden feeders in Rothbury all month (TRD/JD). Four were at Middle Ord on 4th and at Howdon on 19th and at Bakethin on 30th. One to three were seen at a further seven sites.

**Greenfinch** *Carduelis chloris*

13 were feeding at St. Mary's Wetland on 12th (ASJ). A male was song-flighting at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 7th.

**Linnet** *Carduelis cannabina*

A flock of 100 minimum was at Derwent Reservoir on 5th (IFo). A foraging flock of around 90 birds was at St. Mary's on 6th (ASJ). 30 to 50 were at Boulmer, Colt Crag, Buston Links and Low Cocklaw during the month (STH/MR/PRM/TBr). One to 15 at seven other sites. Passage noted this month at Seaton Sluice involved 142 birds S. and nine N.

**Lesser Redpoll** *Carduelis caberet*

21 were at Colt Crag on 28th and 20+ at Bakethin on 30th (MR/PRM). Two at Grindon on 8th and three at Kielder Dam on 30th. Three flew S at St. Mary's on 20th (ASJ).

**Crossbill** *Loxia curvirostra*

20 plus were noted at Bakethin on 30th (PRM). Single birds were at two other sites.

**Goldfinch** *Carduelis carduelis*

100 were at Prestwick Carr on 13th (GB). 80 at Northumberlandia (Cramlington) on 11th (STH). 65 to 70 comprising 80 per cent juveniles, fed on thistles at St. Mary's Wetland on several dates (ASJ). 50+ were at Mickley Square on 20th and at Cresswell Pond on 24th (DLe/MSH). 45 were noted at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) during the month (RS). 40 were seen at Tynemouth on 6th (KWY). One to 21 at eight further sites this month.

**Siskin** *Carduelis spinus*

There were very few reports, with four at Derwent Reservoir, two at Humshaugh and one at Grindon.

**Yellowhammer** *Emberiza citronella*

13 were seen at Low Cocklaw on 25th (TBr). Six juveniles were ringed this month at Mickley Square on 4th and nine on 20th (DLe). Six males were at Fenham Mill on 17th, three of which were singing, with five birds seen at nearby Fenham Le Moor on 24th (ASJ/DM/GB/LAR). Three were noted at Holywell on 20th and two were at Derwent Reservoir on 29th (ASJ/IFo). A single was singing at big Waters on 6th (GB).

**Reed Bunting** *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Six were ringed at East Chevington on 8th and five, four singing males, were at St. Mary's on 19th (IF/ASJ). Four were at Howdon on 5th and three at St. Mary's on 31st (CB).

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

Three were found at Newton scrape on 29th and remained until end of month.

**Muscovy Duck** *Cairina moschata*

Two were at Q E II CP, Ashington on 3rd. Often present at this locality.

**Wood Duck** *Aix sponsa*

A drake was at Holywell Pond on 17th (KWY). An unusual escapee for Northumberland.

**Hybrids**

No sightings

**Birds of Unknown Origin**

No sightings

**LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS**

A.Allen, A.H.Banks, S.R.Barrett, R.J. & M. Bentley (RB / MB), T.Blake, J.S.Booth, A.I.Bowman, G.Bowman, C.Bradshaw, T.Brewis (TBr), J.Bucknall, M.J.Carr, E.Crabtree, A.Curry, T.Daley, T.R. & J.Dean, K.Dougal, I.R.Douglas, T. & J.Farooqi (TF / JFa), P.C.Fletcher, I.Fisher, D.F.Forshaw, I.Forsyth (IFo), P.Gilbert, C.D.Hampton, C.Hartley, M.Hepple (MHP), A.J.Hewitt, M.S.Hodgson, S.T.Holliday, R.M.Holmes, G.Hub, M.Hutcheson (MHu), A.S.Jack, A.Janes, I.Johnson, I.Kerr, M.Kirby (MKi), C.G.Knox, G.P.Knox, D.Leat, P.R.Massey, D.Mckeown, L.J.McDougall, A.D.Mould, M.Nattrass, N.F.Osborne, R.Poyer (RPo), A.Priest, J.Richardson, M.Richardson, J.A.Roper, C.Saunders (CSa), M.Smith, B.Steel, R.Stevens, A.L.Todd, S.Westerberg, K.W.York.

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), Helen Snaith (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).

North Northumberland Bird Club (R Poyer and J Lumby), Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

Thanks to David Sanders of NNBC for providing data.

**Apologies for any accidental omissions**

Proof reading was by Mike Smith.

Mail distribution is by Paul Stewart.

Clive Hammond is Data Manager.

Edited by Steve Barrett [NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com](mailto:NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com)

**RECORD SUBMISSION**

Please email records for the month to [ntbc.records@googlemail.com](mailto: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](mailto: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. 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 [ntbcorg@gmail.com](mailto:ntbcorg@gmail.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 [ntbcorg@jobentleyplus.com](mailto:ntbcorg@jobentleyplus.com) or [ntbcorg@gmail.com](mailto:ntbcorg@gmail.com)

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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://www.ntbc.org.uk)

## HOLY ISLAND

### Vicar's Garden collection box

Coastal gardens with good cover are always wonderful places for migrants. As most members will know, few have a greater reputation for turning up mouth-watering rarities than the Vicarage garden on Holy Island.

While the island is justly famed as the cradle of Christianity in the north, the Lindisfarne Gospels and the first Viking raid on England, it's also of course a hotspot during autumn and spring when it has the reputation of turning up many sought-after species.

Over the years this garden has hosted a superb list of rarities. Although the garden itself is private, the stone wall on the south side is at ideal elbow height for resting binoculars. It's usually the first spot to be checked by birders visiting the village.

In autumn it can be wonderful if wind and weather are favourable. It's not unusual for its mature sycamores to hold up to half a dozen Yellow-browed Warblers at a time, hyper-actively searching through the crumbling leaf cover. Other goodies on the autumn garden list include Pallas's, Radde's, Dusky and Arctic warblers, Red-flanked Bluetail, Red-breasted Flycatcher, Firecrest, Rosefinch and Great Grey Shrike. In addition, it has all the common and regular warblers and northern thrushes and finches for which the island is such a magnet.

In spring the garden can be equally rewarding, having hosted Red-backed Shrike, Subalpine and Marsh warblers and Firecrest and a supporting cast of all the common migrants which pass northwards.

The Vicarage has even attracted species not normally associated with gardens, including Kingfisher and Nightjar. At the bottom of the garden is the beach and, 50 yards away, St Cuthbert's Island which provides a high tide roost for hundreds of waders.

Stretched out behind is the rich Lindisfarne National Nature Reserve. Its avian celebrities, the Svalbard Pale-bellied Brent Geese, are always present between September and March along with thousands of other wildfowl and waders and huge gatherings of "singing" Grey Seals hauled out on the sandbars.

All are within sight and sound of birders at the garden wall. Now Canon Dr Sarah Hills, who took over as vicar of St Mary the Virgin, the island parish church, earlier this year is hoping birders can give something back to the community.

Birders checking the garden are being invited to drop a donation into a collection box which has been installed at the wall. Contributions will help the upkeep of the church which dates back to the Anglo-Saxon period and which, like all old building, is in need of almost constant repair.

"We are extremely lucky to have such a wonderful garden which attracts so many birds. We want birders to continue enjoying them and if they can help a bit, all the better," she said.

Vicar Sarah is being supported by club member Ian Kerr whose hard-back guide, *The Birds of Holy Island*, is now in its second updated edition.

"For years I've thought it would be a good idea and I'm delighted that the idea has been taken up. It will certainly give everyone a chance to show their appreciation of this wonderful facility. After all, a good rarity is worth a bob or two of anyone's money," he added.

The box has been donated and installed by Dr. Max Whitby, co-founder of BirdGuides and now chairman of NatureGuides, who has a house on the island. His company are publishers of Ian's book.



Ian's book is available locally at the island Post Office and Heritage Centre or on-line from [WWW.NATUREGUIDES.COM](http://WWW.NATUREGUIDES.COM). It provides a comprehensive account of island's history and its naturalists down the centuries from St Cuthbert to modern-day visitors. There are full seasonal accounts and details 337 species recorded up to publication. An update, bringing the species list to 341 with the recent additions of Pacific Golden Plover, Little Bittern, Glossy Ibis and Cetti's Warbler, is now available as a free download from the publisher's website.

The wealth of the area's birdlife can be judged by the fact that of the 400-plus species recorded in Northumberland no fewer than 34 made their first (and often only) appearances on the island.

Club member Mike Carr, a very regular island visitor, was the first to make a donation.



Vicar Sarah and Ian with the new donations box.



# Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2019 No 9

MONTHLY SUMMARY SEPTEMBER 2019

5th November 2019



## CONTENTS

Cramlington Book information

Guide to Submitting Records: an update

## CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS HIGHLIGHTS

Ruddy Shelduck	Sightings still at Big Waters, Cresswell Pond and Derwent Reservoir.
Storm Petrel	Single N past Annsteads on 7th.
Leach's Petrel	One N past Newbiggin on 17th.
Cory's Shearwater	One N past Newbiggin on 18th.
Red-necked Grebe	Singes past Seaton Sluice and Newbiggin on 5th and 18th.
Slavonian Grebe	Only record in the month was of one N at St Mary's on 7th.
Spoonbill	Five at Budle Bay until 6th and diminished to single by 27th. One Dutch ringed.
Cattle Egret	One at Cresswell Pond on 26th. Still a major rarity in county.
Great White Egret	Singles at St Mary's on 11th and at Prestwick Carr from 28th.
Pallid / Montagu's Harrier	Distant ringtail at Beal on 20th.
Crane	One at Ouston Moor, Whittle Dene from 2nd to 6th.
Pacific Golden Plover	Moulting adult at Holy Island from 26th.
American Golden Plover	Summer-plumaged adult at St Cuthbert's on Holy island on 22nd.
Little Stint	Single at Cresswell Pond from 26th the only sighting. Poor autumn.
Wood Sandpiper	Singles at Hedgeley Gp and Druridge Pools on 11th and 12th the only sightings.
Long-tailed Skua	Single juveniles past Seaton Sluice and Holy Island on 17th and 21st.
Wryneck	One on Holy Island on 25th and 26th.
Hobby	Adult at Holy Island on 21st.
Bearded Tit	Up to four still being seen at East Chevington.
Yellow-browed Warbler	Influx from 14th.
Greenish Warbler	Excellent find in Vicar's garden on Holy Island on 30th. Latest county record.
Icterine Warbler	One at Seaton Pt, Boulmer on 8th and 9th.
Barred Warbler	One on Snook on Holy island from 24th to 26th.
Firecrest	Only record of one at Woodhorn Vicarage on 25th.
Red-breasted Flycatcher	One on Straight Lonnen, Holy Island on 22nd.
Stonechat	Unusual 'flock' of 11 at Prestwick Carr on 28th !
Common Rosefinch	Juvenile on Holy Island from 8th to 12th.
Lapland Bunting	Influx during month at several coastal sites.

## 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 14th November

**Richard Baines – "Turtle Doves of East Yorkshire"**. Richard is talking about an exciting project with the North Yorkshire National Park on the plight of the Turtle Dove and what can be done to help.

## FIELD TRIPS

Contact Steve Anderson

[seaswan@btinternet.com](mailto:seaswan@btinternet.com)

A Whimbrel  
Newton  
Tim Dean  
20th September



## CLASSIFIED LIST

**Brent Goose** *Branta hrota*

Reports of un-raced birds include 2,900 at Fenham Flats on 25th (ASJ), 192 N at Annstead Point (CGK/GPK) and 28 N at St Mary's (ASJ) on 7th, 157 at Budle Bay on 25th (DF), 120 at Holy Island on 21st (MJC/ADM), ten S at St Mary's on 22nd (PG), and an unknown number heard arriving at Holy Island on 8th (MJC/ADM).

Records of pale-bellied *hrota* race birds involved a total of 225 N and 16 S at Seaton Sluice between 7th-30th, including 84 N on 7th and 99 N on 18th (SSWT), 65+ N at Newbiggin (GB/DM/TF/JFa *et al.*) on 7th and 24 N on 17th (JFa), and 11 N at Cullernose Point between 8th-18th (TRD/JD), 435 at Budle Bay on 26th (DF), eight were at Cheswick Black Rocks on 10th (MHu), and seven at Holy Island on 20th (PRM).

Eight dark-bellied *bernicla* race birds were at Beal on 9th (DF) and eight flew N at Annstead Point on 22nd (DF).

**Canada Goose** *Branta canadensis*

Peak counts involved 640 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 11th (MR), 450 at the Coquet Estuary on 8th and 10th (RPo), 325 at Castle Island on 15th (DM/LJM), 123-187 at Big Waters, Derwent Reservoir, Grindon Lough, Killingworth and QEII CP Lakes, 86 at West Ord, and 24-45 at Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools and Newcastle Leazes Park. Four to six were also at Bothal and Linton Ponds. A single hybrid (parentage unknown) was at Castle Island on 25th (PG).

**Barnacle Goose** *Branta leucopsis*

Singles at Colt Crag Reservoir on 8th (MR) and QEII CP Lake on 15th (DM/PJA), were followed by 35 at Budle Bay on 19th (DF), 12 at Beal on 20th (PRM), 540 at Budle Bay on 23rd (DF), and 2,500 at Holy Island on 25th (ASJ/MJC). Numbers at Budle Bay peaked at 1,530 on 26th (DF) with 445 still there on 30th (DF), 1,825 were at Fenham Flats on 30th (DF), and 900 flew S at Goswick Sands (CH) on 30th. Also on 30th, 350 flew N at Annstead Point (CGK/GPK), 152 N, 60 S and 85 W at Druridge Pools (IDR), and 100 SW at Belford (DF) on 30th. Inland, a flock of 75 flew S on 29th (MJC) and 43 NE at Colt Crag Reservoir on 30th (MR). On 29th-30th, 45 flew N at Druridge Pools and 30-60 at Ellington, Seaton Sluice and Whitley Bay, and 25 were at Cresswell Pond. Two leucistic birds flew S at Goswick Sands on 30th (CH).

**Greylag Goose** *Anser anser*

15 flew NW at Ellington on 16th (TB). A notable 1,035 were at Colt Crag Reservoir on 11th (MR). Other peak counts were 700 at Derwent Reservoir on 15th (IFo), 478 at Branton GP on 14th (IBDa/KDa), 400-410 at Big Waters (GB), Budle Bay (GPK) and Low Newton (DF), 102-132 at Airy Holm Reservoir and Prestwick Carr, and 36-51 at Castle Island and Linton Ponds. Three to seven were at Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough and QEII CP Lake.

**Pink-footed Goose** *Anser brachyrhynchus*

At Budle Bay, ten on 2nd increased to 25 on 3rd (CGK/GPK), 15 were at Holy Island on the latter date (TBr), 55 flew S at St Mary's (ASJ), 30 were at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay)(IJ) and five at Derwent Reservoir (AJ) on 4th, 30 N at Lynemouth on 5th (TB), about 60 over Newbiggin (BS) and 47 S at Holy Island on 8th (MJC/ADM). Most records thereafter involved small numbers moving S, with 40-100 over Cramlington, Druridge Pools, East Ord, Ellington, Embleton, Gosforth-Gosforth Park, Greenlee Lough, Newbiggin and Shilbottle between 13th-30th, and 46-50 N at Middle Ord Pond and Newbiggin. Few appeared to settle, with the largest groups being 120 at Beal Point on 13th (TRD/JD), 70 at Embleton on 16th (JEd) and 27-54 at Big Waters, Colt Crag and Derwent Reservoirs, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools and New Water Haugh between 16th-26th. Smaller numbers were at several further sites.

**Mute Swan** *Cygnus olor*

Three flew N and two S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). 56 were at QEII CP Lake on 15th (DM/PJA), 50 were at the Tweed Estuary on 11th (TBr), 41 at Killingworth Lake on 5th (LJM), 31 at Whiteadder Water on 7th (TBr), 28 at Spittal, Berwick, and ten to 19 at Berwick Little Beach, Big Waters, Bothal and Linton Ponds and Castle Island. Five to eight were also at Budle Bay, Howick and the Wansbeck Estuary.

**Whooper Swan** *Cygnus cygnus*

One at the Tweed Estuary on 11th and 16th (TBr/MHu) was followed by one on the sea off Newbiggin on 17th (JFa), 14 at East Chevington north pool (JBU) on 18th and two at Low Newton scrape/pool (JEd/TRD/JD) between 18th-20th, one to two at Arcot Pond (GMi), Budle Bay (CGK/GPK/PRM) and Widdrington Moor Lake (AA) on 20th, and four at Monks' House Pool on 27th (JPL).

**Shelduck** *Tadorna tadorna*

Eight flew N and seven S at Seaton Sluice on 1st (SSWT). Two at Budle Bay on 20th increased to 26 by 22nd, 219 by 28th and 250 on 30th (DF/CGK/GPK/PRM). Elsewhere, 12 were at Boulmer on 14th (BS), three to four at the Blyth Estuary and Cresswell Pond, and singles at Bell's Pond and Prestwick Carr.

**Ruddy Shelduck** *Tadorna ferruginea*

Three at Cresswell Pond on 2nd flew off to NW (MSH). Single females were at Derwent Reservoir between 6th-14th (IFo) and at Big Waters between 22nd-26th (GB/KB).

**Mandarin** *Aix galericulata*

24 were at Holystone on 29th (DR).



**Shoveler** *Spatula clypeata*

One flew N at Seaton Sluice on 9th (SSWT). Two at Budle Bay on 4th increased to 22 by 13th, 41 by 20th and a peak of 46 on 30th (DF/CGK/GPK). Peak counts elsewhere were 16 at Cresswell Pond on 24th (STH), ten at Grindon Lough on 11th (PRM), ten at Newton Pool on 5th (SW), and four to seven at Arcot Pond, Druridge Pools and Gosforth Park NR. One to two were also at Big Waters, Bell's and Bothal Ponds, Grindon Lough, Low Newton scrape and Marden Quarry.

**Gadwall** *Mareca strepera*

Two flew N at Seaton Sluice on 18th (SSWT). Linton Ponds attracted 139 on 15th (TF/JFa), 82 were at Big Waters on 14th (GB), 70 at Caistrion on 14th (JD), 48-50 at Arcot Pond (STH) and Hedgeley GP (IBDa/KDa), and 12-27 at Cresswell Pond, Marden Quarry and St Mary's Wetland. Six to eight were at Bothal Pond and Gosforth Park NR, and one to four at Castle Island, Grindon Lough, Hallington Reservoir and Low Newton scrape.

**Wigeon** *Mareca penelope*

A total of 485 flew N and one S during the month, including 145 N on 23rd (SSWT), and a total of 70 moved N at Newbiggin on 17th and 22nd (GB/JFa). About 180 at Budle Bay on 20th (PRM) increased to 600 by 30th (CGK/GPK), 72 at Grindon Lough on 5th increased to 184 by 30th (PRM), 20-50 were at Arcot and Cresswell Ponds, Colt Crag Reservoir and Druridge Pools, and ten to 15 at Big Waters, Linton Pond and Low Newton scrape. One to eight were also at Beal, Bolam Lake, Cocklawburn Pond, Fenham Mill, Gosforth Park NR, Hedgeley GP, Linden Hall, Newton Pool, St Mary's Wetland and West Ord.

**Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*

Eight flew N at Seaton Sluice between 8th-18th (SSWT), 128 at Derwent Reservoir on 15th (IFo) was the sole three-figure count. Other peaks were 86 at Linton Ponds on 15th (DM/LJM), 76 at Big Waters on 14th (GB), and 60-68 at Colt Crag Reservoir (MR), Newcastle Exhibition and Leazes Parks (GB/DM), St Mary's Wetland (MSH) and the Tweed Estuary (TBr). Counts of 11-45 came from Arcot, Bothal, Cresswell and Middle Ord Ponds, Castle Island, Grindon Lough, Killingworth Lake, Wark and West Ord. Late breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Killingworth Lake	2	11 (6,5)	LJM. Small young on 5th

**Pintail** *Anas acuta*

A total of 14 flew N at Seaton Sluice between 17th-30th (SSWT) and one flew N at Newbiggin on 17th (JFa). A peak of 14 was at Budle Bay on 23rd (CGK/GPK), five were at East Chevington on 14th (NFO), five at Fenham Mill on 30th (DF), and one to two at Colt Crag and Derwent Reservoirs, the Coquet Estuary, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Football Hole and Newton Pool.

**Teal** *Anas crecca*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 1,869 N and 217 S, including 634 N and 26 S on 9th and 559 N on 18th (SSWT), and a total of 209 moved N at Newbiggin between 7th-22nd (GB/TFa). Largest concentrations were 800 at Budle Bay on 13th (CGK/GPK), 271 at Derwent Reservoir on 15th (IFo), 150-159 at Cresswell Pond (MSH) and Grindon Lough (PRM), 100-106 at Colt Crag Reservoir and Prestwick Carr, and 56-93 at Druridge Pools and Hallington Reservoir. Counts of 16-45 came from Arcot and Linton Ponds, Boulmer, Castle Island, Gosforth Park NR, Lynemouth Flash, St Mary's Wetland and on the River Tweed between A1-border.

**Pochard** *Aythya ferina*

17 were at Linton Ponds on 15th (TF/JFa/PJA/DM), nine at Grindon Lough on 27th (PRM), seven at Greenlee Lough on 17th (MRS), three to four at Big Waters, Derwent Reservoir, Killingworth and Widdrington Moor Lakes, and singles at Bothal Pond, East Chevington and Newton Pool.

**Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula*

Seven flew N at Seaton Sluice between 7th-18th (SSWT). Peak counts were rather modest, with 35 at Ladyburn Lake on 15th (DM/PJA), 31 at Killingworth Lake on 5th (LJM), 29 at Cresswell Pond on 7th (DM/LJM), 24-25 at Caistrion (JD) and Grindon Lough (PRM), and ten to 18 at Big Waters, Bothal and Longhoughton Quarry Ponds, Colt Crag Reservoir and Greenlee Lough. Five to nine were also at Castle Island, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge and Newton Pools and Newcastle Exhibition Park, and one to four at Arcot, Cocklawburn and Linton Ponds, Jesmond Dene, Newcastle Leazes Park and New Water Haugh.

**Scaup** *Aythya marila*

Three were at Boulmer on 8th (TRD/JD) and singles were at Cresswell Pond on 1st (TD) and Fenham Mill on 30th (DF).

**Eider** *Somateria mollissima*

A total of 65 N and 41 S at Seaton Sluice on 1st involved mainly restless local birds (SSWT). Peak counts were 142 at Cheswick on 14th (CH), and 12-20 at Blyth Harbour and Spittal Bay (Berwick). Two to eight were also at Berwick Little Beach, Birling Carrs and Druridge Pools.

**Velvet Scoter** *Melanitta fusca*

One flew N at Newbiggin on 30th (ASH/IK/JR). The only other report was of a drake off Ross Links on 28th (GPK).

**Common Scoter** *Melanitta nigra*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 821 N and 99 S (SSWT), a total of 120+ flew N at Newbiggin between 22nd-29th (GB/ASH), 30 N at Cullernose Point on 18th (TRD/JD), and one to ten N at Druridge and Tynemouth on 29th. A raft of 150 was off Druridge on 26th (TRD/JD), 136 were at Cheswick Black Rocks on 10th (MHu), 30-44 at Cambois, Cocklawburn and Newton Point, and five at Stag Rocks.

**Goldeneye** *Bucephala clangula*

One flew N at Seaton Sluice on 18th (SSWT). Four were at the regular breeding site on 1st (TRD/JD), two at Embleton Quarry (JEd) and West Ord (MHu) on 20th, and singles at Cresswell Pond, Grindon Lough and Hedgeley GP on several dates between 5th-30th.

**Goosander** *Mergus merganser*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 49 N and 23 S (SSWT), ten flew N at Holy Island on 8th (MJC/ADM), and four S at Newbiggin on 24th and one S there on 7th (GB/LJM). Counts of nine came from the Coquet Estuary on 24th (TB), Jesmond Dene on 29th (MJCo), and the Tweed Estuary on 11th (TBr), six were at the Blyth Estuary, Branton GP and Rothbury, and three at Furnace Bridge. One to two were also at Berwick Hill, Boulmer, Castle Island, Derwent Reservoir, Stag Rocks and Warkworth.

**Red-breasted Merganser** *Mergus serrator*

Four moved N and three S at Seaton Sluice on 1st (SSWT). Seven were at Druridge Pools on 13th (IDR), three at Budle Bay on 22nd (CGK/GPK), and one at Beal.

**Red Grouse** *Lagopus lagopus*

Two flocks of 40 and 20 birds in the Harthope Valley on 6th suggested maybe a good breeding season (TRD/JD). One to three were at Addycombe (Rothbury), Grindon Lough and Longframlington Common.

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

Five were in the Harthope Valley on 6th, five also at Beanley on 15th and a single was watched running along the road at Grasslees Burn (Hepple).

**Grey Partridge** *Perdix perdix*

18 lifted from the road at Beal on 24th (ADM), eight were in the Baybridge/Newbiggin area (Blanchland) on 7th (MJc/DJC) and six were in a stubble field at Seaton Point (Boulmer). The only other records were three at Spital (Newbiggin) and a single calling at Big Waters NWT.

**Pheasant** *Phasianus colchicus*

Apart from a single bird at Castle Island all records came from Druridge Pools NR with varying numbers on several dates peaking at two adults with 12 well grown young on 7th (LJM/IDR/JF/DM).

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

The monthly total passing Seaton Sluice was 402 (187N, 215S) in 94 hours of sea-watching (SSWT). This healthy return was reflected by other observers at various points along the coast including 19N at Annstead Point on 30th (CGK/GPK), 16 offshore off Druridge Pools on 13th (IDR) and many other records of passage birds from places throughout the county.

**Black-throated Diver** *Gavia arctica*

Only two were seen – a single on the sea with a Red-throated Diver at Snab Point (Cresswell) on 25th (TB) and one flying S past Druridge Pools NR on 29th (IDR).

**Great Northern Diver** *Gavia immer*

Seaton Sluice had four S on 17th (SSWT), two flew N at Boulmer on 8th (TRD/JD) and two separate records of single birds heading N past Newbiggin on 7th may have been the same individual (NGO/GB).

**Storm Petrel** *Hydrobates pelagicus*

One flew N close inshore at Annstead Point on 7th (CGK/GPK).

**Leach's Petrel** *Oceanodroma leucorhoa*

A well-watched individual, seen by at least seven delighted observers, headed N past Newbiggin at 15:55 on 17th (JFa/NFO).

**Fulmar** *Fulmarus glacialis*

The peak at Annstead was 29 (26N and three S) on 7th (DF) and one to eight were at several other usual locations.

**Cory's Shearwater** *Calonectris borealis*

One was watched heading N past Hauxley at 13:15 on 18th having passed Whitburn earlier (NFO).

**Sooty Shearwater** *Puffinus griseus*

Seaton Sluice reported another "extremely poor" Sept showing with a monthly total of only 13N in 94 hours (SSWT). This pattern was briefly interrupted on 17th when 16 flew N offshore at Newbiggin between 14:30-19:33 (JFa) and 13 flew N in four hours past St.Mary's (AC). At Newbiggin five headed N between 10:40-13:30 on 7th (GB), four were there on 30th, two on 29th and one to two were seen at Annstead Point.

**Manx Shearwater** *Puffinus puffinus*

A monthly total of 83 (82N and one S) was another very low September count at Seaton Sluice (SSWT) with the main passage period between 17th-18th producing 63N. Newbiggin peaked at 31N between 14:30-19:34 on 17th (JFa) whilst Annstead Point bucked the mid-month trend with 28N on 30th (GPK/CGK). There were several other reports of one to seven birds from other locations on various other dates.

**Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

The peak count at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) was 12 on 8th, birds then dispersing with only five remaining by 19th (TD). A similar pattern, evident at Newton Pool with 11 on 5th (SW), reduced to four by 20th (TRD/JD). 12 were at Castle Island on 15th (DM), Hedgeley GP held ten on 14th (IBDa/KDa) and Colt Crag Reservoir held eight to nine all month (MR). Eight were at Linton ponds on 15th and one to six were at Arcot Pond, Big Waters NWT, Branton GP, Caistron, Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough, Howick Hall and Middle Ord Pond (Berwick).

**Red-necked Grebe** *Podiceps grisegena*

Singles flew N past Seaton Sluice on 5th and 18th (SSWT) and one, likely the same bird, also passed Newbiggin on 18th (JFa).

**Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus*

Numbers reduced at Widdrington Moor Lake this month but ten were still present on 6th (EC/JSB). Six at Big Waters NWT included a pair with two large young (GB), Branton GP held an adult and two juveniles on 5th (TRD/JD) and singles were at Birling Carrs (Warkworth), Blyth Harbour, Cheswick Beach, Colt Crag Reservoir, the first for many years at Greenlee Lough (MRS) and Seaton Sluice.

**Slavonian Grebe** *Podiceps auratus*

A single bird flew N at St. Mary's Island on 7th (ASJ).

**Spoonbill** *Platalea leucorodia*

A party of five arrived at Budle Bay on 3rd. One was a colour-ringed bird that had been ringed as a pullus in Den Ooever, The Netherlands, in June 2017 (CGK/GPK/RA). Their number reduced to three on 8th, then two from 9th-12th with a single remaining until 27th (DF/NFO/PRM/BS).

**Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus ibis*

One was at Cresswell Pond on 26th, remaining late into the evening (TB/MN).

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

Yarrow Slake (Berwick) peaked at 14 on 12th (MHu), with 13 present at the nearby Tweed Estuary during a WeBS count on 11th (TBr). 13 were in Budle Bay on 21st (CGK/GPK), Castle Island held seven on 15th (DM) and one to five were at eight other sites including one eating Butterfish at the shore of Newton Point which was considered unusual prey (TRD/JD).



A Grey Heron with a Butterfish  
Newton Point on 20th September by TimDean

**Great White Egret** *Ardea alba*

Two sightings - of what may have been last month's Hauxley bird - with one heading N at St. Mary's Wetland in the early morning of 11th (AC) and one found well-hidden in vegetation at Prestwick Carr during the morning of 28th (STH).



**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*

After the usual late summer influx, numbers remained steady with reports from 14 sites with the greatest number of birds scattered around the Lindisfarne/Fenham Mill-Budle Bay area. A high-tide roost at The Cages (Fenham Mill) peaked at 15 on 30th (DF) whilst the max count at Budle Bay was ten including a colour-ringed bird that had been observed here the last three autumns having hatched in Cleveland in June 2016 (CGK). Maximum numbers of one to four were reported from elsewhere.

**Gannet** *Morus bassanus*

Steady passage was recorded from all the main coastal viewpoints. Regular coverage at Annstead produced 299S and 198N on 6th, 933N in one hour and 55 mins on 7th, 107N and 212S on 11th and 424N, 45S in one hr 15 mins on 20th (DF). 290 headed N past Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) in 20 mins on 13th with 362S there in one hour and 30 mins on 25th (DF). Elsewhere, 250 passed Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) in both directions during the evening of 21st (MJC/ADM), 150 passed Cocklawburn on 13th, 120 headed N at Boulmer on 8th, 107 off Druridge Pools NR on 29th and 100N at Cullernose Point on 18th. Two to 50 were also seen from several other locations.

**Shag** *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

An increase in sightings was reported from Seaton Sluice with a monthly total of 55 (51N and only four S) with the majority (29N) on 17th (SSWT). The Meadow Haven (Berwick) roost increased from 26 on 15th to 42 on 17th (MHu). A WeBS count found nine between Spittal-Cocklawburn on 13th and singles were at Druridge Pools NR and Emblestones (Newton).

**Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Some movement early in the month was noted at both Seaton Sluice, with up to 55 recorded per day (SSWT), and Boulmer with 30N in singles/small groups on 8th (BS). The evening roost at Blyth Harbour peaked at 161 on 6th (STH) and 75 were at Castle Island (R Wansbeck) on 3rd (TF/JFa). 64 in Holy Island Harbour was a high count for the site (IK), 62 were in the Blyth Estuary on 17th (LJM), 48 on the jetty at North Shields Fish Quay on 9th (STH) and 48 at Berwick Little Beach on 11th (TBr). 36 were recorded during a WeBS visit to Spittal-Cocklawburn on 13th and the Meadow Haven (Berwick) roost held 34 on 15th. One to 27 were at 11 other localities including one continental *sinensis* race bird at Cresswell Pond on 24th (STH).

**Osprey** *Pandion haliaetus*

Two individuals were seen at Derwent Reservoir regularly up to 13th (IFo) & two birds were seen there on 4th (AJ), other single birds were at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 2nd which came in off the sea and continued inland over the golf course (DF). One was seen on the River Till (Etal) on 6th (EH) and one flew S offshore at Newbiggin on 7th (TF/JFa), one flew W over the A1 at West Denton on 9th (AA) and one flew West towards West Woodburn over the road very low on 12th (TB).

**Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus*

Two birds were displaying together at Howdon on 9th (CB). A male was seen in the observer's garden at Newbiggin Quarry throughout the month (Bst). Single birds were at 22 sites during the Month.

August revision Sparrow hawk

The first sentence should read - A family party of five birds, two adults and three juveniles, was seen almost daily at the Mound Newbiggin until 26th (AP)

**Goshawk** *Accipiter gentilis*

Unsexed birds were seen at Fourstones on 3rd (PRM), nr Blanchland on 7th (MJC/DJC). An adult male was seen at Colt Crag Reservoir on 9th (MR), a female was on heather with a kill nr Grasslees Burn (Hepple) on 20th (TB) and a male was noted at Colt Crag Reservoir on 25th (MR).

**Harrier sp**

On 20th either a ringtail (probably a juvenile) Pallid or a Montagu's Harrier flew W over The Snook (Holy Island) and then over Beal at 13:15 but was too distant to confirm ID (PRM).

**Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*

Two birds, both juveniles, were seen at Holy Island and Fenham at the same time on 8th (RA), two females were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 12th (RPo). Two birds, a juvenile and a female, were noted at East Chevington on 14th (MN). A male and a female were at Linton Ponds on 15th (DM/PJA/TF/JFa). Singles were at Boulmer (Seaton Point), Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Seaton Sluice Watchtower and Widdrington Moor Lake.

**Hen Harrier** *Circus cyaneus*

A ringtail, probable male flew S at East Chevington on 14th (MN).

**Red Kite** *Milvus milvus*

Three birds were in the air together at Airy Holm Reservoir (nr Shotleyfield) on 13th (IFo), and a single bird was at Derwent Reservoir on 3rd and 5th (IFo).

**Common Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*

Four birds were at Plenmeller Common on 27th (PRM). Three were seen at Gunnerton (Barrasford) on 1st (SW), College Valley on 7th (RPo), nr Blanchland on 7th (MJC/DJC), Wark (North Tyne) on 8th (PRM), West Hartford on 17th (TB), Howick Hall on 20th (PHa/Aha) and at Prestwick Carr on 28th. Two birds were seen at Druridge Pools, Ellington, Elsdon, Grindon Lough, High Letham (Berwick), Longhirst, Otterburn, Wark (North Tyne) and West Hartford. Singles were reported from 12 sites this Month.

**Water Rail** *Rallus aquaticus*

Only single birds were seen or heard at East Chevington on 4th (IRD), Holy Island on 14th (MJC/ADM), Cresswell Pond on 15th (IRD), Newton Pool on 20th (TRD/JD), Arcot Pond on 21st (STH) and at Big Waters NWT on 22nd (GB).

**Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*

The highest counts came from Grindon Lough on 11th (PRM) and Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 30th (DM) with 18 birds at both sites. 12 birds were at Linton Lane NR on 15th (DM/LJM), 11 were at Castle Island also on 15th (DM/PJA) and eight at Druridge Pools on 7th (DM/LJM) and at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 30th (DM). One to six birds were at Cocklawburn Pond, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Howick Hall Pond, Jesmond Dene (Newcastle) and Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay).

**Coot** *Fulica atra*

The highest count came from Linton Pond with 108 birds present on 15th (DM/PJA/TF). Other maximum counts were 41 at Killingworth Lake on 5th (LJM), 40 at Big Waters NWT on 14th (GB), 32 at Grindon Lough on 11th (PRM) and 29 at Bothal Pond on 8th (TD). One - fourteen birds were at Derwent Reservoir, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Howick Hall Pond, Leazes Park (Newcastle), Newton Pool and Shield on the Wall. One at Newton Pool on 25th was an odd bi-coloured individual with white under parts (TRD/JD).



Coots at Newton Pool, one bi-coloured white  
Tim Dean on 25th September

**Crane** *Grus grus*

On 4th a bird flew overhead and circled before returning to a distant field (AJ).

**Oystercatcher** *Haematopus ostralegus*

A peak count of 124 on 17th came from the Coastwatch Station, Berwick (MHu), with 49 at Birling Carrs, Warkworth (RPo) and 30 at Spittal-Cocklawburn (TBr) on 13th. Fewer than five birds were noted at Druridge (IDR), Derwent Reservoir (IFo) and the Wansbeck Estuary (DM/PJA).

**Avocet** *Recurvirostra avosetta*

One was at Cresswell Pond on 9th (TB).

**Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus*

A maximum monthly count of 1,700 was recorded at Budle Bay (CGK/GPK). There were 690 at Widdrington Moor Lake on 29th (ASJ) and 485 at Boulmer on 29th (BS). Numbers at Grindon Lough rose from 11 on 19th to 357 on 27th (PRM). St Mary's Island had 311 on 24th and Derwent Reservoir had 300 on 14th. There were 258 at Cocklawburn on 19th (MHu), 200+ at Gloucester Lodge, Blyth on 12th (MSH), and 170 at Otterburn on 16th (MJC). East Cramlington LNR had 120 on 3rd (STH). There were 105 at the Tweed Estuary on 11th (TBr) and 100 at Cresswell Pond on 19th (MN). Reports of smaller numbers came from Druridge Pools, Prestwick Carr and Castle Island, with counts below 50 from Berwick, Big Waters, Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Howdon and Ellington. The only indication of movement over the sea was 12S at Seaton Sluice Watch Tower on 27th.

**Golden Plover** *Pluvialis apricaria*

The highest total came from Goswick Sands, where 3,000 were recorded on 30th (CH). 2,000 birds, including one leucistic individual, were counted around Holy Island on 22nd (MJC/ADM) and St Mary's Island also had 2,000 on 22nd (AC). There were 1,200 at Boulmer on 28th (BS) and ca. 1,000 at Longhoughton Steel on 11th (MKi). Grindon Lough had a peak count of c. 500 on 26th. Newton Point had 300 on 10th (TRD/JD), Annstead, Seahouses had 200 on 11th (DF) and Howick had 140 on 14th (JAR). Smaller counts came from Derwent Reservoir, Colt Crag Reservoir, Beacon Point, Newbiggin and Otterburn. 15 were noted on the Town Moor, Newcastle, on 16th (GB).

**Pacific Golden Plover** *Pluvialis fulva*

One was in fields off the Straight Lonnen, Holy Island on 30th (ADM/BCh).

**American Golden Plover** *Pluvialis dominica*

An adult retaining most of its breeding plumage was briefly north off St Cuthbert's Island, Holy Island on 22nd (MJC).

**Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola*

There were 200N past Beal Point (Goswick Sands) on 30th (CH), and a maximum count of 60 at Budle Bay on 26th. Smaller numbers were recorded at other coastal sites, including Birling Carrs (Warkworth) and Seaton Point (Boulmer). Summer-plumaged birds were noted on the Holy Island causeway on 3rd (TBr), Boulmer on 8th (TRD/JD) and from Seaton Sluice Watch Tower on 17th.

**Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula*

The highest count came from Budle Bay, with 80 on 22nd (CGK/GPK), while Black Rocks (Cheswick) had 68 on 28th (CH) and Snab Point (Cresswell) had 60 on 25th (TB). There were 56 roosting on the rocks at Beacon Point, Newbiggin on 5th (STH) and 43 at the Chibburn Mouth, East Chevington on 27th (AJH). Warkworth Gut had 42 on 24th (JAR) and Beal and Boulmer had 40 on 3rd (DF) and 8th (TRD/JD) respectively. There were 38 at Cocklawburn on 18th (MHu), 33 on St Mary's Island on 24th (ASJ) and ca. 30 at Little Beach, Berwick on 11th (TBr). A WeBS count recorded 28 at Birling Carrs, Warkworth on 13th (RPo). Reports of 20 birds came from Stag Rocks, Bamburgh on 1st (DF) and Low Newton scrape on 10th (TRD/JD). Smaller numbers came from other coastal sites, and juveniles were noted at Prestwick Carr on 1st (GB) and Grindon Lough on 26th (PRM).

**Little Ringed Plover** *Charadrius dubius*

There were two were at Derwent Reservoir (IFo) and one at Prestwick Carr (GB, STH) on 1st.

**Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus*

The highest count came from Seaton Sluice Watch Tower, with 23 (18N, 5S) on 1st. There were 4 at Beal on 9th (DF) and 2 at Church Point, Newbiggin on 7th (DM/LJM). Single birds were reported from Budle Bay, Howick, Holy Island, Druridge Bay, Cresswell Pond, High Hauxley, Quarry Cottage and Southfield Green, Cramlington.

**Curlew** *Numenius arquata*

There were 82 at St Mary's Island on 13th (ASJ), 80 on the Coquet Estuary on 5th (SW), 74 in the stubble field at Snab Point, Cresswell on 28th (GB) and 70 at Boulmer on 28th (MJC/DJC). There were 60+ near Whitley Bay Cemetery on 12th. A WeBS count recorded 48 on the Tweed Estuary on 11th (TBr) and there were 46 at roost at the Coastwatch Station, Berwick on 17th (MHu). There were 40 at Alnmouth on 1st (CB) and a monthly maximum of 37 at Druridge Pools on 29th (IDR). Smaller counts came from other coastal sites, with individuals noted inland at Prestwick Carr, Grindon Lough and Plenmeller Common.

**Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica*

The highest count came from Fenham Flats, Lindisfarne NNR with 500 on 25th (ASJ). There were 75 at Sandham Bay, Holy Island on 7th (TD). Boulmer had a maximum count of 29 on 28th (MJC/DJC) and Budle Bay had 25 on 6th (GPK). Counts of fewer than 20 birds came from Longhoughton, Berwick, Amble and Newbiggin, with seven birds unusually seen on Low Newton scrape on 25th (TRD/JD). A single bird was at the Spanish Battery rocks at Tynemouth, where sightings are scarce, on 9th (CB).

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

The Coquet Estuary had the largest number of birds again, with 71 on 10th (RPo). Druridge Pools had 50 on 23rd (TF/JFa, IDR) and 20 flew S at Amble on 1st (CB). Counts of fewer than five birds came from Cresswell Pond, Alnmouth and Budle Bay, with singles at Boulmer, the Blyth Estuary and Castle Island.

**Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*

The highest counts came from the usual favoured areas with 49 at Boulmer on 28th (MJC/DJC), 36 at Stag Rocks on 1st (DF), 32 at Berwick Little Beach on 28th (MHu), 30 at Annstead Point (Seahouses) on 30th (GPK/CGK), 23 at Newbiggin on 7th (DM), 22 at Budle Bay on 6th (GPK) and 20 at Low Newton on 10th (TRD/JD). Six to 19 were at Berwick Coastwatch, Birling Carrs (Warkworth), Calot Shad (River Tweed Estuary) and Cocklawburn.

**Knot** *Calidris canutus*

High numbers remained at Fenham Flats (Lindisfarne NNR) with 1,200 present on 30th (ASJ). At Seaton Sluice, 400 were on the rocks on 7th (SSWT) and 200 were present a few miles further south at St Mary's Island on 6th (JBu). Budle Bay held a minimum of 80 on 4th (DF), 70 were at Stag Rocks on 1st (GPK) and ca.70 were at Holy Island North Shore on 3rd (TBr). At Beacon Point (Newbiggin), 40 were seen on 5th (STH) and same number was at Sandham Bay (Holy Island) on 7th (TD).



The maximum count from Stag Rocks was 35 on 2nd and 13th (DF/TRD/JD) and 22 were at Cocklawburn on 13th (TBr). Sixteen were at Boulmer on 28th, 15 at Newbiggin on the same day and 12 at Birling Carrs (Warkworth) on 13th.

#### **Ruff** *Calidris pugnax*

Prestwick Carr was favoured with 12 on 1st being the highest count (STH). Druridge pools attracted two on 1st, increasing to six by 23rd (TD/IDR *et al.*). One to three were seen on various dates through the month at Beal, Boulmer, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Low Newton scrape and St Mary's Island and Wetland.

#### **Curlew Sandpiper** *Calidris ferruginea*

Records increased from last month with three at Budle Bay on 13th (GPK/RA) and two juveniles at Seaton Point (Boulmer) on 5th (CSa) with one remaining until 15th (BS). Two were also present at the River Coquet Estuary on 23rd (CSa). Singles were present at Low Newton from 8th-25th (IBDa/KDa/DF *et al.*) and Holy Island Snook on 22nd (MJC).

#### **Sanderling** *Calidris alba*

Numbers remained high from last month at St Mary's Island with 127 on 5th (ASJ) and also at Chevington Burn mouth (Druridge Bay) where 118 were counted on 26th (AJ/ASH/TW/AJN). At Holy Island, 50 were at Sandham Bay on 7th (TD) and ca.40 were at the North Shore on 3rd (TBr). Birling Carrs attracted 21 on 13th (RPo) 18 were at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 7th (DM) and ten were counted at Cocklawburn on 19th (MHu). One-seven were at Berwick Little Beach, Low Newton and Low Newton scrape.

#### **Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*

Limited passage was noted at Seaton Sluice with 57N on 18th (SSWT). At Boulmer over 200 were present on 14th with a reduction to 42 by 26th (BS/MKi). Birds were observed at several sites at Lindisfarne NNR with 102 at Budle Bay on 10th (DF), ca.80 at Holy island North Shore on 3rd (TBr), 60 at Fenham Mill on 13th (TRD/JD) and 50 at Sandham Bay (Holy Island) on 7th (TD). Lesser numbers included 40 at Low Newton scrape on 10th (TRD/JD), 30 at Beal on 3rd (DF), 25 at Druridge Pools on 23rd (IDR) and 20 at Cresswell Pond on 26th (TRD/JD). 17 were at Berwick Little Beach on 11th and three at Birling Carrs (Warkworth) on 28th. Inland, three were at Grindon Lough between 13th-27th and two at Hedgeley GP on 11th.



A Dunlin at St. Mary's  
28th September  
Alan Jack

#### **Purple Sandpiper** *Calidris maritima*

Low numbers were reported with 16 at Boulmer on 28th being the highest (MJC/DJC). Four were at Cocklawburn on 19th (MHu) and singles were at Annstead (Seahouses), Stag Rocks and Seaton Sluice. An unusual freshwater record was one at Druridge pools on 30th (IDR).

**Little Stint** *Calidris minuta*

A juvenile was at Cresswell Pond from 26th-30th (NFO/GB/MN).

**Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago*

Double figure counts came from Beadnell scrapes with 15 on 27th (IDR) and Low Newton scrape with 12 on 25th (TRD/JD). One-ten were at Beal, Big Waters, Bothal Pond, Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond, Druridge pools, Grindon Lough, Holy Island Snook, Longhoughton Steel, Newbiggin, Prestwick Carr, St Mary's Wetland, Warkworth Gut and Widdrington Lake.

**Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos*

Stragglers were noted at Budle Bay on 4th (GPK), Newstead Flash on 10th, (NFO) and the River Tweed Estuary on 17th (MHu).

**Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*

Light passage was noted with one S over the observer's garden at Gosforth Garden Village on 4th (MJC) and singles at Hedgeley GP on 11th (TRD/JD), Caistron on 14th (JD), Newstead Flash on 16th (NFO), St Mary's Island on 28th (ASJ) and Doddington on 28th (JD). At Ogle Bridge on the (River Blyth) two were present on 11th, one on 12th, 14th-15th, 21st and 26th and three on 25th (AHB).

**Redshank** *Tringa totanus*

Lower numbers than last month were reported with 157 at the River Tweed Estuary being the highest count on 11th (TBr). The River Coquet Estuary held 129 on 5th (SW), 106 were at Yarrow Slake (River Tweed) on 16th (MHu) and 104 at Boulmer on 26th (MKi). Lesser counts were 43 at St Mary's Wetland roosting on 29th (MSH), 20 at Druridge Pools on 23rd (IDR) and 12 at both Berwick Little Beach on 28th (MHu) and Cresswell Pond on 7th (DM). One-ten were at Birling Carrs (Warkworth), Beadnell scrapes, Bothal Pond, Castle Island and Newbiggin.



A Redshank  
Cresswell  
20th September  
Colin Bradshaw

**Wood Sandpiper** *Tringa glareola*

Singles were seen at Hedgeley GP on 11th (TRD/JD) and Druridge Pools on 12th (MN).

**Spotted Redshank** *Tringa erythropus*

An adult and juvenile were at Low Newton scrape on 25th with the juvenile remaining until 30th (TRD/JD/AJH/DF). Single birds were seen at Druridge Pools from 1st-20th (TF/JFa/AA *et al.*), Cresswell Pond from 5th-9th (TB/AJ) and Budle Bay from 6th-13th (GPK).



**Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*

Good numbers continued to be reported with the favoured Beal- Holy Island causeway area attracting a maximum of 17 on 3rd (TBr) with other counts from 3rd-30th of between two-14 (DF/PRM/ASJ *et al.*). Elsewhere on Lindisfarne NNR, reports from Budle Bay involved one-seven during the month (GPK/CGK/NFO *et al.*) and three were at Fenham Mill. Seven flew N at St Mary's Wetland on 8th (AC) and one-two were seen at Alnmouth, Berwick Little Beach, Colt Crag Reservoir, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Hauxley NWT, Hedgeley GP, Newstead Flash, St Mary's Island, the River Tweed Estuary, River Tweed (A1-border) and Warkworth Gut.



A Greenshank at Holy Island  
21st September  
Alan Jack

**Kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla*

A light passage was evident at Holy Island when 130 per hour moved N in 90 minutes during late afternoon on 21st (MJC/ADM) and 30-50 flew N at Druridge Bay and Cullernose Point on 17th/18th (IDR/TRD/JD). A single bird at Colt Crag Reservoir on 30th was an unusual sighting (MR).

**Black-headed Gull** *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

A large number, 3,000, were in the evening roost at Budle Bay on 7th (CGK) and at Castle Island at least 1,000 were present on 9th (TF/JFa). Counts elsewhere, on various dates throughout, comprised 500-650 at Berwick (West Ord), the Blyth Estuary and on a stretch of the River Tweed from the A1 to the Border (TBr/MHu/LJM), 300-500 at Spittal Bay, Spittal-Cocklawburn, Saltpan Rocks and the Tweed Estuary (TBr/MHu) and 100-300 at Castle Island and Druridge Pools (DM/IDR/JF). Smaller gatherings of up to 60 were at Arcot Ponds, Bothal Pond, Cramlington, Exhibition Park and Jesmond Dene (DM/TD/MJCo).

**Little Gull** *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

Single adult or immature birds were recorded on dates from 13th-28th at Boulmer, Cocklawburn, Howick, Low Newton, Newbiggin and Seaton Sluice.



A Little Gull at Newton Scrape  
20th September by Tim Dean



**Mediterranean Gull** *Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus*

At Seaton Sluice, a total of 12 were seen from the watch point during the month (SSWT). Many remained in the county following the very significant influx last month with maximum counts of 110, mainly adults and 2nd-winter, which rested on rocks in Lynemouth Bay on 2nd (MSH), 61 in Newbiggin Bay on 19th and 42 at Cresswell Pond on 12th (ASH/MN). Numbers declined quickly beyond mid-month with 27 at Ellington on 15th (TB) and 19 at Newbiggin on 26th (ASH/MN) and all other records comprised only one to eight at many sites, mainly in the south east between Tynemouth and Cresswell, but also further afield at Alnmouth, Budle Bay, Fenham Mill, Holy Island and Low Newton (*many observers*).

**Common Gull** *Larus canus*

The evening roost at Budle Bay held 2,500 on 7th (CGK) and significant counts elsewhere were 850 at Bolam (AJR), 450 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs (AJR), 400 at Druridge Pools (IDR) and 340 at West Ord (MHu). WeBS counts at two sites on the River Tweed included 60 at each and 30 at Cocklawburn (TBr).

**Great Black-backed Gull** *Larus marinus*

The largest flock recorded held 300 at Warkworth Gut on 24th (JAR); elsewhere 250 were at Druridge Pools on 28th (IDR/JF), 43 in the roost at Budle Bay on 28th (DF) and 46 at New Water Haugh on the River Tweed on 16th (MHu). Smaller counts of up to 14 came from five other coastal localities plus six at Colt Crag Reservoir and singles at Grindon Lough.

**Herring Gull** *Larus argentatus argenteus*

The Budle Bay evening roost held 2,000 on 7th (CGK) and a large flock of 1,000 fed on a stubble field at Dunston Steads (Embleton) on 15th (JEd). Gatherings at other sites comprised 620 at New Water Haugh on the River Tweed on 16th (MHu), 612 in a WeBS count on the Tweed Estuary on 11th (TBr), 445 in the Blyth Estuary on 17th (LJM) and 100-200 at three other sites in the Berwick area (TBr/MHu) and at Castle Island (DM). Smaller groups of up to 60 were at Druridge Pools and Big Waters NWT.

**Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus fuscus graelsii*

The largest counts, all during the first half of the month, were 80 at Hedgeley GP (TRD/JD), 18 at Castle Island (DM), 13 at Colt Crag Reservoir (MR) and 12 at Bolam (AJR)). Numbers declined during the second half of the month as birds moved out of the county when one to eight were seen at ten other coastal and inland localities.

**Tern sp**

On 22nd, 90 were at Budle Point (CGK/GPK).

**Sandwich Tern** *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

Passage birds recorded during the month at Seaton Sluice totalled 90N and 25S with numbers dropping off beyond 17th (SSWT) and 90 moved N off Holy Island in 90 minutes on 21st (MJC/ADM). Other counts of passage/feeding birds on various dates up to 29th were 15-40 at Annstead, Bamburgh, Boulmer, Cullernose Point, Howick, Newbiggin and St Mary's Island with up to 12 at eight other sites (*many observers*).

**Roseate Tern** *Sterna dougallii*

Four adults were in Budle Bay from 20th-22nd (CGK/GPK) with probably two of them still at Budle Point on 23rd (NFO). Single adult birds were noted also at Bamburgh on 1st (DF), Newbiggin on 7th (GB) and at Budle Bay on 29th, the latest record (CGK/GPK).

**Common Tern** *Sterna hirundo*

The maximum day count at Seaton Sluice was 80N and 20 S on 17th with smaller numbers recorded throughout (SSWT); 50 moved S in ten minutes at Chevington Burn mouth on 26th (AJ *et al.*) and counts of 10-20 came from Boulmer, Druridge Pools, Newbiggin and up to six at four other sites with the last sighting on 29th.

**Arctic Tern** *Sterna paradisaea*

Thirteen passed N in 90 minutes' sea-watching at Holy Island on 21st (MJC/ADM), two were at Boulmer on 28th (BS) and a single at Newton Point on 25th (TRD/JD).

**Great Skua** *Stercorarius skua*

Yet another very poor monthly total from Seaton Sluice with only ten sighted in 94 hours watching (SSWT). Six flew N at Annstead on 7th (CGK/GPK) with another 12 records, on various dates throughout, comprising one to three at Annstead, Boulmer, Chevington Burn mouth, Druridge Bay, Embleton Bay, Holy Island, Newbiggin and Newton Point (*many observers*).

**Pomarine Skua** *Stercorarius pomarinus*

A monthly total of 15, seven N, eight S, passed Seaton Sluice of which 11 occurred on 17th (SSWT) and on the same day presumably the same 11 birds were seen moving N at Newbiggin in five hours during late afternoon (JFa/NFO). Other sightings on 17th were two N at Druridge Bay (IDR) and, on 18th, two moved N at Hauxley (NFO) and singles flew N at Cullernose Point (TRD/JD) and St Mary's Island (AC). An adult with full 'spoons' moved N off Holy Island on 21st (MJC) as did one at Newbiggin on 30th (ASH/IK/JR).

**Arctic Skua** *Stercorarius parasiticus*

Another poor September total of only 16 N and 24 S in 94 hours watching at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). Elsewhere, seven flew N at Newbiggin on 17th (JFa), five N at Holy Island on 21st (MJC/ADM), four N at Cullernose Point on 18th (TFD/JD) and at Newbiggin on 30th (ASH/IK/JR). One to three were sighted at a further 12 localities between Tynemouth and Bamburgh on various dates from 7th-29th (*many observers*).



An Arctic Skua chases a Common Tern  
Newton Point on 25th September by Tim Dean

**Long-tailed Skua** *Stercorarius longicaudus*

A juvenile moved N at Seaton Sluice on 17th (SSWT) and a 'probable' juvenile was sighted during a sea-watch at Holy Island on 21st (MJC/ADM).

**Auk** *sp*

At Seaton Sluice on 21st 1,000 per hour flew N, the only significant movement (SSWT) and on the same day at Holy Island, 150 moved N during 90 minutes sea-watching in late afternoon on 21st (MJC/ADM). Smaller movements N were also seen at Annstead and Bamburgh on 20th and 25th (DF).

**Common Guillemot** *Uria aalge*

At Emmanuel Head, Holy Island, 69 flew N on 21st (MJC/ADM). At Bamburgh Stag Rocks, 150, including small family groups, were offshore on 13th (DF/TRD/JD) and up to 18 were counted at ten other localities between Newbiggin and Berwick on dates throughout.

**Razorbill** *Alca torda*

21 moved N at Emmanuel Head (Holy Island), during the sea-watch on 21st (MJC/ADM). Elsewhere, one to three were at Druridge Bay and Longhoughton Steel.

**Puffin** *Fratercula arctica*

At Emmanuel Head 23 flew N in 90 minutes sea-watching on 21st (MJC/ADM) and six were recorded passing Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). Three were at Newbiggin on 7th (DM).

**Feral Pigeon** *Columba livia*

On 15th 20 were at Stakeford Railway Bridge (DM/PJA).

**Stock Dove** *Columba oenas*

Four was the high count at Cresswell Pond on 7th (DM/LJM), three at Jesmond Dene on 8th (MJCo) and Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 29th with one to two at five other locations.

**Woodpigeon** *Columba palumbus*

On the afternoon of 19th 22 were at Stobhill (Morpeth) with ten there in the morning (IDR), nine at Jesmond Dene on 8th (MJCo), eight at Ellington on 22nd and eight at Druridge Pools NR reducing to two by the month with and one still on nest at Whitley Bay Cemetery on 27th.

**Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto*

A pre-roost gathering of 70 was at Low Farm (Embleton) on 16th (JEd), 19 at Kirkley Mill on 28th, 11 at Berwick Hill on 26th, ten at Ogle on 28th and a maximum of seven at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) during the month with two to five at Stobhill (Morpeth) and Ellington.

**Cuckoo** *Cuculus canorus*

One was found at North Dunes (Holy Island) by Neil Crouch on 25th (ADM).

**Barn Owl** *Tyto alba*

All sightings were of single birds at Seaton Sluice on 6th, Howick on 7th & 15th, Stannington Station and Colt Crag Reservoir on 25th and a road casualty on A69 at Brocksbushes Farm (Acomb) on 7th.

**Tawny Owl** *Strix aluco*

Two called at Waren Mill (nr. Bamburgh) on 8th and at Ellington on 30th (TB) with singles at Fulbeck (Morpeth) and Howick all month and nine other widespread localities.

**Little Owl** *Athene noctua*

A male sang at Shiremoor on 18th (CGK) and one was at Druridge Pools NR on 28th (IDR/JF).

**Long-eared Owl** *Asio otus*

One talon grappled with a Barn Owl before flying off over Folly Moss (Colt Crag Reservoir) on 25th (MR).

**Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus*

One was mobbed by crows at the Straight Lonnen (Holy Island) with one on the island on 26th (IBDa/KDa).

**Swift** *Apus apus*

Around 20 fed over the lake at East Chevington on 6th (EC/JSB). 15 flew SW at Budle Bay on 2nd (GPK) with four to eight at East Chevington from 1st to 5th and five at Bamburgh on 27th. Four were at Seaton Sluice on 4th and Longbenton on 23rd with one to two at twelve other locations, the last a single at North Seaton (Ashington) on 27th.

**Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis*

Three were at Jesmond Dene on 1st, two at Beal Point / Longridge End on 25th (MJC), with one noted at Budle Bay on ten dates during the month (CGK/GPK/DMi), four dates at Felton, three dates at Colt Crag Reservoir and two dates at Branton GP and Big Waters NWT. Singles were at 18 other widespread localities.

**Wryneck** *Jynx torquilla*

One was found in North Dunes (Holy Island) between 16.18 and 17.45h on 25th with possibly the same bird at the Snook on 26th (ADM/MJC).

**Great Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos major*

Two were at Gunnerton on 1st (SW), Howick Pool and Wood on 20th (PHa/AHa) and Grindon Lough on 26th (PRM) with singles at five other locations.

**Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*

Four birds were seen on Holy Island on 25th and 26th (ADM/MJC); three were at West Hartford on 13th (TB) and at St Mary's Island on 25th (ASJ). Two birds were observed at North Shore (Holy Island) on 3rd (TBr), Ellington on 9th (TB), Holy Island on 21st (MJC/ADM) and at Grindon Lough on 27th (PRM). Single birds were reported from over 20 sites.

**Merlin** *Falco columbarius*

Single birds were observed at Holy Island on several dates (ADM/MJC), Otterburn on 16th (MJC), Low Newton on 18th (Jed), Beal on 20th (PRM), St Mary's Island on 25th (ASJ), Boulmer on 28th and 29th (MJC/DJC/BS).

**Hobby** *Falco subbuteo*

An adult briefly over the Priory/Vicar's Garden (Holy Island) area at 13:15h was a very long overdue county tick for one delighted observer (*per* ADM).

**Peregrine** *Falco peregrinus*

Three birds were all moving over the sea at Seaton Sluice Watch Tower with two N and one S on 1st (SSWT). Two birds, an adult and a juvenile, were regularly observed at Budle Bay through September (CGK/GPK). Single Birds were reported from 14 sites including a one which sat on a pylon at East Cramlington LNR with an orange ring on its left leg on 4th (STH).

**Ring-necked Parakeet** *Psittacula krameri*

One flew N at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 10th (GB) and one was at Heaton Bowling Park Green (Jesmond Dene) on 22nd (MJCo).

**Jay** *Garrulus glandarius*

On 30th five were at Colt Crag Reservoir (MR), three at Jesmond Dene on 22nd (MJCo) with two at Branton GP, Valley Park (Cramlington), Ellington and Howick. Singles were at 12 other widespread localities



**Magpie** *Pica pica*

Seven were at Druridge Pools NR on 22nd (IDR/JF), five at the Village (Holy Island) on 21st (MJC/ADM), four at Jesmond Dene on 22nd (MJCo) with three at Druridge Pools and Stobhill (Morpeth) regularly.

**Jackdaw** *Corvus monedula*

High counts of 450 at Gosforth Home Farm area on 14th (MJC/DJC). 200 at Derwent Reservoir on 9th (IFo), 70+ roosting at Marden Farm (Cullercoats) on 11th (MN). 45 were at Howdon on 1st, 30 at Ellington on 22nd, six at Jesmond Dene on 29th and two at Stobhill (Morpeth) on 19th.

**Rook** *Corvus frugilegus*

A flock of 850 was in a field at Hepple on 16th and 70 at Craster on 13th (MJC).

**Carrion Crow** *Corvus corone*

On 14th 62 were at Gosforth Home Farm area (MJC/DJC), a flock of 30 at Marden Farm (Cullercoats) on 11th (MN), 18 at Town Moor (Newcastle) on 24th and a peak of nine at Druridge Pools NR on 30th. Six were at Jesmond Dene and one to two at Stobhill (Morpeth).

**Raven** *Corvus corax*

Three moved SW at Otterburn on 18th (MJC), two at Harthope Valley on 6th and Grindon Lough on 19th (TRD/JD/PRM). Singles were at Colt Crag Reservoir on 3rd & 30th, Harbottle on 22nd and Grindon Lough on 27th.

**Coal Tit** *Periparus ater*

Garden feeders attracted six at Tynemouth on 2nd (CB), five were trapped and ringed during the month at Bamburgh Ringing Station, four at Craster on 13th with one to three at seven other locations.

**Marsh Tit** *Poecile palustris*

Present all month at Rothbury with two on several dates (TRD/JD), two at Ellington on 21st (TB) with singles regularly at Linden Hall (Longhorsley), Thrum Mill (Rothbury) on 21st, Letah Wood (Hexham) on 23rd and Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 24th.

**Willow Tit** *Poecile montanus*

Four were at Craster on 13th (MJC) and at Derwent Reservoir on 17th (IFo). Two were at Prestwick Carr on 14th and at East Sleekburn on 20th with singles regularly at Prestwick Carr and at eight other locations.

**Blue Tit** *Cyanistes caeruleus*

30 were trapped and ringed during the month at Bamburgh Ringing Station with 12+ on 5th. Six were at Stobhill (Morpeth) on 19th and at Druridge pools on 28th & 29th with three to five at both locations on other dates and one at Jesmond Dene on 22nd.

**Great Tit** *Parus major*

At Bamburgh Ringing Station 16 were trapped and ringed during the month, four at Stobhill (Morpeth) on 19th and Druridge Pools NR on 29th (IDR) with one to two there on three other dates and three at Jesmond Dene on 22nd.

**Bearded Tit** *Panurus biarmicus*

Four at the North Pool East Chevington on 18th and two there on 19th (JBU/MN).



A Willow Tit at St. Mary's  
8th September  
Alan Jack

**Skylark** *Alauda arvensis*

At Otterburn 100/hr headed SE for four hours on the morning of 16th and 50/hr SE in four hours on 18th (MJC) with 35 moving south there on 10th. At Holy Island 82 moved south over the Snook on 22nd with double-figure counts there on four other dates and 35 at St Mary's Island on 19th. Ten to 26 were at six other locations and two to eight at a further eight.

**Sand Martin** *Riparia riparia*

20 were in stubble at East Chevington on 1st (CB) with six at Ellington on 16th (TB), three at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 2nd (RS), two at Spittal (Newbiggin) on 16th and St Mary's on 22nd being the latest record (ASJ). Singles were at Boulmer, Bamburgh and Colt Crag Reservoir.

**Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

Many large counts with 200 including many juveniles feeding at St Mary's Island on 11th the peak 150 there on 20th and 120 on 6th (ASJ). 150 moved south at Druridge Pools on 13th (IDR), 120 S at Otterburn in four hours on 16th & 18th (MJC). 100 at Embleton Quarry at dusk on 19th and 100 on wires at Cresswell on the same date with 80 at Humshaugh on 3rd and 75 at Todburn (Slaley) on 18th and 70 the peak at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin). There were 33 reports of 10 to 50 birds including 15 locations additional to those already noted and one to eight from a further 13 recorded up till the month end.

**House Martin** *Delichon urbica*

High counts of 140 at Gunnerton on 1st (SW), 110 feeding over fields at St Mary's Island on 6th (ASJ), 80 at Cresswell on 19th (TB), 58 at Rose Garden (Berwick Walls) on 13th (MHu) and 55 at Ellington on 6th and Old Hartley on 11th. 12 to 40 were at 15 other locations with one to nine at a further ten the latest being 40 at Prestwick Car on 29th (GB).

**Long-tailed Tit** *Aegithalos caudatus*

Large tribes of 24 were noted at Grindon Lough on 27th (PRM) and 22 at Druridge Pools on 29th (IDR). At Ellington there were counts of 11-18 on three dates 17th-26th, 17 were at Budle Bay on 30th, 16 at Howick Hall on 20th and 13 at East Sleekburn on 23rd. Ten were feeding together on a peanut feeder in a Rothbury garden on 22nd, while groups of six to eight were reported from Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Cramlington (Beacon Lane and Valley Park), Marden Quarry and the R.V.I. (Newcastle). At least five were noted at Castle Island on 25th, five were at Gunnerton on 1st, a family party were 'scolding' a Red Squirrel at Howick on 1st, and four were noted at Low Newton and Tynemouth and one to two at Branton GP and Jesmond Dene.

**Willow Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Small numbers at Holy Island peaked at 12 on 8th, with four present on the following day (MJC/ADM) and one to two from 24th-29th. At least five were at St Mary's Island on 16th and singles there on 1st and 4th. Elsewhere three were at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd and two at Bamburgh on 13th, Branton GP on 1st, Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 29th and Colt Crag Reservoir on 9th. In addition, singles were reported from Cocklawburn Pond on 19th, Ellington on 19th and 24th, Grindon Lough on 25th, Rothbury on 23rd, Wark (North Tyne) on 7th and Woodhorn Church on 27th. The final record of the month was another single at St Mary's Island on 30th.

**Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita*

There were notable inland counts of 14 at Gunnerton and ten at Branton GP on 1st (SW/TRD/JD). On the coast, 13 were at Alnmouth on 30th and ten were at Budle Point on 29th-30th and at Craster on 13th. Other coastal areas produced counts of seven to eight at Druridge Pools on 13th and 28th, Holy Island on 22nd and Woodhorn Church on 30th, while at least six were noted at Howick Hall on 20th and St Mary's Island on 30th. Elsewhere, five + were at Derwent Reservoir on 17th, five at the Wansbeck Estuary on 28th and fours at Exhibition Park on 3rd and 30th, Gosforth Park NR on 15th and Marden Quarry on 8th. One to three were reported from a further 40 widespread localities.

**Yellow-browed Warbler** *Phylloscopus inornatus*

The first arrival of this increasingly regular visitor was a calling bird at Low Newton on 14th (DF). There were no further sightings until 22nd when five were on Holy Island and singles at Budle Point and Druridge Pools, while on 23rd two were at Low Newton (tin Church) and another at Bamburgh. Numbers at Holy Island increased to seven by 24th-25th (ADM) during which period three were at Budle Point (25th) and singles at Blyth Cemetery, Cresswell Pond, Fenham Mill, Tynemouth and Whitley Bay Cemetery. Back on Holy Island, one at the Half Moon Slack on 26th and two at The Lough on 29th were 'new' birds. Elsewhere, singles were at Budle Point on 29th-30th, Chugdon Wood (Ellington) and Druridge Pools on 29th and three at St Mary's Island and one at Alnmouth on 30th.

**Greenish Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochiloides*

One was found at Holy Island (Vicar's garden) on 30th (BCh).

**Sedge Warbler** *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

One at Cresswell Pond on 1st was the only record (TD).

**Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Two were still at Bates Minewater Treatment Works on 3rd (LJM). An un-streaked *Acrocephalus* warbler at Holy Island (Snook House) on 8th was almost certainly this species, while another was at the island Lough on 22nd (MJC/ADM).

**Icterine Warbler** *Hippolais icterina*

One was at Boulmer (Seaton Point) on 8th-9th (BS/MKi).

**Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla*

A total of 17 were trapped and ringed at Bamburgh during the month (BRS). Seven were noted at Cambois on 23rd (STH), a total of five were ringed at East Sleekburn from 17th-23rd, four were at Beggar's Rigg (Rothbury) on 10th, and three were at Colt Crag Reservoir on 8th, Druridge Pools on 13th and the Wansbeck Estuary on 28th; two to three frequented Exhibition Park from 4th-16th. Elsewhere, two were noted at Derwent Reservoir on 17th, Holy Island on 26th and St Mary's Island on 1st. Singles were reported from Branton GP on 1st, Cramlington (Valley Park) on 21st, Craster on 13th, Gunnerton on 1st, Holy Island from 21st-22nd, Little Mill on 5th, Low Newton on 20th and 23rd, Morpeth on 10th, Rothbury on 1st and 11th, Tynemouth on 2nd and 29th, Wallington Hall on 11th, Wansbeck Estuary on 24th and Woodhorn Church on 27th.

**Garden Warbler** *Sylvia borin*

Three were at Holy Island (Chare Ends) on 9th, with one there on 26th (NFO/MJC). Nearby two were noted at Budle Point on 8th and at Bamburgh on 10th, while singles were at Druridge Pools on 22nd and Woodhorn Church on 29th.

**Barred Warbler** *Sylvia nisoria*

One remained at Holy Island (Snook) from 24th-26th (ADM/MJC).

**Lesser Whitethroat** *Sylvia curruca*

Singles were noted at Bamburgh on 5th, Craster on 9th, Holy Island on 8th, 22nd and 29th and at St Mary's Island on 23rd and 30th.

**Whitethroat** *Sylvia communis*

Four at St Mary's Island / Wetland from 1st-4th decreased to two from 12th-16th (MSH/ASJ). Two were trapped and ringed at Bamburgh during the month and singles were noted at Colt Crag Reservoir and Cramlington (Beaconhill) on 8th, Derwent Reservoir on 17th, Druridge Pools on 22nd, East Chevington on 1st, East Ord on 8th, Exhibition Park on 16th, Holy Island on 8th, Howick on 15th, Low Newton on 10th and 25th, Marden Quarry on 29th, Tynemouth on 9th and the Wansbeck Estuary on 28th.

**Firecrest** *Regulus ignicapilla*

One was at Woodhorn Old Vicarage on 25th (MN).

**Goldcrest** *Regulus regulus*

There were counts of two to six from Holy Island on six dates from 8th-26th and a peak of 16 on 29th (ADM/MJC). On the following day at least six were at St Mary's Island and five at both Alnmouth and Woodhorn Church; five were also reported from Ellington and Howick Hall on 20th-21st. Four were at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 27th and Wallington Hall on 2nd, while three+ were reported from Bamburgh on 5th and 18th and three at Cambois on 23rd and Craster on 13th. Counts of two came from Druridge Pools on 13th, 22nd and 28th-29th, Grindon Lough on 26th-27th, St Mary's Island on 4th, Tynemouth on 29th, and Valley Park (Cramlington). Elsewhere singles were reported from Cramlington (Barns Park and Seven Oaks Park), East Ord, Exhibition Park, Hexham, Tynemouth, the Wansbeck Estuary and Wark (North Tyne).



A Goldcrest at S. Mary's  
30th September by Alan Jack



**Wren** *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Two to five were noted at Druridge Pools on five dates with a peak on 13th (IDR); five were at Jesmond Dene on 22nd and four at Stobhill on 19th.

**Nuthatch** *Sitta europaea*

Counts of four came from Gunnerton, Howick Hall and Jesmond Dene and three were at Wallington Hall. Two were noted at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) and at Humshaugh and singles at three localities in Cramlington (Sevenoaks Park, St Nicholas Churchyard and Valley Park). One found at Woodhorn Church on 26th-27th was apparently only the third record for Newbiggin (H.Galley *per* MJC).

**Treecreeper** *Certhia familiaris*

Up to eight were reported from Gosforth Park NR on 15th (MJC/DJC) and four were noted at Craster on 13th and at Gunnerton on 1st. Counts of three came from Alnmouth on 30th and Gosforth Home Farm on 14th and one to two were at Woodhorn Church from 23rd-27th. In addition singles were reported from Bamburgh, Branton GP, Exhibition Park, Howick, Humshaugh, Wallington Hall and Wark (North Tyne). Perhaps more unusual were singles or the same at Holy Island (Vicar's garden) on 8th and 28th.

**Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris*

A roost at Big Waters rose from 950 on 18th to 1,500 by 24th (GB). A flock of 500 was at Boulmer on 1st, while around 400 were reported from Cocklawburn on 13th, Derwent Reservoir on 9th and Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 13th-18th, the latter falling to 300 by the end of the month. Over 300 were noted at Gloucester Lodge (Blyth) on 12th and notwithstanding any obvious overlap a further 300+ were at St Bartholomew's Church (Newbiggin) on 10th, 170-200 were at nearby Beacon Point on 5th-7th and 150 at Boulmer (Seaton Point) on 1st. Counts of 50-60 came from Little Swinburne and Wark (North Tyne), 25-26 were at Druridge Pools and Ellington and up to 15 at Stobhill (Morpeth).

**Ring Ouzel** *Turdus torquatus*

One was found among a flock of Starlings *Sturnus vulgaris* in fields east of Grindon Lough on 5th (PRM).

**Blackbird** *Turdus merula*

The largest gathering was 13 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 9th (MR). Elsewhere, three were in the College Valley on 7th and one to two at Jesmond Dene and Stobhill.

**Redwing** *Turdus iliacus*

The first arrivals were at Holy Island with two on 22nd, 18 on 24th, 21 on 25th and two on 29th (MJC/ADM). Elsewhere, five were well inland at Hexham on 25th and another at Linden Hall on 30th.

**Song Thrush** *Turdus philomelos*

A light influx occurred on Holy Island, with three to eight from 22nd-24th, rising to 35 on 25th and 24 on 26th (MJC/ADM/ASJ). At Linden Hall there were eight on 20th and 15 on 29th, while six were noted at Cambois on 23rd and one at Stobhill on 19th.

**Mistle Thrush** *Turdus viscivorus*

A large flock of 40 was at Colt Crag Reservoir on 9th (MR), 28 were noted at Howick on the same day and 20 at Wooler Common on 25th. A flock of 12 was at Airy Holm Reservoir on 2nd and ten were at Longframlington Common on 11th, while seven defended Rowan berries near Blanchland on 7th. Five were noted at Gunnerton on 1st and two were at the R.V.I. (Newcastle) on 30th and at Wark (North Tyne) on 24th.

**Spotted Flycatcher** *Muscicapa striata*

Six were at Barrasford and three at Howick on 1st (SW/JAR) and two at Wallington Hall on 11th. Most of the other reports were deemed to be passage birds, including up to two at Linden Hall on four dates from 6th-16th (breeding birds departed four weeks ago). Elsewhere, single migrants were noted at Exhibition Park on 3rd and 17th, Colt Crag Reservoir on 8th, Wooler Common on 11th, Gosforth Home Farm on 14th, St Mary's Island on 23rd, Holy Island on 24th, and Boulmer on 25th and the Wansbeck Estuary on 28th.

**Robin** *Erithacus rubecula*

A light fall towards the end of the month produced 20+ at Boulmer on 22nd (BS) and 18 on Holy Island on 25th, while ten were trapped and ringed at Bamburgh during the month. Up to nine were noted at Stobhill (Morpeth) with a peak on 19th, five were at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) from 20th-30th and four at Howick on 20th and Druridge Pools on 22nd. Three birds disputed winter territory at Gosforth Garden Village on 4th and three were at Jesmond Dene and Ellington on 22nd.

**Pied Flycatcher** *Ficedula hypoleuca*

At Holy Island one to two passage birds were noted on 8th-9th and four on 22nd (MJC/ADM), reducing to one on 23rd. Another was at Craster on 13th.

**Red-breasted Flycatcher** *Ficedula parva*

A first-calendar year bird was at Holy Island (Straight Lonnen) on 22nd (SJM *et al.*).

**Redstart** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

On Holy Island one was noted on 10th and later in the month up to eight almost daily from 22nd-29th (MJC/ADM). Elsewhere during this latter period singles were reported from Bell's Farm (Cresswell), Cambois, Druridge Pools, Tynemouth and Whitley Bay Cemetery. The only inland record was two passage birds at Colt Crag Reservoir on 9th.

**Whinchat** *Saxicola rubetra*

This species was well reported from St Mary's Island with seven to eight on 2nd and 4th and a peak of 13 on 3rd; four were noted here on 7th and 13th, three on 6th, two on 16th and singles on 1st, 11th and 23rd (AJS *et al.*). Elsewhere, four were at East Chevington on 1st, and on Holy Island there were counts of four on 22nd, two on 21st, 26th and 30th and one on 14th. Two were at Cresswell Pond on 26th and at Warkworth Lane on 28th, while singles were reported from Boulmer on 25th and 28th-29th, Colt Crag Reservoir on 17th, Druridge Pools on 1st, Ellington on 23rd, Tynemouth on 25th and Warkworth on 22nd.

**Stonechat** *Saxicola rubicola*

A group of 11 appeared from nowhere at Prestwick Carr on 28th before disappearing over fields (STH/PF). Elsewhere, peak monthly counts were five at Cresswell Pond on 24th, four at Druridge Pools on 1st and at St Mary's Island on 23rd, three at Budle Bay on 16th, Cocklawburn on 10th and at Longframlington Common on 6th. Two at Boulmer (Seaton Point) on 29th were new arrivals, while two were also reported from Hareshaw Moor and Warkworth GC. Singles were noted at Colt Crag Reservoir, Cullernose Point, Holy Island, Little Swinburne and Low Newton.

**Wheatear** *Oenanthe oenanthe*

The peak count from Holy Island was 18 on 3rd (TBr), with two noted here on 7th, 14th and 21st-22nd and one on 29th. Eight were at St Mary's Island and five at Buston Links also on 3rd and four at Howick on 4th. Elsewhere during the first few days of the month, three were found at Seaton Point (Boulmer) on 1st, Hareshaw Moor on 2nd and Newcastle Town Moor on 3rd, while two were at Colt Crag Reservoir and Warkworth GC on 3rd. Apart from two at Berwick Little Beach and Boulmer on 11th and 13th respectively all other reports were of singles, most of which were during the first week, at Arcot Manor, Bamburgh, Berwick, Cullercoats, Derwent Reservoir, Howden, Newbiggin and Rockcliffe. Singles were also at Beal Point on 13th, Boulmer on 15th and 28th, Chibburn Links on 16th and Newbiggin on 19th, 20th and 24th. The final record of the month was well inland at Little Swinburne on 30th.

**Dipper** *Cinclus cinclus*

Four were seen at Furnace Bridge on River Blyth on 22nd (JR). Singles were seen at Jesmond Dene, Bygate, Fulbeck (Morpeth), Warden, Seaton Sluice and College Valley.

**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*

Around 75 were at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin), coming in to food provided, during the month (RS). 50 were at Ellington on 22nd (IDR). 35 at Wark on 7th (PRM). 20 seen at Seaton Point on 1st (CB). 20 plus roosted in a garden holly tree all month at Marden (ASJ). One to five were at two other locations.

**Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus*

70 were in stubble at Seaton Point on 1st (CB). 40 + were counted between the A1 and the Border (Tweed) on (TBr). 40 flew S in four small flocks at Wansbeck Estuary on 28th (GB). 33 flew S at Cambois on 23rd and 32 S at St. Mary's on 4th (STH/ASJ). 15 went S at Cresswell on 24th (STH). Ten were at Cresswell Pond on 7th (DM/LJM). Nine were seen at St. Mary's on 30th (MSH). Six attended garden feeders in Tynemouth on 9th (CB).

**Dunnock** *Prunella modularis*

16 were trapped and ringed at Bamburgh during the month. Four were seen in Jesmond Dene on 15th and at St Mary's on 17th (MJCo/ASJ). Singles were at two other sites.

A Dunnock  
Tynemouth  
Colin Bradshaw  
9th September



**Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava*

Six were present at Low Newton scrape between 8th and 10th (KBDa/Ida/TRD/JD). Three were at Boulmer and Wark on 8th and moving S at Otterburn on 10th (TRD/JD/PRM/MJC). Two were at a further three sites and singles at a further six during the month, with the last this month at Embleton on 16th.

**Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*

Four were at Gosforth Garden village on 7th and at Warden on 8th. Three were in Jesmond Dene on 15th. Two were seen at six other sites, with singles at a further ten places.

**Pied Wagtail** *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

Good numbers were noted this month. 30 to 34 were at the beach and promenade at St Mary's on 16th and 17th. 25 remained by 25th (ASJ/AC). 32 at Derwent Reservoir on 5th (IFo). 27 birds in Holy Island village on 21st and 29 the following day, comprising 13 at Snook and 16 flying towards the Lough at dusk. 22 were counted in the village on 14th (MJC/ADM). 24 were at Boulmer on 20th and at Low Newton on 30th (BS). 17 at Prestwick Carr on 1st, 15 on 8th and 18 on 20th (STH/GB). 17, mainly juveniles, were at Low Cocklaw on 1st (Tbr), 16 in a field near Blanchland on 7th (MJC) and 14 were noted at Berwick Little Beach on 28th (MHu). One to eight were seen at four further sites during the month.

**White Wagtail** *Motacilla alba alba*

Singles were seen at Hadston on 1st and at Felton sewage works on 19th.

**Meadow Pipit** *Anthus pratensis*

Notable southward passage this month, with the peak counts of 600 on 10th and 400 on 16th at Otterburn, decreasing to 80 on 18th. Also 330 at Gosforth Garden Village on the morning of 1st, with 180 here on 7th (MJC). On Holy Island, 285 did likewise at the Snook on 8th (MJC/ADM). A month's total at Marden Estate (Cullercoats) was 210, again southward bound (ASJ). 100 to 150 flew S at a further seven sites during the month, with ten to 75 also S at 16 other sites (CB/ASJ/TB/MJC/ADM/STH *et al.*). 60 paused to feed in St. Mary's Wetland on the morning of 20th (ASJ). One to eight were noted at seven other sites.

**Tree Pipit** *Anthus trivialis*

Two flew S at the Snook (Holy Island) on 22nd, with one in North Dunes on 24th a further two were noted on 25th (MJC/ADM). Also on 25th, a single was at Budle Point and one flew over Gosforth Garden village on 7th (GPK/MJC). Finally, one headed SW from the Vicar's garden (Holy Island) on 26th.

**Rock Pipit** *Anthus petrosus*

Seven were seen at Boulmer on 28th (MJC/DJC). Two were present at Cullercoats, St. Mary's, Hauxley and Newton Point during the month (ASJ/IRD/TRD/JD). Single birds were noted at Tynemouth, Blyth Harbour, Cullernose Point, Spital (Newbiggin) and North Blyth.

**Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelebs*

A flock of 80 was at Crooked Oak (Derwent Reservoir) on 5th (IFo). 15 flew S at Cambois on 23rd (STH). One to six at a further five sites.

**Brambling** *Fringilla montifringilla*

The first of the Autumn was a single male at Whitley Bay cemetery on 24th. One was at Holy Island village the following day (ASJ). Six were found at the Snook (Holy Island) also that day (MJC/ADM). Two remained on the island on 26th.

**Bullfinch** *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Five were seen at Colt Crag on 17th (MR). Four were at Alnmouth on 30th (MJC). One to three were seen at 11 further sites during the month.

**Common Rosefinch** *Carpodacus erythrinus*

A juvenile bird was found at the Snook (Holy Island) on the morning of 8th, then re-found at Chare Ends that afternoon (ADM/MJC/TFa/JFa). It was still present the following day (ADM).

**Greenfinch** *Carduelis chloris*

A maximum of 44 were feeding on rosehips at St. Mary's on several dates (ASJ/MSH). 16 flew S at East Cramlington on 4th (STH). 13 were trapped and ringed at Bamburgh during the month. Three and four were at Colt Crag and College Valley respectively this month.

**Linnet** *Carduelis cannabina*

Around 200 were at Football Hole (Newton) on 20th (TRD/JD); 100 to 130 at Seaton Point on 8th and 9th (BS/MKi). Other counts involved 70 at Birling Carrs and around 60 at High Letham on 3rd, 60 at St. Mary's on 4th (STH/TBr/ASJ), 53 to 56 at the Snook on 20th to 22nd. 52 flew S at East Cramlington on 3rd

**Common Redpoll** *Carduelis flammea*

Two were on Holy Island on 29th, one at the Snook and one over the Vicar's Garden (MJC/ADM).

**Lesser Redpoll** *Carduelis caberet*

40 at Colt Crag on 5th, increased to 200 by 30th (MR). At the coast, three flew S on 3rd at St. Mary's (ASJ). Singles were seen at three other sites.



**Goldfinch** *Carduelis carduelis*

120 at Cresswell on 19th was the largest of several flocks noted this month (TB). 100 were at Embleton Quarry on the same day (JDe). About 90 were at Cocklawburn on 13th (TBr). 50 to 60 were at St. Mary's on several dates (ASJ/MSH). 60 noted on 14th at Holy Island, East Chevington and at Snab Point. 56 were trapped and ringed at Bamburgh during the month. Two to 40 were noted at a further 18 widespread sites.

**Siskin** *Carduelis spinus*

26 were seen at Colt Crag on 23rd (MR), ten at Lemington Hall on 16th (Pha/Aha) and one to six were seen at four other sites.

**Yellowhammer** *Emberiza citronella*

Nine at Craster on 13th was the month's peak count (MJC). Eight were at Linden Hall on 22nd (NFO). Two at Seaton Point on 2nd and at Beanley on 15th.

**Reed Bunting** *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Six at St. Mary's on 4th remained all month and six were also at Snook on 20th (ASJ/PRM). One to three were at six further locations this month.

**Lapland Bunting** *Calcarius lapponicus*

One was found at Holy Island on 7th, with one also seen there on 14th and 15th and two in flight at Straight Lonnen on 29th (RP/IBDa/KDa/MJC). One was at Boulmer on 8th, a female at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 19th and one at Beal on 30th (BS/TD/CH).

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

Three were still at Newton scrape until 25th (TRD/JD / DF).



Bar-headed Geese  
Newton Scrape  
10th September  
Tim Dean

**Muscovy Duck** *Cairina moschata*

Two were at Q E II CP, Ashington on 15th (DM). Often present at this locality.

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

Singles at Hedgeley GP on 11th (TRD/JD) and at Castle Island on 15th (DM).

**Canada Goose x Barnacle Goose** *Branta canadensis* x *Branta leucopsis*

One at Colt Crag Reservoir from 13th to 23rd (MR).

**Birds of Unknown Origin**

No sightings

**LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS**

R.Ahmed, A.Allen, A.H.Banks, T.Blake, J.S.Booth, G.Bowman, C.Bradshaw, T.Brewis (TBr), J.Bucknall (JBu), D.J.Carr, M.J.Carr, B.Chambers (BCh), M.J.Cook (MJCo), A.Curry, T.Daley, I.B. & K.Davison (IBDa / KDa), T.R. & J.Dean, I.R.Douglas, J.Edwards, J.Fairclough, T. & J.Farooqi (TF / JFa), D.F.Forshaw, I.Forsyth (IFo), P.Gilbert, A.Hanmer, P.H.Hanmer, E.Hardman, E.Harrison (EHa), A.S.Hart, C.Hartley, M.Hepple (MHP), 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, J.P.Lumby, P.R.Massey, D.Mckeown, S.V.McCormick, L.J.McDougall, D.Miller (DMi), G.Milward, A.D.Mould, M.Nattrass, A.J.Newson, N.F.Osborne, R.Poyer (RPo), A.J.Richards, J.Richardson, M.Richardson, I.D.Robson, J.A.Roper, C.Saunders (CSa), M.R.Smith, B.Steel, R.Stevens, D.R.Watson, T.Watson, S.Westerberg, 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), Helen Snaith (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).

North Northumberland Bird Club (R Poyer and J Lumby), Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

Thanks to David Sanders of NNBC for providing data.

**Apologies for any accidental omissions**

Proof reading was by Mike Smith.

Mail distribution by Paul Stewart.

Clive Hammond is Data Manager.

Edited by Steve Barrett [NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com](mailto:NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com)**RECORD SUBMISSION**Please email records for the month to [ntbc.records@googlemail.com](mailto:ntbc.records@googlemail.com)

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

Location names and grid references: Please use 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](mailto: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. 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 [ntbcorg@gmail.com](mailto:ntbcorg@gmail.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 [ntbcorg@jobentleyplus.com](mailto:ntbcorg@jobentleyplus.com) or [ntbcorg@gmail.com](mailto:ntbcorg@gmail.com)

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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://www.ntbc.org.uk)

### CRAMLINGTON BIRDS NOTES

Over the past 4 years I have been researching and collating bird records for my local area i.e. the Cramlington area, an area which has a few well-known sites such as Arcot Pond, West Hartford and East Cramlington Pond NWT. We also have at least 6 very keen birders living in the area, with several holding notebooks going back over 40 or more years. My initial aim was to simply create a database for local reference however it is clear that we have several long-running series' of data which I believe deserve a wider audience e.g. breeding water-bird numbers going back over 30 years, annual Grasshopper Warbler surveys during recent years, two warbler surveys (2003 and 2009), wintering Waxwing numbers almost every year and so on. As one might also expect, some of the data sources don't always get submitted to the Northumberland & Tyneside Bird Club (NTBC) database and consequently remain unpublished.

As the work has developed, I have created both a database of records plus a summary 'publication' which I think will have a wider interest. This latter document is nearing completion and runs to 190 pages, is A4 in size, holds many tables, various data, high quality photographs throughout and so on, plus a 12 page overview of the various birdwatching locations within the Cramlington area and a high-quality map.

Given the size and preferred quality of production (with the inclusion of colour photographs) the production costs are quite steep. Consequently, both the NTBC and Natural History Society of Northumbria have very kindly agreed to assist and some 20-25 copies will be provided to both organisations.

As publication is hopefully going to occur before the end of 2019, I am now able to register interest from anyone interested in purchasing a copy directly from myself. I anticipate the final cost to be no more than £12 each plus £3 postage. Once I have a clear view of the overall interest, I shall then agree a one-off print run with the printing house.

If you would like to register your interest please contact me directly.

Please contact me via email or on 07786 213699

Thank you,

Steve Holliday

[steveholliday@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:steveholliday@hotmail.co.uk)



NTBC

## *Northumberland & Tyneside Bird Club*

Registered Charity No. 517641

### **GUIDE TO SUBMITTING BIRD RECORDS**

#### Why submit your records to the NTBC?

Records submitted to the County Recorder are used by the bird club to compile a monthly bulletin which is issued to all members either via email (the usual method) or as a hard paper copy. This shows details of species recorded in the county during the month concerned and also forms part of the basis of the annual bird report for the county, *Birds in Northumbria*. This annual report is the definitive record of historical ornithological information for the area covered by the club which includes Northumberland and the Metropolitan Districts of Newcastle upon Tyne and North Tyneside. The records are permanently archived and, with prior arrangement, they are available for more detailed research. Club members wishing to carry out a detailed study of digital records and/or record cards should contact the County Recorder or any NTBC Committee member for more details.

#### What to report

The bulk of the records concern numbers, distribution, arrivals, departures and movements of our regular resident and visiting species. Quantitative and comparative data on breeding species are among the most important in the ornithological field and contributors are encouraged to submit this information. Records of species of conservation concern are of particular value: please see the leaflet *Birds of Conservation Concern in the United Kingdom* (available free from the RSPB or BTO) for what species at which times of the year. Other records involving the monitoring of vagrants and scarce migrants for the official Northumberland bird list. The appendices at the end of this guide show the main categories of records required. It is also useful to look through a few monthly bulletins to get an indication of what is relevant.

Please note that if you are carrying out fieldwork for surveys, records entered on to survey sheets, etc. are kept separately from bulletin records and will not automatically appear in the bulletin as well. If your fieldwork locates some interesting birds, please also enter these via the club's electronic record sheet or on record cards so they can also be published in the bulletin and annual report.

Remember that in all bird recording, the welfare of the birds and their habitat must be your first consideration. This is especially true when dealing with breeding species.

#### How to submit your records

For most observations, the club asks that observers submit their records either via email on a spreadsheet which is available, with guidance, from the Data Manager or on standard record cards available from the County Recorder. For records of rare or unusual species (see Schedule

A below) special 'Rare Bird' report forms are available (on the club website [www.ntbc.org.uk](http://www.ntbc.org.uk) or from the County Recorder) to provide the supporting evidence in greater detail than is possible on the spreadsheet or cards.

### Spreadsheet or Record Cards?

The preferred method of submitting records is via the club's spreadsheet system as this enables ease of handling and less space used in storage. However, the club recognizes that not everyone has easy access to a personal computer or indeed may not wish to use one and hand-written record cards are just as acceptable.

### Spreadsheet records

Any spreadsheet program compatible with Microsoft Excel (e.g. Microsoft Works, Open Office) may be used. Initially, you should obtain a Template in the standard Club format by sending an e-mail request to the Data Manager at [NTBC.Records@googlemail.com](mailto:NTBC.Records@googlemail.com) (please specify which program/version you will be using if not a recent version of Excel). The template spreadsheet and full guidance notes will then be emailed to you

Completed spreadsheets should be emailed as file attachments to [NTBC.Records@googlemail.com](mailto:NTBC.Records@googlemail.com) to arrive before (or at the latest on) the 8th of the month following that in which the records were collected. There is no requirement, as there is with Record Cards, to order records on the spreadsheet in BOU taxonomic sequence.

### Record Cards

When sending in your observations on record cards please follow the guidelines set out below :

1. Please use only the club cards, or other cards of identical size (149mm x 102mm). Cards of any other size (even if just  $\frac{1}{2}$ mm larger) or scraps of paper do not file easily together with the standard cards and have to be trimmed or laboriously re-written prior to archiving. Also, please do not fold, tear or cut the cards nor use staples, clips or sticky labels, as these all cause problems in the permanent files.
2. Please write legibly and be as precise and concise as possible.
3. Please use only one card per species per month. Sightings of the same species on different dates in a month and/or different localities in Northumberland can be entered on the same card. Please also use separate cards for distinct subspecies, e.g. European and Greenland White-fronted Geese, Pied and White Wagtails, etc.
4. **SPECIES** : Please use the English names that appear in Monthly Bulletins, *Birds in Northumbria* or the County List (available on the web site at [www.ntbc.org.uk](http://www.ntbc.org.uk)).

**5. YEAR :** Enter the appropriate year

**6. OBSERVER(S) :** Write the observer's name(s) with **full initials and surname(s)**. If you only put initials we might know who you are but anyone analyzing the records in 20 years or 200 years may not.

**7. DATE :** Enter date(s) of sightings - day and month - in the relevant box and columns.

**8. NUMBER (AGE & SEX) :** Enter the number of birds seen and, if known or relevant, the age and sex.

**9. LOCATION :** Enter the place of the sighting. Please remember some place names are duplicated in the county and these need extra information to indicate the correct location e.g. Fenham (Lindisfarne); Fenham (Newcastle).

**10. GRID REF :** It is extremely helpful if a grid reference is also entered for the location. Little-known places especially should also be accompanied by reference to the nearest well-known place (e.g. Willimontswick 2km SW of Bardon Mill) and/or a grid reference (e.g. Prendwick NU0012) in the box provided. With surveys and other counts over large areas, the area covered should be indicated (e.g. five pairs of Dipper on 10km of the Wansbeck from NZ119851 to NZ201858; seven pairs of Yellowhammer on 45ha of farmland, etc.). Birds seen from boats offshore should be marked with the latitude, longitude and distance offshore (by GPS or otherwise normally available from the ship's officers). Nowadays many observers are familiar with **TETRAD** identifiers and these can be used as an alternative to grid references. A list of **LOCALITY/TETRAD** identifiers showing many birding locations in the county is available on the web site at [www.ntbc.org.uk](http://www.ntbc.org.uk).

**11. NOTES & COMMENTS :** Use this column to add any further relevant details such as behaviour, direction of flight of seabirds, local significance, etc.

**12.** For those species listed in Schedule B below, which require a brief description of the identification characteristics seen, the blank reverse side of the card can be utilized to provide your notes. Or alternatively you can provide these on a separate Rare Bird Report form.

**13.** For those rare species and sub species that require a full description (see Schedule A below) you should also send a completed Rare Bird Report form to the County recorder as soon as possible after the sighting.

**14.** Duplicate and un-necessary record cards waste resources and clog up the files. Small numbers of common birds at predictable places and times (e.g. two Goldeneye at Holywell Pond in January) can use up many cards, unless the observation is of interest in some other way. However, this is not the case if you use the spreadsheet method to submit records as these are all currently held electronically.

If you go out birding in a group, save on resources by ensuring that just one person sends in the details.

Once you have written your cards please remember to:

**15.** Sort them into new BOU order as in shown the bulletins (from January 2019), Birds in



Northumbria (from BiN 2018 onwards) and the County Check List (on the web site at [www.ntbc.org.uk](http://www.ntbc.org.uk).)

16. Send them to the County Recorder to arrive before (or at the latest on) the 8th of the following month. Records received after this date may not appear in the bulletin but may be included in the annual report.

17. Please seal your envelope well and, very important, use enough stamps to cover the postage. Supplies of record cards are available from the County Recorder if you send a suitably-sized, stamped, self-addressed envelope (again please ensure you have supplied sufficient postage stamps). Cards are also available at club meetings.

### **Confidential Records**

Occasionally contributors may see a species in a locality that they feel should be kept confidential. These records may be submitted to the County Recorder in confidence by writing **Confidential** or **Confidential locality** on top of the card or within the Comments section of the spreadsheet. If marked **Confidential** the record will not appear in the bulletin or annual report. If marked **Confidential locality** it will be published but without precise reference to the site, e.g. 'in the north of the county'. Please do, however, provide full details of the site so that records from other observers not so annotated can be similarly treated.

Records typically treated in this manner include breeding records of those species at particular risk from illegal persecution (e.g. Hen Harrier, Peregrine Falcon, Long-eared Owl, Raven). The County Recorder may choose to not publish any sensitive record. Note that confidential records may need to be discussed by the County Records Committee before the sighting can be accepted but observers can request that site names are withheld from the CRC or given vaguely by the County Recorder in such meetings.

### **Rare and Unusual Species**

Sightings of rare or unusual species require supporting evidence, usually in the form of a detailed description on special forms available from the club web site ([www.ntbc.org.uk](http://www.ntbc.org.uk)) or the County Recorder. The ongoing taxonomic and genetic debates over a number of species and subspecies mean that detailed field notes are vitally important in establishing records for both immediate publication and possible re-interpretation in the future. Taking field notes makes observations more rigorous and critical. Photographs and/or sound recordings can make the acceptance of such records easier.

In the Appendices below, Schedule A gives a list of species for which full written descriptions (preferably on the standard club Rare Bird Report Form) are required and Schedule B those for which briefer notes are needed either on a Rare Bird Report Form or on the reverse side of the standard record cards if that will suffice. The lists in these schedules are not exhaustive and notes may be requested on any record by the County Records Committee, for example a species reported out of season or at an unusual locality. Please note that for brief notes species,

identification details that prove the identification beyond reasonable doubt are still required.

### The County Records Committee

The County Records Committee comprises the County Recorder, who acts as Chairman, and four others elected by the committee of the Northumberland & Tyneside Bird Club. They are chosen not only for their ornithological expertise but also, importantly, for their knowledge of the county and its birds.

All records (not just rarities) are considered by the CRC during the course of about five meetings during the year. Where full details have been submitted, the first observer named on a particular report will be notified of the committee's decision on the record. To facilitate communication between the observer and the recorder, please ensure your address (and preferably email address) is given with the record.

The County Recorder will forward details of any record accepted as proven by the CRC and which requires consideration by the British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC) directly to that committee. Decisions reached by the BBRC are published in *British Birds* and the County Recorder will also notify the first observer of their decision as it becomes available.

Generally non-acceptance of a record, by either the county or the national committee, is not a reflection of an observer's ability or integrity. By far the commonest reason for non-acceptance is insufficient details being available for the committee to accept the identification as 100% proven. In only a few cases is it felt that a genuine mistake may have been made in the identification.

### **and finally, ...**

We hope that these notes will be of use to both our newer contributors and long-standing contributors alike and may help to enhance the already high standard of bird recording in the county. If you are not already a contributor, why not? Bird recording can be a very enjoyable and satisfying part of your hobby.

## APPENDICES

### 1. Schedule A - full description required

All species and sub-species considered by the BBRC

Any species or sub-species removed from the BBRC list after publication of these notes

Any species or sub-species not previously recorded in the County

Any record for which the CRC have asked for full details

The following :-

American Wigeon	Crane	Woodlark
Ferruginous Duck	Stone-curlew	Short-toed Lark
Ring-necked Duck	Black-winged Stilt	Red-rumped Swallow
Lesser Scaup	American Golden Plover	Cetti's Warbler
Surf Scoter	Kentish Plover	Dusky Warbler
White-billed Diver	Temminck's Stint	Radde's Warbler
Wilson's Petrel	White-rumped Sandpiper	Greenish Warbler
Cory's Shearwater	Buff-breasted Sandpiper	Blyth's Reed Warbler
Great Shearwater	Pectoral Sandpiper	Marsh Warbler
Balearic Shearwater	Red-necked Phalarope	Melodious Warbler
White Stork	Grey Phalarope	Rose-coloured Starling
Glossy Ibis	Sabine's Gull	Nightingale
Night-heron	Ring-billed Gull	Red-flanked Bluetail
Cattle Egret	Caspian Gull	Citrine Wagtail
Purple Heron	Yellow-legged Gull (all races)	Richard's Pipit
Great White Egret	White-winged Black Tern	Olive-backed Pipit
Honey-buzzard	Alpine Swift	Red-throated Pipit
Montagu's Harrier	Bee-eater	Water Pipit
Black Kite	Red-footed Falcon	Parrot Crossbill
White-tailed Eagle	Hobby	Serin
Rough-legged Buzzard	Woodchat Shrike	Ortolan Bunting
Corncrake	Chough	Little Bunting
Spotted Crake	Crested Tit	



## 2. Schedule B – brief description required

Snow Goose	Dotterel	Yellow-browed Warbler
Taiga Bean Goose	Long-tailed Skua (juvs only)	(inland & Spring birds only)
Ruddy Shelduck	Black Guillemot (away from	Icterine Warbler
Green-winged Teal	Farne Islands & Holy Island)	Bluethroat (autumn only)
Leach's Petrel	Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	Red-breasted Flycatcher
Golden Eagle	Golden Oriole	Common Rosefinch
Goshawk (coastal records only)	Pallas's Warbler (inland & Spring birds only)	Corn Bunting

## 3. Subspecies – notes as appropriate to confirm identification

<b>Kumlien's Gull</b> <i>L. g. kumlieni</i>	<b>Chiffchaff</b> - other than <i>P. c. collybita</i>	<b>Yellow Wagtail</b> other than <i>M. f. flava</i> (Blue-headed Wagtail) & <i>M. f. flavissima</i> ('British' Yellow Wagtail)
<b>Herring Gull</b> - other than <i>L. a. argentatus</i> & <i>L. a. argentatus</i>	<b>'Northern' Willow Warbler</b> <i>P. t. acredula</i>	
<b>Lesser Black-backed Gull</b> <i>L. f. intermedius</i> & <i>L. f. fuscus</i>	<b>Lesser Whitethroat</b> - all races except <i>S. c. curruca</i>	<b>White Wagtail</b> - <i>M. a. alba</i> (autumn & winter only)
<b>Jackdaw</b> - other than <i>C. m. spermologus</i> & <i>C. m. monedula</i>	<b>'White-spotted' Bluethroat</b> <i>L. s. cyaneola</i>	<b>'Northern' Bullfinch</b> <i>P. p. pyrrhula</i>
<b>'Northern' Great Spotted Woodpecker</b> <i>D. m. major</i>	<b>'Black-bellied' Dipper</b> <i>C. c. cinclus</i>	

## 4. **Hybrids** Any bird suspected of being a hybrid between two different species

These lists are not meant to be exhaustive and the County Recorder may ask for notes on any species at any time.

## 5. All other species

Please send in records as follows: -

Breeding studies and totals, population counts and large flocks.

Migration totals and observations, including early and late dates of summer, passage and winter visitors (please include brief descriptions for any well outside of normal times).

Records of species in abnormal areas or habitat, including local site rarities and inland records of coastal species (please include any known relevant information e.g. 'only the second record in 20 years at this site', and brief descriptions for species very rare inland, e.g. Common Eider, Purple Sandpiper, Razorbill, etc.).

Unusual behaviour or plumages.

Significant ringing recoveries.

Anything else interesting or unusual.

September 2019

# Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2019 No 10

MONTHLY SUMMARY October 2019

3rd December



## CONTENTS

A photographic supplement this month. Sorry, only sent electronically.

Inland WeBS organiser needed.

Northumberland Locality and Tetrad List update.

## CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Bewick's Swan	Unusual October sightings of one at Coquet Estuary and two at Cresswell.
Black Scoter	Returning drake back at Cheswick/Goswick from 23rd.
Smew	Redhead seen flying N offshore at St Mary's and Seaton Sluice.
Quail	Late record of one at St Mary's on 5th.
Sooty Shearwater	Few records with one to two past St Mary's on 1st and 29th.
Bittern	One at Cresswell on 28th.
Great White Egret	Singles N past Old Hartley on 22nd and at Prestwick Carr last month until 10th.
Little Egret	Peak count of 23 at Lindisfarne on 13th and 18th.
Stone-curlew	Excellent find of one on north side of Budle Bay on 29th.
Purple Sandpiper	Peak count at Bamburgh of 186 on 27th.
Little Stint	One at Cresswell Pond from 19th to 28th. Only sighting all month.
Long-billed Dowitcher	Another excellent find at Cresswell from 26th.
Spotted Redshank	One remained at Low Newton scrape on 1st. Only sighting all month.
Little Gull	Large influx with 1,000 plus offshore on 13th between Newbiggin and St Mary's.
Little Tern	Second latest record in county with one on 16th at Boulmer.
American Black Tern	First record for county with one briefly at St Mary's wetland on 7th.
Long-tailed Skua	At least eight individuals noted with five past Seaton Sluice on 1st.
Little Auk	Influx late month past many coastal sites.
Black Guillemot	Lingering individual at Bamburgh and Ross between 9th and 22nd.
Turtle Dove	Popular late record of one at St Mary's on 5th.
Hoopoe	Another popular sighting at Amble links between 1st and 8th.
Great Grey Shrike	One at Prestwick Carr on 5th and on Holy Island from 6th until 15th.
Waxwing	Up to six at Howick on 23rd and 24th.
Bearded Tit	Up to three being seen at East Chevington and one at Cresswell Pond on 28th.
Shorelark	Singles at Goswick on 13th and at Boulmer from 19th to 21st.
Cetti's Warbler	Sightings at East Chevington and Holy Island.
Siberian Chiffchaff	Singles on seven dates on Holy Island.
Greenish Warbler	Still in Vicar's garden on Holy Island until 10th. Latest county record.
Barred Warbler	Several records with up to 2 at St Mary's and singles on Holy Island and Newbiggin.
Siberian Lesser Whitethroat	Single <i>blythi</i> on Holy Island from 15th to 31st.
Rose-coloured Starling	Adult in a Bedlington garden from 18th.
Spotted Flycatcher	One in Vicar's garden on Holy Island from 29th. Latest county record since 1984.
Richard's Pipit	One heard at St Mary's on 15th.
Olive-backed Pipit	Superb find on Holy Island on 7th. First away from Farne Islands since 2009.
Water Pipit	One at Seaton Pt, Boulmer from 28th.
Hawfinch	One on Holy Island on 7th.
Little Bunting	Another popular sighting with one at St Mary's on 16th.

A Hoopoe at Amble

5th October

by Duncan Watson





## 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 is in September. See you there.

## Thursday 12th December

### Hawks and Owl Trust - Urban Peregrines

## FIELD TRIPS

Contact Steve Anderson [seaswan@btinternet.com](mailto:seaswan@btinternet.com)

## CLASSIFIED LIST

### Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

Pale-bellied *hrota* race birds involved 185 at Budle Bay on 12th (CGK/GPK), 86 N at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), 48 N at Newbiggin on 29th (GB/TF/DLo), and six to eight N at Boulmer, East Chevington and Snab Point. Dark-bellied *bernicla* race birds involved 147 at Holy Island on 14th (DF), 19 N at Seaton Sluice (SSWT), 15 at Budle Bay on 12th (CGK/GPK), two to four N at Hauxley, Newbiggin and Stag Rocks on single dates, and one at Low Newton. Un-raced birds involved 3,900 at Fenham Flats on 27th (ASJ), 3,000 at Holy Island on 13th (MJC), 1,260 at Beal Point-Longbridge End on 4th (MJC), 13 N at Snab Point (JR) and five off Tynemouth.

### Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

140 flew N at West Ord on 18th (MHu), 40 N at Cramlington on 12th (LJM) and eight N at Seaton Sluice between 2nd-10th (SSWT), while 27 flew S at Ellington on 19th (TB). Peak counts were 345 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 2nd (MR), 315 at Grindon Lough on 17th (PRM), 297 at QEII CP Lake on 12th (CDH), 244 at the Aln Estuary on 16th (MKi), 104-165 at Big Waters (GB) and Killingworth Lake (LJM), 97 at the Tweed Estuary (TBr/MMcM) and 42 at Budle Bay. One to eight were also at Castle Island, Linton Ponds, Newcastle Exhibition Park and Plenmeller Common.

### Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

A total of 257 flew N at Seaton Sluice between 1st-3rd (SSWT), 75 flew N at Bamburgh on 8th and 14th (BRS), 57 N at St Mary's between 1st-5th (JBU/AC/IJ) and 14-27 N at Annstead, Boulmer and Low Newton on 1st. A total of 264 flew S at Cocklawburn on 8th (MHu) and 19 flew S at East Chevington between 3rd-5th. Numbers at Budle Bay varied from 1,450 on 1st (DF), 2,600 at an evening roost on 8th (DF/CGK/GPK), about 4,000 on 9th (DF) and 1,600-1,900 between 23rd-29th (DF). Nearby (and possibly involving some overlap), 1,200 were at Ross on 17th (MJC), 1,000 at Elwick on 18th (BS), and 600 at Goswick-Longbridge End on 23rd (MJC). Elsewhere, 87 were at Longhoughton Steel on 2nd (MKi) and one to ten at Cresswell Pond, Low Newton scrape and QEII CP Lake, and the Tweed Estuary.

### Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Three flew S at Seaton Sluice on 27th (SSWT). The largest counts involved 800 at Derwent Reservoir on 17th (IFo), 385 at Big Waters on 13th (GB) and 284 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 16th (MR). Groups of 19-40 were at Grindon Lough, QEII CP Lake and the Tweed Estuary, and two to three at Castle Island and Plenmeller Common.

### Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

A total of about 4,500 was noted over Low Cocklaw (Berwick) during the month (TBr), and about 2,150 flew S at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) between 12th-30th (BSt). The monthly total of 403 N and 1,890 S at Seaton Sluice, included 550 S on 12th and 40 N and 1,104 S between 24th-28th (SSWT). Strong movement on 23rd included a total of about 4,000 S at Belford (DF) and about 2,000 S at Low Newton (TRD/JD), 2,860 flew W at Cocklawburn on 24th (MHu), about 1,600 flew 'in off' the sea at East Ord during 22nd (MHu), 1,300 S at Longhoughton Low Steads (BS) and 1,000 N at Ellington on 14th (TB), and 1,000 S at Belford on 22nd (DF). Totals of 220-895 moved S at Bamburgh, Belford, Berwick upon Tweed, Cramlington, Holy Island, Low Newton, Marden Quarry, Newbiggin, Ross, St Mary's Island, Tynemouth and Whitley Bay between 5th-28th. Flocks of 220-800 flew N at Belford, East Ord, Ord Moor, Spittal (Berwick), Stag Rocks and West Ord between 5th-28th, 120 flew W at Plessey Woods on 8th, and flocks of 25-90 flew over, in various directions, Airy Holm and Colt Crag Reservoirs, Kingston Park, Lesbury, Monkseaton, Ross and West Hartford. A group of about ten was heard flying over Rothbury at 22.00h on 9th (TRD/JD).

Large gatherings involved peaks of 6,800 at Holy Island (4,000 at the Heugh and 2,800 arriving at the Snook from the NW) on 13th (MJC), 5,200 arriving 'in off' the sea at Beal Point-Longbridge End on 20th (MJC), 70 at Budle Bay on 3rd increasing to 3,200 by 23rd (DF), about 3,000 at Widdrington Moor Lake on 2nd (ASJ), 2,500 at Bamburgh on 11th (JPL), 2,500 at Doddington on 23rd (JD), 2,000 at Linton on 8th (TB), and 1,500 at New Moor and Widdrington (TB), while 150-293 were at Dunstanburgh, Fenton (Wooler) and St Mary's. One to 24 were also at Branton GP and Grindon Lough. A leucistic bird was at Beal on 23rd (DF).

### Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

63 were at QEII CP Lake on 12th (CDH), 46 were on the River Tyne at Howdon on 2nd (CB), 41 at Killingworth Lake on 22nd (LJM), 20-22 at Bolam Lake and Bothal Pond, and counts of ten to 11 at the Coquet, Tweed and Wansbeck Estuaries, and Linton Ponds. Two to eight were also at Castle Island, Druridge, Howick Hall, Jesmond Dene and Shield on the Wall and Woodhorn Flashes.

### Bewick's Swan *Cygnus columbianus*

One amongst a flock of 26 Mute Swans at the Coquet Estuary on 12th was seen to fly off S (RPo). Two were at Cresswell on 28th (DLo).

**Whooper Swan** *Cygnus cygnus*

One at East Chevington on 3rd (MN) was followed by 35 at Beal Point-Longbridge End on 4th (MJC) and two at Druridge on 11th (MSH). A party of 32 was noted flying S at Newbiggin (GB/AP) and St Mary's on 12th (JBU/ASJ), and 38 flew S at the latter site on 13th (ASJ), when 25 were at East Holywell (ASJ). The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 131 S (a record October count) and included 68 S on 12th-13th and 63 S between 25th-28th (SSWT). Other totals included 113 S at Budle Bay between 21st-26th (CGK/GPK), 93, in several flocks, S at Boulmer on the evening of 26th (BS) with a further 31 S there on 27th (BS), 65 S at Newbiggin between 14th-26th (AP), 35 S at Ellington on 27th-28th (TB), and 33 'in off' the sea at East Ord on 21st (MHu). Two to nine also flew S at Alnwick, Beal, Ross, Spittal Bay and Tynemouth between 12th-28th, eight to nine N at Buston Links, Ellington and Newbiggin between 20th-28th, and three W at Derwent Reservoir on 14th (IFo).

A group of 120 were in a stubble field at Lucker on 26th (TF/JFa) with 48-53 (up to ten juveniles) on 27th-28th (MSH/ASJ), 41 were noted between Bell's Pond and Druridge 'corner' on 28th (CB), 36 at Hauxley Reserve on 26th (MN), and 11-20 were at Cresswell Pond, Doddington, Holy Island, Howick Hall and between 21st-26th, while three to nine were at Big Waters, Branton GP, Budle Bay, Cheswick, Derwent Reservoir, Grindon Lough, Low Newton and Ross between 13th-28th.



Whoopers at Druridge Pools  
by Tim Dean on 28th October

**Shelduck** *Tadorna tadorna*

At Seaton Sluice, 15 flew N and four S during the month, including ten N on 6th (SSWT), and a total of seven flew N at Newbiggin on 29th-30th (GB). Good numbers at Budle Bay peaked at 583 on 18th (DF), 55 were at Beal on 19th (ASJ), and four at the Blyth Estuary (LJM).

**Shoveler** *Spatula clypeata*

At Newbiggin, a flock of seven landed off Church Point before continuing N on 20th (GB) and two flew N there on 29th (TF), and five moved N at Seaton Sluice on 29th (SSWT). Budle Bay held good numbers all month, with peaks of 60 on 16th and 24th (DF), and 57 on 17th (CGK/GPK). Elsewhere, 11 were at Prestwick Carr on 8th (LJM), four to six at Arcot and Linton Ponds, Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough, Killingworth Lake and Monks' House Pool, and two at Low Newton scrape.

**Gadwall** *Mareca strepera*

Peak counts were 105 at Linton Ponds on 12th (CDH), 62 at Big Waters on 13th (GB), 39 at St Mary's Wetland on 16th-17th (AC/MSH), 25 at Lynemouth Flash on 6th (IRD), ten to 14 at Bothal Pond, Caistron, Killingworth Lake and Marden Quarry, and three to seven at Arcot Pond, Branton GP, Castle Island, Marden Quarry and Newton Pool.

**Wigeon** *Mareca penelope*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 2,241 N and 41 S, including 1,315 N on 4th and 638 N and five S on 29th-30th (SSWT), 275 flew N at Ross on 28th (MJC), 270 N at Newbiggin on 29th-30th (GB/TF/STH), 136 N at Snab Point on 21st (JR), 100 S then N at Stag Rocks on 30th (DF), and 16-35 N at Annstead, Cullercoats and Snab Point. Numbers at the Fenham Flats section of Lindisfarne NNR rose from 8,000 on 13th (MJC) to 10,000 by 15th (BS), 14,000 by 18th (BS), and 19,000 (no date given; IK). The latter count was the highest there for 15 years (IK). Budle Bay held 3,000 on 11th and included a leucistic individual (CGK/GPK). Other peak site counts were 318 at Derwent Reservoir on 31st (IFo), 209 at Cresswell Pond on 21st (CDH), 190 at Grindon Lough on 17th (PRM), and 110 at the Coquet Estuary on 22nd (CDH), and 57-60 at Colt Crag Reservoir and off Ross. Counts of 15-27 came from Bothal and Linton Ponds, Druridge Pools and Maiden's Hall Lake. Smaller numbers were at several further sites and included two at Marden Quarry on 5th (KWY).

**Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*

The monthly total of 68 N and six S at Seaton Sluice included 52 N and two S between 28th-30th (SSWT), 15 moved N at Snab Point on 21st (JR), 14 N at Stag Rocks on 28th (DF), and seven to ten N at Annstead and Newbiggin on several dates. A count of 265 at Derwent Reservoir on 14th (IFo) was by far the largest reported concentration. Other peak counts were 92 at Calot Shad (The Tweed Estuary) on 26th (MHu), 82 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 4th (MR), 79 at Castle Island on 13th (DM/PJH), 32-49 at Big Waters (GB), Bothal Pond (TD), Grindon Lough (PRM), Marden Quarry (KWY), and West Ord (MHu), and ten to 27 at Airy Holm Reservoir, Arcot, Burradon and Newsham Ponds, Lynemouth Flash, Ross and Woodhorn Flashes. A pair were copulating at Shield on the Wall on 15th (MRS).

**Pintail** *Anas acuta*

Four flew N and four S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), and one flew W at Howdon on 5th (CB). Six were at Budle Bay on 10th (CGK/GPK) and one at Colt Crag Reservoir on 4th (MR).

**Teal** *Anas crecca*

The Seaton Sluice monthly total of 634 N and 126 S included 257 N and 24 S on 4th (SSWT), 90+ moved N at Newbiggin on 29th-30th (GB/JR), 55 flew N at Snab Point on 21st (JR), a total of 53 N at Stag Rocks on 6th and 30th (DF), and 12 N at Cullercoats. Numbers at Budle Bay peaked at 700 on 11th (CGK/GPK), 345 were at Derwent Reservoir on 15th (IFo), 290 at Cresswell Pond on 10th (CH), 222-230 at Colt Crag Reservoir (MR) and Grindon Lough (PRM), 127 at Druridge Pools, and 50-62 at Castle Island, Low Cocklaw and St Mary's Wetland. Groups of 27-47 were at the Aln Estuary, Arcot, Bothal and Middle Ord Ponds, Lynemouth Flash and Plenmeller Common.

**Pochard** *Aythya ferina*

One flew N at Seaton Sluice on 4th (SSWT). Peak counts were 22 at Killingworth Lake on 26th (GB), 19 at Greenlee Lough on 15th (MRS), 13 at Widdrington Moor Lake on 7th (TF), eight at Grindon Lough on 15th (MRS), three at Bothal and Linton Ponds and Widdrington Moor Lake, and one to two at Branton GP, Derwent Reservoir and Marden Quarry.

**Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula*

On 29th, 12 flew N at Newbiggin (GB/TF) and eight flew N at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). Highest counts were 64 at QEII CP Lake on 12th (CDH), 55 at Swallow Pond on 30th (GPK), 35 at Castle Island on 13th (DM/PJH), 32 at Hallington Reservoir on 14th (MR), 22-29 at Grindon Lough and Killingworth Lake, and seven to ten at Bothal Pond, Derwent Reservoir and Newcastle Exhibition Park. One to three were at Cocklawburn Pond, Greenlee Lough and Jesmond Dene.

**Scaup** *Aythya marila*

At Seaton Sluice, six flew N on 1st and three S on 13th (SSWT), and two moved N at Newbiggin on 29th (GB). Eight were at Cresswell Pond on 28th (CB), and one to six there on 6th and regularly between 8th-30th (CDH/MKi/DLo/ADM<sub>c</sub> *et al.*). Three were off Berwick Little Beach on 13th (TRD/JD) and Newbiggin on 1st (ADM<sub>c</sub>), and singles (juvenile) off Druridge on 28th (TRD/JD) and East Chevington (drake) on 15th (TRD/JD).

**Eider** *Somateria mollissima*

The Seaton Sluice monthly total was 236 N and 34 S, including 169 N and ten S between 29th-31st (SSWT), a total of 86 N at Stag Rocks in the month (DF), and 70+ N and one S at Newbiggin on 30th (GB/STH) when 58 moved N at Annstead (DF). Peak counts offshore were 96 at Ross on 22nd (MJC), 82 between Goswick-Longbridge End on 23rd (MJC), 73 at Holy Island north shore on 24th (MJC), 67 at the Blyth Estuary on 17th (LJM) and ten to 23 at Seaton Sluice and Spittal Bay.

**Velvet Scoter** *Melanitta fusca*

Monthly totals involved 32 N and 11 S at Seaton Sluice, including 17 N and nine S between 29th-31st (SSWT), 24 at St Mary's, including 18 N (in three hours) on 29th (JBu), 19+ N and four S at Newbiggin (GB/TF/MH/ADM<sub>c</sub> *et al.*), and two to seven N at Berwick pier (MHu), Cullercoats (CB), Hadston (MH/AA), Holy Island (BS) and Snab Point (MH/AA/JR). Four flew S at Cullercoats on 1st (ASJ). 16 were off Cocklawburn on 11th (CH), six at nearby Cheswick on 26th (TF/JFa), three between Goswick-Longbridge End on 23rd (MJC) and one off Druridge on 28th (TRD/JD).

**Common Scoter** *Melanitta nigra*

At Seaton Sluice, 1,939 flew N and 136 S during the month, including 1,001 N and nine S on 29th (SSWT), 738+ N at Newbiggin between 29th-31st (GB/TF/STH), 226 N at 21st and 29th (JR), 100 N at East Chevington on 15th (TRD/JD), 80 N at Boulmer on 29th (TRD/JD), 15-43 N at Annstead, Stag Rocks and St Mary's and 18 S at Spittal Bay on 7th (MHu). Peak counts were 440 at Cocklawburn on 11th (CH), 358 at nearby Goswick-Longbridge End on 23rd (MJC), 109 off Ross on 14th (MJC) and 35-43 at Alnmouth and Druridge Bays. One to three were also at Low Newton and Stag Rocks. Ten were on Cresswell Pond on 1st (MKi) and two there on 31st (GB/AIB), and one was on Druridge Pools on 9th (NFO).

**Black Scoter** *Melanitta americana*

The returning adult drake was noted between Goswick-Longbridge End on 23rd (MJC) and at nearby Cheswick on 26th (TF/JFa).

**Long-tailed Duck** *Clangula hyemalis*

Single drakes flew S at Hauxley on 5th (DRW) and off Cocklawburn on 11th (CH), one was at Fenham Flats on 18th (BS), and one to three N at Annstead Point (GPK), Newbiggin (GB/TF) and Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay; IJ) on 20th. Reports increased thereafter. The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 29 N, including 18 N on 29th (SSWT). Also on 29th, 17 flew N at Newbiggin (GB/TF), 15 N at St Mary's (JBu) and five N at Boulmer (TRD/JD) and Snab Point (AJ).



On 30th, 12 flew N at Snab Point (AJ), and six+ N at Newbiggin (GB/AJ). 12 were off Ross on 28th (MJC), seven were at Longhoughton on 28th (IBDa/KDa), four between Spittal-Cocklawburn on 24th (TBr), and one at Boulmer on 26th (BS). Four were at Cresswell Pond on 25th-26th and one to three there between 21st-30th (ADM*c et al.*).

#### **Goldeneye** *Bucephala clangula*

One to four were at Branton GP, Colt Crag and Hallington Reservoirs, East Chevington, Ross, Spital (Newbiggin), Stag Rocks and West Ord between 2nd-15th. Numbers increased from 20th when six flew N at Berwick pier (MHu), and on 21st, 19 were at Derwent Reservoir (IFo) six to eight at New Water Haugh (MHu) and West Ord (MHu), and five to nine flew N at Snab Point (JR) and Stag Rocks (DF). The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 165 N and six S, including 119 N on 21st (SSWT), and a total of 74+ flew N at Newbiggin between 29th-31st (GB/TF/STH). Peak site counts were 45 at Killingworth Lake on 28th (TRD/JD), 30 at Fenham Flats on 31st (BS), 23 at Stag Rocks on 29th (DF), 11-14 at Bolam Lake (LJM), Colt Crag Reservoir (MR) and Derwent Reservoir (IFo) on 29th, and five to nine at Airy Holm Reservoir, Arcot Pond, Cresswell Pond and Druridge Pools, and three at Widdrington Moor Lake.

#### **Smew** *Mergellus albellus*

An interesting sea-watching record involved a 'redhead' travelling N with three Goldeneye at St Mary's and Seaton Sluice on 29th (SSWT).

#### **Goosander** *Mergus merganser*

At Seaton Sluice, 40 flew N and 14 S during the month (a record for October; SSWT), a total of three flew N and ten S on 20th and 30th (GB), and three N at Snab Point (JR). There were no large reported gatherings, peak counts being six at Derwent Reservoir on 26th (IFo), five at the Blyth Estuary on 17th (LJM), five at Marden Quarry on 27th (KWY), and three to four at/over Beal, Boulmer, Holy Island, Jesmond Dene, River Breamish and the Tweed Estuary. One to two were at/over Airy Holm Reservoir, Berwick Little Beach, Castle Island, Cresswell Pond, Gosforth Garden Village, Newcastle Exhibition Park and Town Moor, Newton Point, Tyne Green and the Wansbeck Estuary.

#### **Red-breasted Merganser** *Mergus serrator*

A total of 13 flew N and seven S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), seven moved N at Cullercoats on 20th (CB), and four N at Newbiggin between 20th-29th (GB). Peak counts were 25 off Ross on 28th (TRD/JD), 18 at Fenham Flats on 31st (BS), ten at Holy Island on 26th (ADM), seven off Druridge on 28th (TRD/JD), and four at Cocklawburn (MHu). One to two were also at the Blyth Estuary, Cresswell Pond, Dunstanburgh and Low Newton.

#### **Black Grouse** *Tetrao tetrix*

A single female at Plenmeller Common on 2nd was the only record (PRM).

#### **Red Grouse** *Lagopus lagopus*

13 were at Plenmeller Common on 2nd, with two also there on 25th (PRM) .

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

At least 50 were in a field west of the farm at Druridge Lane on 24th (TB). One to six were at Blakehopeburnhaugh (Kielder Forest), Easington Grange and Wooler.

#### **Grey Partridge** *Perdix perdix*

Three coveys totalling 18 birds were at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 27th (TBr), 17 were at BealPoint/LongbridgeEnd on 4th (MJC), two coveys totalled 13 individuals between Goswick-Longbridge End on 23rd (MJC), 11 were at St.Mary's Island and ten at Lynemouth Flash. One to nine were at Bell's Farm Pond, Craster, Druridge Bay, Heddon, Hemscott Hill, Howick Bay, Longland's School (Ord), Ord Moor (Berwick), Spital (Newbiggin) and West Sleekburn.

#### **Quail** *Coturnix coturnix*

One was flushed from a stubble field west of the main footpath at St. Mary's on 5th (JBu/AC/JM).

#### **Pheasant** *Phasianus colchicus*

A grand total of 25 were at Lynemouth Flash on 24th (TB), whilst six males and a female were at Druridge Pools on 21st and a single was at Castle Island (R Wansbeck).

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

The monthly total passing Seaton Sluice was 315 (187N – exactly the same total as September - and 128S) in 75 hours of sea-watching. The majority were at the very beginning and end of the month (SSWT). Peak counts and totals from elsewhere included 76 at Ross on 14th, with 46 there on 22nd (MJC), 25S and 20N at St Mary's Island on 1st (AC), 37 from Goswick-Longbridge End on 23rd, 33 off the North Shore at Holy Island on 24th (MJC), 23 at Stag Rocks on 27th and Newbiggin on 30th, 20 at Cocklawburn and 17 off Cambois. Reports of one to 20 came from several other locations.

#### **Black-throated Diver** *Gavia arctica*

A single headed N past Low Newton on 1st (TRD/JD) and another was providing good views off Snab Point (Cresswell) on 4th (AA). The pace of passage then increased mid-month with two off Cheswick/Goswick Sands on 13th and three at nearby Cocklawburn the next day (CH). Three flew N past Snab Point during the morning of 21st (JR) with the same number seen at Longhoughton on 28th (IBDa/KDa). Singles were reported from several other sights on several dates from mid to end of month. Interestingly the only sighting at Seaton Sluice, during 75 hours of watching, was a single N on 30th – suggesting perhaps a direction of travel for this species (SSWT).

**Great Northern Diver** *Gavia immer*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was three flying N (SSWT), two flew N at St. Mary's Island on 2nd (ASJ) and two were also at Stag Rocks on 27th. Singles were seen at Cullercoats, Rockcliffe, Holy Island, Newbiggin and Ross.

**Sooty Shearwater** *Puffinus griseus*

The only sightings were on 1st, with six heading N past St. Mary's Island (JBU/AC) and two N at Seaton Sluice (SSWT), and 29th with two N past St. Mary's Island (AC).

**Manx Shearwater** *Puffinus puffinus*

A monthly total of 36 (35N and one S) in 75 hours of watching was reported from Seaton Sluice with the main passage period being on 1st with 27N (SSWT). Elsewhere on 1st, northerly birds included 19 at Bondicar and 12 past both Annstead Point and St. Mary's. At the end of the month one to three were watched passing Cheswick, Snab Point and St. Mary's.

**Balearic Shearwater** *Puffinus mauretanicus*

One was feeding offshore at St Mary's on 13th (AC).

**Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

The highest count was from Castle Island (R Wansbeck) with 20 birds there on 13th (DM). Up to 16 were on the R. Tweed between Paxton-Horncliffe on 15th (CH), nine were at Caistron on 12th (JD) and at Woodhorn Flashes on 5th (GB/DM). Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) peaked at eight on 12th and one to six were at Airy Holm Reservoir, the Aln Estuary, Big Waters NWT, Bolam Lake, on the sea at Boulmer, Budle Bay, Coquet Estuary, Craggside, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough, Howick Hall Pool, Killingworth Lake, Linton Ponds, Lynemouth, Marden Quarry, Middle Ord Pond, Newton Pool, Tyne Green (Hexham) and West Ord (Berwick).

**Red-necked Grebe** *Podiceps grisegena*

The watch tower at Seaton Sluice recorded three this month, all singles heading N on 2nd, 20th and 28th (SSWT). Singles were also reported on the sea at Stag Rocks on 12th and 26th, flying N past Newbiggin on 20th and N past St. Mary's on 29th.

**Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus*

Six were present at Widdrington Moor Lake during a visit on 11th (MSH), four were at Big Waters NWT on 13th (GB) and one to two were at Branton GP, Colt Crag Reservoir, Cresswell, Druridge Pools and Killingworth Lake. Off the coast one to two birds were on the sea at Boulmer Haven, Buston Links (Alnmouth), Druridge Bay, Fenham Flats, Seaton Sluice, Spittal Bay (Berwick) and Tynemouth. One flew S at Ross on 14th.



A Great Crested Grebe success at Druridge Pools by Tim Dean on 29th October

**Slavonian Grebe** *Podiceps auratus*

Colt Crag Reservoir hosted two separate birds at different times with one in winter plumage present from 4th-7th and a second, still showing some colour in the neck, there from 14th-16th (MR). Singles flew N past Snab Point on 1st, Howick on 20th and Church Point (Newbiggin) on 29th and one was in Spittal Bay (Berwick) on 7th.

**Bittern** *Botaurus stellaris*

One dropped into reeds in the south east corner of Cresswell Pond on 28th (CB).

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

A WeBS visit to the Tweed Estuary found a total of 17 on 11th (TBr/MMcN). Seaton Sluice Watch Tower reported random movements of one N and six S during the month, with no sign of any immigration (SSWT). One to four birds were at eight other localities.

**Great White Egret** *Ardea alba*

The Preswick Carr bird from last month remained until the 8th when it was seen to fly off east over Dinnington (MH/LJM). At Newbiggin one headed N past Beacon Point on 22nd (AP) and on 28th one flew N past Hartley Point (St. Mary's) having previously been seen at Whitburn and subsequently photographed at Newbiggin (JBU).

**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*

Lindisfarne NNR held at least 23 birds on two separate dates – on 13th four were at the Snook and 19 at Fenham-le-Moor (MJC) and 23 were visible at Fenham Flats on 18th (BS). At nearby Budle Bay, ten were present on 2nd (CGK/GPK) and nine were counted from Goswick-Longbridge End on 23rd (MJC). One to six were at the Aln Estuary, Bedlington, Boulmer, Castle Island, the Coquet Estuary, Cresswell, Furnace Bank, Gosforth Home Farm, New Water Haugh, North Seaton, Prestwick Carr, Ross, Swallow Pond, the Wansbeck Estuary, Warkworth and West Ord.



A Little Egret at Cresswell Pond by Chris Barlow on 29th October

**Gannet** *Morus bassanus*

Passage numbers, including juveniles, were still good even into the late month with Seaton Sluice reporting a steady 265N in two and a half hours on 29th. However a large movement was observed at Stag Rocks on 16th with 1,455 heading S in just 35 minutes, contrary to the previous day's count of 450 heading N at that site (DF). At least 860 per hour were heading S past Berwick Pier on 7th and 500 per hour on 20th (MHu), Annstead reported 93N and 211S on 14th and 163N and 11S on 30th (DF) and similar numbers from elsewhere. 19, mainly adults, fished on the flats at St. Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) at high tide on 6th after being driven in by a strong SE wind (IK),

**Shag** *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

There were good numbers reported at Ross on several dates with a peak of 91 on 22nd (MJC) with, only slightly further north, 90 counted from Goswick-Longbridge End on 23rd (MJC). 52 were at Holy Island North Shore on 24th (MJC) and at least 40 were at Megstone (Farne Islands) on 27th (ASJ). 30 were on a rocky island offshore at Berwick Little Beach on 13th (TRD/JD), 18 were in Spittal Bay (Berwick) on 7th and one to 15 were seen at Cocklawburn, Low Newton, Newton Point, Seaton Sluice and Stag Rocks.

**Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

The peak count this month was from Ross with 61 there on 22nd (MJC). 52 were in the Blyth Estuary on 17th (LJM), whilst 42 were counted between Spittal-Cocklawburn on 24th (TBr). A WeBS visit to the Tweed Estuary produced 35 on 11th (TBr/MMcN), 33 were roosting on Goswick Sands on 5th (DF), Calot Shad (Tweed Estuary) hosted 28 on 20th and 16 were at Colt Crag Reservoir on 21st. One to six were at several other localities including one at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on two dates, an unusual sighting there.



**Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus*

At Holy Island on 7th three birds were present (MJC/AH/AS/ADM) and three were at Craster on 16th (MJC). Two birds were at Ellington on 14th and two birds were seen at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) (TBr) and Seaton Sluice Watch Tower (SSWT) throughout October. A single bird was at Newbiggin Quarry throughout the month and other single birds were at 12 sites.

**Goshawk** *Accipiter gentilis*

A female, possibly defending a territory, flew up to attack another female at a confidential site on 28th (MH). Other singles were noted at Colt Crag Reservoir on 4th and 29th (MR), Holburn on 22nd (CD) and at Whiteside (Scotchcoulard) (per MH).

**Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*

Two 1st calendar year birds, a male and a female, were hunting together at Widdrington Moor Lake on 8th (MH/AA) and two female types were seen there on 19th (ADMc). A juvenile with orange/red wing tags was at Linton Pond on 5th and at East Chevington North Pool on 17th (ADMc); a female was at Bell's Pond (Cresswell) on 21st (CDH). On 22nd juvenile birds were noted at Maiden's Hall Lake (MSH), Widdrington Moor Lake (MH/AA) and at East Chevington South Pool (MH/AA) and a female was at Cresswell on 29th (DLo).

**Hen Harrier** *Circus cyaneus*

An adult female was noted a confidential site on 2nd.

**Red Kite** *Milvus milvus*

Two birds drifted S at Broomlee on 31st (AJ/ASH/AJN/TW). Single birds were noted at Derwent Reservoir on 15th, 17th and 24th (IfO). On 2nd a single bird flew E towards the QEII CP with the gulls from the Newmoor tip (Ashington) (TB). One was at Minsteracres on 17th (ASH/IK/AJN/AJ). An immature bird hunted towards Goswick from Cheswick Dunes on 24th (MHu) and at West Minsteracres on 31st (IfO).

**Common Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*

13 birds were noted at Plenmeller Common on 2nd (PRM), four+ birds were at Prestwick Carr on 17th (MN) and four were at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 27th (TBr). Three birds were at West Hartford on several dates (TB), Prestwick Carr on 8th (LJM), Ross on 22nd (MJC) and Derwent Reservoir on 24th (IfO). One to two were reported from 17 sites this Month.

**Water Rail** *Rallus aquaticus*

Cresswell Pond had three birds on 25th (EC/JSB); two were present at East Chevington on 16th (IRD) and at Holy Island Lough on 31st (MJC). Single birds were either seen or heard at Big Waters NWT, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Holy Island and Prestwick Carr.



A Water Rail by Colin Bradshaw on 28th October at Cresswell Pond

**Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*

18 birds at Castle Island (Ashington) on 13th was the highest count (DM/PJA), followed by 13 at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 28th (GB) and 11 at Killingworth Lake on 22nd (GB). Eight were at Cresswell Pond on 5th (DM/GB/LAR), six were at Linton Ponds on 12th (CDH), 5 were at QEII CP Lake on 12th (CDH) and three were at Jesmond Dene (Newcastle) on 27th (MJCo) and a single at Airy Holm Reservoir (near Shotleyfield) on 24th & 29th was the observer's first for months at the site (IfO).

**Coot** *Fulica atra*

A record WeBS count of 98 was at Linton Ponds on 12th (CDH), 62 were at Big Waters NWT on 13th (GB), 49 at Killingworth Lake (LJM) and 47 at Widdrington Moor Lake, both on 22nd. Grindon Lough peaked at 27 on 17th (PRM), 19 were at QEII CP Lake on 12th (CDH) and 17 were noted at Bothal Pond on 27th (TD). One to nine birds were at Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Howick Hall, Newton Pool (Low Newton) and at Shield on the Wall.

**Stone-curlew** *Burhinus oedicnemus*

One was at Budle Bay on 29th (MJC).

**Oystercatcher** *Haematopus ostralegus*

The highest count was 182 feeding on the mini-golf course at Whitley Bay on 29th (ASJ). There were also 95 at Buston Links (Alnmouth) on 29th (MH/AA), with 69 at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 27th (ASJ) and 56 at Calot Shad on 13th (MHu). Counts below 50 came from St Mary's Island (MSH), Longhoughton Steel (MKi), Spittal-Cocklawburn WeBS (TBr), Newbiggin golf course (DM) and Seaton Sluice (DM, DLo). The only record from an inland site was one at Derwent Reservoir on 29th (IFo).



An Oystercatcher with a Bar-tailed Godwit at Stag Rocks by Mike Carr on 27th October

**Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus*

Large numbers were reported throughout the month, with a maximum of 1,000 at Hemscott Hill (Cresswell) on 22nd (TB) and 800 at Widdrington Moor Lake on 12th (ASJ). The highest count from Budle Bay was 650 on 21st (DF), with 600 at Derwent Reservoir on 17th (IFo). Cresswell Pond had 534 on 21st (CDH) and there were 500 at Ross on 14th (MJC). The highest count from Grindon Lough was 480 on 17th (PRM). There were 350+ at Cresswell Pond on 15th and at Prestwick Carr on 17th (MN), with 340 at Cocklawburn on 8th (MHu), 325 at St Mary's Island on 20th (ASJ), 309 at the Coquet Estuary on 22nd (CDH) and 300 at Druridge Pools on 28th (TD). Flocks of 100 to 200+ were noted at other locations throughout the month, including Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), the Aln Estuary, Colt Crag Reservoir and Spittal-Cocklawburn. Seaton Sluice Watch Tower recorded 221 (60N, 161S) from 7th.

**Golden Plover** *Pluvialis apricaria*

Flocks of 2,000 were noted at Backworth (St Mary's Island flock) on 6th (ASJ) and at Holy Island on 8th and 16th (TRD/JD). There were 1,500 at Budle Bay on 23rd (DF), 800 at Grindon Lough on 15th (MRS) rising to 1,200 on 17th (PRM), c.1,100 at Longhoughton Steel on 8th and 1,015 at Boulmer on 16th (BS). 800 were noted in a recently drilled field at Smallburn, Longhorsley on 7th (AB/LB). There were 500S at Seaton Sluice Watch Tower on 23rd, 417 at the Coquet Estuary on 22nd (CDH) and 400 at Derwent Reservoir on 17th (IFo). Flocks of 200 to fewer than 400 birds were reported at Cocklawburn, Belford, Ellington, Druridge, Low Newton, Beukley (Stagshaw) and Colt Crag Reservoir (possibly the Beukley flock). There were 50 on the Town Moor (Newcastle) on 3rd (GB) and 33 at Chugden Hill, Whittingham on 13th (CW).



**Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola*

The largest flock was reported from Budle Bay, with 120 at high tide on 26th (CGK). There were 55 at Fenham Flats, Lindisfarne on 19th (ASJ), 33 at Boulmer on 24th (AB/LB), 30 at Buston Links, Alnmouth on 29th (MH/AA) and 15 at Beadnell on 19th (ASJ). eight flew N at St Mary's Island on 1st (JBu). Singles were reported from Amble Links, Boulmer, Holy Island and the Coquet Estuary, and there was one N at Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

**Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula*

There were a maximum 70 at Budle Bay on 11th (CGK/GPK), with 33 at St Mary's Island on 10th (ASJ), 30 at Stag Rocks, Bamburgh on 8th (MSH) and also 28 at Cocklawburn on 8th (MHu). Snab Point (Cresswell) had 22 on 5th (DM). There were six on the beach on 28th at Druridge Pools (TD), five at Low Newton on 1st (TRD/JD) and three at Cresswell Pond on 24th (TB).



A Ringed Plover at Stag Rocks by Mike Carr on 27th October

**Whimbrel**

The photograph in September's Bulletin was by Alan Jack - apologies Ed.

**Curlew** *Numenius arquata*

The largest flocks were at Budle Bay, with 360 on 21st (DF) and 275 on 26th (CGK). There were 115 at Boulmer Steel on 2nd (TM) and 108 feeding in stubble at St Mary's Island on 10th (ASJ). Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) had 75N on both 7th and 16th (DF) and there were 70 at Boulmer on 24th (AB/LB). The WeBS recorded 51 at Spittal-Cocklawburn on 24th (TBr) and 43 at the Tweed Estuary on 11th (TBr/MMcN). There were 30 at Druridge Pools on 28th (TD) and 12 at Spittal Bay, Newbiggin on 15th (PG). Singles were reported at Plenmeller Common, Newbiggin golf course, Seaton Sluice and Derwent Reservoir.

**Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica*

Beal had by far the highest count, with an estimated 1,000 feeding along South Low channel on the rising tide on 23rd (DF). There were 35 at Budle Bay on 10th (CGK/GPK) and 30 at Boulmer on 26th (BS). There were 15 at the high-tide roost at Buston Links (Alnmouth) on 29th (MH/AA) and 13 at Newbiggin on 6th (IRD). Counts of ten and below came from Little Beach, Berwick, Holy Island causeway, Low Newton, Cresswell Pond and the Coquet Estuary.



A Bar-tailed Godwit at Stag Rocks  
Mike Carr on 27th October



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

There were 33 at the Aln Estuary on 16th (MKi) and 19 at Druridge Pools on 29th (CDH). Monks' House Pool had three on 11th (JPL) and Low Newton scrape had two on 1st (TRD/JD). Two birds were present in Budle Bay throughout the month (CGK/GPK) and there was a single bird at Fenham Flats on 18th (BS).

**Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*

The largest numbers were found in the north, with 71 at Holy Island north shore on 24th (MJC), 64 at Berwick Little Beach on 28th (MHU), 48 at Stag Rocks on 14th (MKi) and 42 at Spittal-Cocklawburn on 24th (TBr). At St Mary's Island the peak count was 36 on 10th (ASJ), 25 were seen at Low Newton on 1st (TRD/JD), 24 at Longhoughton Steel on 2nd (MKi), and 22 were at Saltpan Rocks (Cocklawburn) on 8th (MHU). One-18 were at Boulmer, Dunstanburgh, Seaton Sluice and Snab Point (Cresswell).



A Turnstone by Alan Jack on 27th October at St. Mary's

**Knot** *Calidris canutus*

The main concentrations were recorded from the Lindisfarne NNR with 900 reported on 19th(ASJ), 500 at St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) on 10th, 400 at Budle Bay on 26th(CGK) and 360 at Beal on 26th (DF). Lower numbers were noted away from Lindisfarne with 50 at Stag Rocks on 16th (DF) 42 at Seaton Sluice on 2nd (LJM) and a maximum of 20 at the River Coquet Estuary on 31st (CSa). 12 were at Newbiggin, nine at Boulmer and one at the River Aln Estuary.

**Ruff** *Calidris pugnax*

Birds were reported from Creswell Pond during most of the month with a high of six on 11th with lower numbers noted thereafter (MN/EC/JSB *et al.*). Three were at both Prestwick Carr on 11th (EC/JSB/MH) and Druridge Pools on 28th (CB). Two were at the River Coquet Estuary on 24th (CSa), singles were seen at Boulmer, Hemscott Hill Pond (Cresswell), and Low Newton scrape on dates from 1st-10th.

**Sanderling** *Calidris alba*

A high count of 260 was made at Ross (Lindisfarne NNR) on 14th (MJC) with 129 at the southern end of recording area at St Mary's Island on 2nd (ASJ). At Seaton Point (Boulmer) 65 were present on 26th (BS). There were no major counts from the regular haunt of Druridge Bay with the maximum counts being 30 at East Chevington on 15th (TRD/JD) and 16 at Druridge on 28th (TD). Birds were noted flying S at Stag Rocks with seven on 17th, 16 on 29th and 25 on 31st (DF). One-three were at Boulmer, Cresswell Pond and Newbiggin Golf Course.



A Sanderling by Mike Carr 12th October at Low Hauxley



**Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*

Birds were reported from many coastal stretches with the Lindisfarne NNR providing the highest counts with a minimum of 900 at Fenham Flats on 19th (ASJ) and a maximum of 300 at Budle Bay on 26th (CGK). At the River Coquet Estuary ca.100 were counted on 24th (CSa), 57 were at Boulmer on 8th (MKi) and the peak count from Cresswell Pond was 50 on 15th (MN). Low Newton attracted 30 on 1st (TRD/JD), 29 were reported from St Mary's Island on 10th (ASJ), 27 flew N at Stag Rocks on 28th (DF), 18 were seen at Berwick Little Beach on 28th (MHU) and 14 were at the River Aln Estuary on 16th (MKi). One-two were seen at Calot Shad (River Tweed Estuary), East Chevington and Grindon Lough.



An unusual sight - Dunlin with a Snipe on the rocks at Low Newton  
by Tim Dean on 1st October

**Purple Sandpiper** *Calidris maritima*

Two at Stag Rocks on 8th were regarded by the observer as very late (DF). There were only 12 at this site on 21st but numbers built up to a maximum of 186 on 27th (DF/ASJ/MJC *et al.*). Much smaller numbers were noted elsewhere with 16 at Tynemouth on 29th (ASJ) and one-eight at Cocklawburn, Cullercoats, Dunstanburgh, Holy Island, Low Newton, Seaton Sluice and St Mary's Island.

Correction to September bulletin

One at Druridge Pools on 30<sup>th</sup> should be 'one at Druridge Links'



A Purple Sandpiper by Alan Jack at Bamburgh on 27th October

**Little Stint** *Calidris minuta*

A single bird was noted at Cresswell Pond between 21st-28th (CDH/MN/DLo *et al.*).

**Long-billed Dowitcher** *Limnodromus scolopaceus*

A well-watched bird was seen at Cresswell Pond from 26th-30th (ADMc/TB/MKi *et al.*).

**Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola*

Five were noted on Holy island on 6th (RA/AH/BCh/ADM) with lower numbers noted on dates up to 31st (MJC/BS/ADM). Singles were seen at Boulmer, Cresswell Pond, Low Buston, Newbiggin and 'in-off' at Tynemouth.

**Jack Snipe** *Lymnocyrtus minimus*

Singles were at Holy Island excavations on 6th (ADM), 7th and 30th at the Snook (MJC). Other single birds were seen at Beal saltmarsh on 17th (BS) and St Mary's Island on 19th (AC).

**Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago*

An all-island count on Holy Island on 7th revealed a total of 36 (MJC/AH/ASJ/ADM).

The maximum seen at Cresswell Pond during the month was 35 on 25th (EC/JSB), 22 were at Big Waters on 13th (GB) and 16 were noted at Prestwick Carr on 5th (MH). One-nine were seen at Bothal Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Grindon Lough, Howdon, Low Newton, St Mary's Wetland and West Hartford.

**Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*

A single was present near Great Whittington on 1st-2nd(ALT) and one was heard flying over Seaton Point (Boulmer on 14th (BS).

**Redshank** *Tringa totanus*

A high-tide roost was noted at St Mary's Wetland on 5th, 8th and 20th attracting 100-169 birds (ASJ/AC/KWY). A WeBS count at the River Tweed Estuary on 11th recorded 141 birds (TBr/MMCN) with 130 at nearby Berwick Little Beach on 28th (MHu). Budle Bay held 92 on 24th (DF), 90 were at Cresswell Pond on 22nd (IRD), 60 were at Cullercoats on 15th (MN) and 50 at Beal Point - Longbridge End (Lindisfarne NNR) on 4th (MJC). One-20 were reported from Castle Island Newbiggin, the River Aln Estuary, Seaton Sluice and Woodhorn Flashes.

**Spotted Redshank** *Tringa erythropus*

The sole report was of one at Low Newton scrape on 1st (TRD/JD).

**Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*

Birds were regularly reported from the favoured Beal-Longbridge End-Holy Island causeway area all month with the maximum noted being eight on 5th (DF/CH/MJC *et al.*). Away from this area, five were at Budle Bay on 9th (CGK/GPK), four at Holy Island on 10th (per NNBC) and a one was seen at Widdrington Moor Lake on 5th (DRW).

**Kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla*

At Bamburgh Stag Rocks, 70 flew S on 15th (DF) and on 1st, 65 moved N at Hadston/Bondicarr (AA/MH). Small numbers, up to nine, were seen at Boulmer, Newbiggin, Newton Point and St Mary's Island on dates throughout.

**Black-headed Gull** *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

The largest count was 800+ feeding offshore from St Mary's Island-Seaton Sluice, this coinciding with the large influx of Little Gulls noted below, obviously attracted by exceptional feeding conditions (ASJ). Other large concentrations were 560 at Berwick, Little Beach on 28th (MHu), 342 in the Blyth Estuary on 17th LJM), 100-200 at Bamburgh, Boulmer, Castle Island and Jesmond Dene with up to 100 at seven other coastal and inland sites.

**Little Gull** *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

A very unusual, large autumn influx took place commencing on 5th when three were at Cresswell Snab Point and 20+ moved S at Bamburgh; thereafter 60 S in small flocks at Newbiggin on 6th, 130 S at St Mary's Island on 7th, 410 N at Cocklawburn on 11th and on 12th-13th 500-1,000+ were counted feeding offshore between St Mary's Island and Seaton Sluice (ASJ *et al.*). Numbers declined rapidly after 13th with ten seen flying S at Boulmer on 16th and one to six, mainly moving S, recorded at seven other coastal localities on dates up to the month end (*many observers*).

**Mediterranean Gull** *Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus*

Eight were recorded from Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT) and seven were at Cresswell Snab Point on 22nd (AA/MH). At Newbiggin, 27 frequented the sports field on 31st (STH), 14 were in the bay on 10th (CH) and up to 12 fed at Quarry Cottage (BS); elsewhere, apart from four at Longhoughton and Snab Point, all other records were of single birds at 12 coastal localities from St Mary's Island to Holy Island on dates throughout (*many observers*).

**Common Gull** *Larus canus*

The largest counts were 193 in the Tweed Estuary on 11th (TBr/MMcN) and 100 in Budle Bay on 21st (DF); 42 flew N at Bamburgh Stag Rocks on 28th and 57 were in the River Aln Estuary on 16th. Up to five were at four other sites.



**Great Black-backed Gull** *Larus marinus*

Counts of 130-170 came from Budle Bay (DF) and East Chevington (IRD), 92 at Castle Island (DM) and 50 moved S at Bamburgh on 17th (DF). Smaller gatherings of 10-30 were at Longhoughton Steel, the Tweed Estuary and Warkworth with four inland at Colt Crag Reservoir.

**Iceland Gull** *Larus glaucoides*

A 1st-winter bird flew S following a trawler off Seaton Sluice on 19th (SSWT).

**Herring Gull** *Larus argentatus argenteus*

A WeB Survey in the River Tweed Estuary included a large gathering of 1,203 on 11th (TBr/MMcN), 505 fed in stubble field at Berwick, Low Cocklaw (TBr), 500 were in the evening roost at Boulmer on 27th (BS) and 47 at Castle Island (DM).

**Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus fuscus graelsii*

The maximum of three counts at Grindon Lough was five (PRM/MRS) with the same number at Castle Island (DM) and elsewhere one or two were present at Bamburgh, Derwent Reservoir and in the River Tweed Estuary (IFo/DF/TBr/MMcN).

**Sandwich Tern** *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

Seven were recorded during the month at Seaton Sluice between 1st and 31st (SSWT) and late-staying birds elsewhere included a maximum of nine at Ross on 14th (MJC), three to five at Bamburgh, Berwick (Spittal Bay) and St Mary's Island and singles at seven other localities on dates throughout, the latest on 31st.

**Little Tern** *Sternula albifrons*

A juvenile was seen flying S at Boulmer on the extremely late date of 16th (BS).

**Common Tern** *Sterna hirundo*

Five were counted passing Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT) and movement S at Bamburgh Stag Rocks included 63 on 5th and a further 24 on 7th (DF). Ten were in Budle Bay on 12th, nine at St Mary's island on 8th and one to four at four other sites, the latest being seen at Boulmer on 16th.

**Arctic Tern** *Sterna paradisaea*

At Ross on 14th, 25 were present (MJC) and six were at St Mary's Island on 7th (AC). Counts of one or two came from Berwick (Spittal Bay), Boulmer, Cocklawburn and Cresswell (Snab Point), the latest date being 22nd.

**\*Black Tern** *Chlidonias niger*

A first county record, subject to BBRC acceptance, will be a juvenile Nearctic subspecies, *C.n.surinamensis*, watched at St Mary's wetland for 20 minutes at first light before flying out to sea on 7th (AC); a single moving S at Seaton Sluice on 12th (SSWT) and seen again distantly offshore there on 13th (SSWT/ASJ) is thought likely to have been the same individual.

**Great Skua** *Stercorarius skua*

Four seen moving N from the Seaton Sluice Watch Tower on 1st/2nd was a low October total. Also recorded on 1st were eight N at St Mary's Island (JBU/AC), four N at Cresswell, Snab Point, three N at Hadston/Bondicarr and two N at Annstead. Other sightings were singles moving N at Annstead on 14th and Newbiggin on 9th.

**Pomarine Skua** *Stercorarius pomarinus*

At Seaton Sluice, two flew N on 1st and a single N on 24th (SSWT). Other sightings on 1st were seven N at Annstead (DF/CGK/GPK), five N at St Mary's Island and Hadston/Bondicarr and four N at Cullercoats. Other records were singles N at Bamburgh and Annstead on 7th and 14th respectively.

**Arctic Skua** *Stercorarius parasiticus*

A very good daily total of 73 moved past Seaton Sluice on 1st, the majority moving N, but few were seen thereafter (SSWT). The passage on 1st was also recorded at Annstead, Cresswell (Snab Point), Hadston/Bondicarr, Newbiggin and St Mary's Island with counts of four to 18 (ADM *et al*). The only other records were singles on 3rd and 5th at Bamburgh.

**Long-tailed Skua** *Stercorarius longicaudus*

At Seaton Sluice, five moving N on 1st included one adult and two passed S on 19th (SSWT). Two adults chased Kittiwakes at Cullercoats on 1st (ASJ) and a juvenile was seen at Beal Point on 4th (MJC).

**Auk** *sp*

On 1st, 'thousands' headed N at Annstead (DF) and 134 passed N in 30 minutes at St Mary's Island (MSH). Another significant movement was seen at Cullercoats on 20th with 1,500 moving N in an hour and a half (CB).

**Little Auk** *Alle alle*

Birds moving N were seen daily at Seaton Sluice from 20th-31st and a monthly total of 47 was counted with a day maximum on 36 on 29th (SSWT). From 20th-28th records of one to six came from nine localities between St Mary's Island and Annstead Point (*many observers*) and the movement peaked on 29th-30th with maxima of around 60 at Newbiggin in three hours (TF/GB), 25 at St Mary's Island (JBU) and 16 at Boulmer (TRD/JD).

**Common Guillemot** *Uria aalge*/**Razorbill** *Alca torda*  
400 per hour moved N at Seaton Sluice on 1st (SSWT).

**Common Guillemot** *Uria aalge*

An estimated 2,500 flew N in under three hours on 1st at Hadston/Bondicarr (MH/AA) and large groups were seen moving at Newton Point on the same day (TRD/JD); at Berwick Pier on 20th, 550 per hour moved N (MHu). The species was particularly well-reported from 13th-31st including 194 at Ross (MJC), counts of 20-70 from seven other localities and up to 15 at a further ten sites (*many observers*).

**Razorbill** *Alca torda*

The maximum counts were 180 which fed offshore at St Mary's Island on 18th and 110 at Ross on 14th (MJC). At Newbiggin 14 flew N on 20th (GB) but elsewhere records were of one to six at seven other localities.

**Black Guillemot** *Cephus grylle*

From 8th-16th one was at Bamburgh Stag Rocks (DF) and on 22nd an adult was at Ross (MJC).

**Puffin** *Fratercula arctica*

Unusual numbers were reported moving N on 21st at Seaton Sluice but were not counted (SSWT). At Cocklawburn and Ross 14-15 were seen on 14th (CH/MJC) and elsewhere, from 13th-31st, one to four were at 12 sites, mainly in the northern half of the county.

**Feral Pigeon** *Columba livia*

The only report of unquantified presence at Jesmond Dene on 7th (MJCo).

**Stock Dove** *Columba oenas*

A pre-roost gathering of 84 was at Howdon on 31st (CB) with three at St Mary's Island on 23rd and two at Jesmond Dene on 27th.

**Woodpigeon** *Columba palumbus*

400 flew from roost at Arcot Pond on 13th (LJM), a flock of 250 at Derwent Reservoir on 17th (IFo), 42 at Howdon on 7th and a juvenile at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 24th.

**Turtle Dove** *Streptopelia turtur*

On 5th a juvenile was found at the St. Mary's wetland and later in fields with Woodpigeons (ASJ/JBu/AC).



The St. Mary's Turtle Dove seen by a lucky few.  
Jack Bucknall on 5th October

**Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto*

A high count of 33 at Widdrington Village on 22nd (TB), 22 at Berwick Hill and Kirkley Mill on 5th, 16 at Ogle on 20th (AHB), 11 regularly visiting gardens at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) and eight at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) during the month.

**Barn Owl** *Tyto alba*

Single birds were at Holy Island on 15th, 21st and 26th with a blank breeding year reported with one pair having two failed clutches and a second pair not laying at all probably due to the lack of small mammal prey (ADM/BCh/MJC/IK). Singles were at Rothley on 3rd, QEII CP on 6th, Colt Crag Reservoir on 23rd and High Hedley Farm on 26th.

**Tawny Owl** *Strix aluco*

Two were at Harbottle on 20th and 27th (MKi), Ellington on 24th (TB) and regularly at Rothbury (TRD/JD). Singles were at Belford, Cramlington on three dates, Haltwhistle Common, Killingworth Village, Lesbury, Morpeth, Ross and Woodhorn Church with a road casualty at Widdrington Village on 16th.

**Little Owl** *Athene noctua*

Territorial male singing at Shiremoor on 15th (CGK), one at Druridge Lane on 24th (TB) and calling at Kirkley Mill on 30th (AHB).

**Long-eared Owl** *Asio otus*

One presumed migrant roosted at a coastal site in the south of the county on 5th (GB) with one at Holy Island on 19th (BCh).

**Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus*

Two at Holy Island one 'in off' on 6th with singles there regularly during the month (ADM *et al.*). Most sightings reported as 'in off' at Bamburgh on 4th and 5th, Cresswell Village on 5th, Newbiggin on 5th and 6th, Seaton Point (Boulmer) on 14th, Howick Bay on 17th, West Stobswood reclamation site and Widdrington Moor Lake on 18th, St Mary's Island on 20th and 29th, Rockcliffe on 22nd, Ross Back Sands on 28th and Tynemouth on 29th. In off reports at Seaton Sluice Watch Tower were singles on 10th and 28th with two on 19th.

A Short-eared Owl at St. Mary's by Jack Bucknall on 23rd October

**Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis*

Two roosted under a bridge at Gosforth Garden Village on 6th (MJC). Two were ate at Otterburn on 11th (MJC) and at Castle Island on 13th (PJA/DM), with singles regularly at Colt Crag Reservoir all month and on rocks at Seaton Sluice on three dates and often Cresswell Pond in the last week of the month. Singles were also at Amble, Big Waters, Boulmer, Branton GP, Fontburn Reservoir, Howick, Jesmond Dene, Morpeth, River Tyne Close House and Tyne Green, St Mary's Island and Whitley Bay.

**Hoopoe** *Upupa epops*

On 5th one found by a non-birder frequented Amble links and was still there on 7th.

**Great Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos major*

Two at West Hartford on 13th (LJM) was the only multiple report with singles at Bamburgh, Berwick, Cramlington at two locations, Grindon Lough, Harbottle, Painsdale Burn, Ross, St Mary's Island and West Denton (Newcastle).

**Green Woodpecker** *Picus viridis*

One was at Pauperhaugh (Morpeth) on 5th (IBDa/KDa).

**Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*

Prestwick Carr had four birds on 8th & 11th (LJM/MH) and three birds were at West Hartford on 10th (TB) and Derwent Reservoir on 27th (IFo). Two birds were in a high pine tree in the observer's garden in Fulbeck (Morpeth) throughout the month, causing angst to the Magpies which had nested in it earlier this year (TD). One - two birds were seen at Beal Point/Longbridge End, Coquet Estuary, Cramlington, Craster, Derwent Reservoir, Ellington, Holy Island, Low Cocklaw (Berwick), Newmoor (Ashington), Plenmeller Common, Prestwick Carr, QEII CP Lake, Snab Point (Cresswell), West Hartford & at Widdrington Moor Lake.

**Merlin** *Falco columbarius*

Up to two were observed at Holy Island on several dates (ADM/MJC/BCh). A good month for sightings this month with birds noted at 14 coastal sites and at 5 inland sites.

A Merlin perches on Holy Island  
Mike Carr  
24th October





**Peregrine** *Falco peregrinus*

Three birds, involving two adults and a juvenile, were at Budle Bay throughout the month (CGK/GPK). Two juveniles were over the Snook (Holy Island) on 6th (ADM), two birds were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 18th (EC/JSB) and an adult female and a juvenile female were at Ross on 22nd (MJC). At Seaton Sluice Watch Tower singles were noted moving offshore on seven dates between 1st & 24th (SSWT) and a juvenile female was regularly noted on Holy Island (IK). Other single birds were at 12 coastal sites and five inland sites.



A Peregrine passes Mike Carr  
22nd October at Guile Point

**Ring-necked Parakeet** *Psittacula krameri*

Five were at Gosforth Garden Village (Newcastle) on 5th (MJC) with one at Heaton Park (Newcastle) on 27th (MJCo).

**Great Grey Shrike** *Lanius excubiter*

One was seen with a vole at Prestwick Carr on 5th (PRC) with one found by Barry Chambers at Holy Island on 6th seen regularly by many till 15th and identified as first calendar year bird (BCh *et al.*).

**Jay** *Garrulus glandarius*

Reports of four came from Derwent Reservoir on 17th, Craggside (Rothbury) on 26th and Bedlington on 29th (IFo/JD/JR). Three were at Ellington on 12th and 29th (TB), West Hartford on 13th (LJM) and Minsteracres on 17th (ASH/IK/AJN/AJ) with two at Cramlington on 2nd and 15th and singles at a further 14 widespread localities.

**Magpie** *Pica pica*

At Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) 12 was the peak count (RS), three at Jesmond Dene on 7th (MJCo) and one at Holy Island on 8th (TBr).

**Jackdaw** *Corvus monedula*

On 18th 1,000 gathered in fields at Gosforth Home Farm (Newcastle) prior to roosting (MJC), 80+ with Rooks at High Letham (Berwick) on 3rd (TBr), 40 regularly at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin), 35 at Church Point (Newbiggin) on 28th (RS) and 31 at Jesmond Dene on 27th.

**Rook** *Corvus frugilegus*

Just two reports of 100 at High Letham (Berwick) on 3rd (TBr) and 22 at Derwent Reservoir on 22nd (IFo).

**Carrion Crow** *Corvus corone*

44 was the high count at Howdon on 7th (CB), 36 at Crooked Lonnen (Holy Island) on 15th, 16 at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 28th (GB) with four to five at Jesmond Dene and Newbiggin.



A Carrion Crow alights at Cresswell by Chris Barlow on 29th October

**Raven** *Corvus corax*

A high count of seven at Grindon Lough on 17th with four at Plenmeller Common on 2nd (PRM) and two at Beanley Wood on 13th, Lindisfarne NNR on 19th, Brough Law (Ingram Valley) on 21st, Goswick to Longbridge End on 23rd, Holy Island on 26th and Bellshiel Law on 27th. Singles were at three other locations.

**Waxwing** *Bombycilla garrulus*

Six were at Howick Hall Pool / Woods on 23rd with three at Howick Dene on 24th (BS/MR).

**Coal Tit** *Periparus ater*

On 2nd ten were at Colt Crag Reservoir (MR), six on feeders at Tynemouth on 27th (CB), three on feeders at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) (RS) in the latter part of the month with singles at Rockcliffe on 19th and Jesmond Dene on 27th.

**Marsh Tit** *Poecile palustris*

Three at Rothbury on 11th (MJC), two at Ellington on 12th (TB) with birds present daily on feeders at Rothbury (TRD/JD) and at Linden Hall (Longhorsley). Singles were at Bolam Lake, Craster and Low Cocklaw (Berwick) and Letah Wood (Hexham).

**Willow Tit** *Poecile montanus*

On 16th seven were at Craster (MJC) with two at Derwent Reservoir and Prestwick Carr on two dates during the month. Singles were at eight widespread localities.



A Willow Tit by Jack Bucknall at St. Mary's Island 5th October

**Blue Tit** *Cyanistes caeruleus*

High counts of 24 within 2km of Low Cocklaw (Berwick) the maximum count for the month (TBr) with 16 trapped and ringed at Bamburgh (BRS). Four were at Rockcliffe with three at Jesmond Dene and Newbiggin.

**Great Tit** *Parus major*

Three at Jesmond Dene on 27th (MJCo) and two visiting feeders at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) in the latter part of the month (RS).

**Bearded Tit** *Panurus biarmicus*

North Pool East Chevington hosted three on 5th (DRW) with one flying into reeds near hide at Cresswell on 28th (CB).

**Skylark** *Alauda arvensis*

Movement south was noted with 182 the peak at Goswick to Longbridge End on 23rd, 132 over Ross on 14th and 77 at Lindisfarne NNR on 13th (MJC). 80 were at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) (MH/AA), 40-55 at St Mary's Island all month (ASJ) with 30 on stubble at Hadston and Widdrington Moor. 20 to 50 flew south at Budle Point, Beal, Holy Island, Lynemouth, Newbiggin with three to 18 at nine other locations.

**Shore Lark** *Eremophila alpestris*

Two fed on the high-tide line at Goswick Sands on 13th (CH) with one on the beach at Seaton Point (Boulmer) on 19th & 21st (BS/CSa).

**Sand Martin** *Riparia riparia*

There was only one report of a single late bird at Branton GP on 10th (IBDa/KDa).

**Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

High count of 27 S was made at Cresswell Pond on 6th (IRD), 17 at Netherwhitton on the same date (JR) and 16 at Prestwick Carr on 5th (MH) with 12 hawking insects there on 8th (LJM). One to eight were at 23 other locations with one the latest at Fenham Flats (Lindisfarne NNR) on 31st (BS).

**House Martin** *Delichon urbica*

At Belford 12 were still present on 1st (DF), five at Ellington on 7th, two there on 9th (TB) and at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 6th (DM). On 4th a pair were still feeding two young at The Widdrington Inn (BS).

**Cetti's Warbler** *Cettia cetti*

One was again heard at East Chevington on 3rd, 23rd and 31st (MN/MSH) and another was at Holy Island Lough from 14th-24th (BCh *et al.*). Perhaps more unusual was a bird at Newbiggin (Beacon Point) on 7th, feeding on the footpath / shore line with Meadow Pipits (AP/DE).

**Long-tailed Tit** *Aegithalos caudatus*

Two flocks totalling 27 were at Craster on 16th (MJC), 25 were at Healey on 31st, 18-20 at Budle Bay on 15th and 23rd and 19 at Bamburgh on 21st. The peak count from Low Cocklaw was 18, while 17 were noted at Prestwick Carr on 26th, 15 at Letah Wood (Hexham) on 4th and 12 at Big Waters on 27th and at Bolam Lake on 29th. Elsewhere, six to nine were reported from Airy Holm Reservoir, Colt Crag Reservoir, Cramlington (Southfield Lea), Druridge, Ellington, Grindon Lough, Lynemouth, Newbiggin (Quarry Cottage) and Tynemouth and more unusually, three to four were at Holy Island on 8th and 31st. Up to four were also at Branton GP, three at Jesmond Dene and one at Tyne Green (Hexham).

**Willow Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Singles were at Holy Island on 6th-7th and 13th, with eight here on 15th (MJC/ADM), two on 19th and singles on 20th, 26th and 29th-30th. Elsewhere, further singles were noted at Lynemouth on 9th and Whitley Bay GC on 8th.

A bird showing characteristics of the **Northern race** *P.t.acredula* was photographed at Holy Island (Straight Lonnen) on 5th (ADM/BCh).

**Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita*

Numerous reports came from Holy Island during the month including peak counts of 24 on 15th (MJC/BCh/AH/ADM/SR), 12-14 on 6th-7th and 11 on 21st. The maximum monthly count from Budle Point was 20 on 10th, while up to 12 were noted at St Mary's Island (2nd), nine were at Lynemouth on 9th, eight at Craster on 16th, seven + at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) on 12th and six at Branton on 1st and at Tynemouth on 6th. Three were at Colt Crag Reservoir on 2nd and at Prestwick Carr on 8th and one to two at a further 29 localities.

Single birds showing characteristics of the **Eastern race** *P.c.abietinus* were at Holy Island on 7th and 26th (MJC/ADM), while **Siberian race** *P.c.tristis* birds were noted here on 6th (Chare Ends-ADM/TF), 15th (Excavations-ADM), 16th (School-TRD/JD), 19th (Village-BCh/AH), 21st (Vicars garden-MJC) and 29th-30th (Straight Lonnen-MJC/ADM).

**Yellow-browed Warbler** *Phylloscopus inornatus*

There was another good showing of this increasingly regular Siberian visitor, particularly from Holy Island where one on 3rd rose to four on 4th, six on 5th, seven on 6th and a peak of 12 on 7th. One was present here from 8th-10th before a further influx, with two on 15th rising to five on 19th and singles on 21st and 30th-31st (MJC/AH/ASJ/ADM *et al.*) Elsewhere, a conservative estimate of seven individuals was submitted from Budle Point during the period 1st-7th, with a peak of three on 6th (CGK/GPK). A maximum of three were noted at St Mary's Island on 1st and 6th, with further counts from here of two on 4th and 9th and singles on 3rd and 10th. Two were noted at Tynemouth on 4th, Bamburgh on 5th, Low Hauxley on 9th, Low Newton on 13th and Craster on 16th and one, perhaps two, birds were at Newbiggin on 5th. Reports of singles came from Bamburgh on 1st and 7th-8th, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Howick Hall, Longhoughton and Seaton Point (Boulmer) on 5th, Berwick on 7th, Brierdene (Whitley Bay) on 8th, Lynemouth on 9th, Newbiggin and Rockcliffe on 12th, Ross Village on 14th and 17th, Warkworth on 18th and Low Hauxley on 19th. In addition, single birds ventured a little way inland and attached themselves to tit flocks at Widdrington Station on 5th and West Monkseaton on 9th, while much more unusual was another well inland at Grindon Lough on 17th.

**Greenish Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochiloides*

The bird reported last month at Holy Island (Vicar's garden) remained to 7th (BCh/MJC/AH/ASJ/ADM).

**Acrocephalus warbler sp.**

An unidentified *Acro.* was noted at St Mary's Island on 12th (IJ).

**Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Singles were at Cresswell Pond on 5th, Holy Island (Excavations) on 6th, Holy Island Lough on 7th, Bamburgh on 8th, Low Newton on 13th and another at Bamburgh on 21st.

**Grasshopper Warbler** *Locustella naevia*

One was at Holy Island on 7th (BCh).



**Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla*

Birds arrived at Holy Island during two noticeable falls, with nine to 11 from 6th-7th and 45 on 15th; three to six were noted here from 19th-21st and one to two on four other dates (MJC/BCh/AH/ADM/SR). Eleven were trapped and ringed at Bamburgh during the month. Elsewhere two were at St Mary's Island from 4th-5th and 12th-15th, while two were also noted at North Seaton Colliery, Fenham-le-Moor and Low Newton on 13th and at Craster on 16th. Singles were reported from Derwent Reservoir on 18th, Ellington on 12th, Leazes Park on 28th, Newbiggin on 12th and 19th, Ross on 14th and 17th and Tynemouth on 6th and 19th.

**Garden Warbler** *Sylvia borin*

Singles were at Bamburgh on 5th (BRS), Newbiggin on 6th (GB) and 14th (TB) and Holy Island on 15th (BS).

**Barred Warbler** *Sylvia nisoria*

Two were at St Mary's Island from 4th-17th (AC/ASJ *et al.*), while singles were noted at Holy Island (Snook) on 7th, Holy Island (Straight Lonnen) on 8th and Newbiggin from 12th-14th.



A Barred Warbler feasts at St.Mary's by Alan Jack on 14th October

**Lesser Whitethroat** *Sylvia curruca*

The peak count from Holy Island was five on 6th (RA/AH/BCh/ADM), with two there on 7th and singles on 5th and 15th. Elsewhere, singles were noted St Mary's Island on 5th, 7th, 12th and 28th, Newbiggin from 5th-6th, Hadston Links on 8th and Bamburgh on 21st.

A bird showing characteristics of the **Siberian race** *S.c.blythi* was at Holy Island north dunes from 15th-26th, while it or another was at The Snook on 20th. What may have been another bird was on the Straight Lonnen on 30th, with presumably the same individual on the Crooked Lonnen on 31st (MJC/ADM/BCh)

**Whitethroat** *Sylvia communis*

One was at Budle Bay on 2nd (CGK/GPK).

**Goldcrest** *Regulus regulus*

Large numbers arrived at Holy Island with a 'fall' of thrushes; numbers rose from 13 on 4th, 33 on 5th and 85 on 6th to peak at 152 on 7th (MJC/AH/ASJ/ADM). Later in the month another influx produced 40-50 on 15th and 19th, declining to 15 by 20th. Elsewhere, other notable counts included 27 at Craster on 16th, 20 at Budle Point on 6th, 20+ at St Mary's Island on 13th and 14 at Low Cocklaw on 24th. Inland, about ten were noted at Painsdale Burn (Haltwhistle) on 2nd. One to six were reported from a further 13 coastal and seven inland localities.



A Goldcrest on Holy Island by Mike Carr on 7th October

**Wren** *Troglodytes troglodytes*

37 at Craster on 16th was a good count (MJC). On Holy Island numbers fluctuated, beginning with 16 on 5th and seven on 6th; later in the month eight were noted on 15th and there was a further influx at the end of the month with ten on 21st, 12 on 24th, nine on 26th and 30th and a peak of 17 on 31st. Ten were trapped and ringed at Bamburgh during the month, nine were at Ross on 22nd and singles at Jesmond Dene and St Mary's Island.



A Wren at Druridge Pools by Chris Barlow on 29th October



**Nuthatch** *Sitta europaea*

There were eight at Bolam Lake on 29th (LJM), while elsewhere one to two were noted at Bedlington, Cramlington (Valley Park), Derwent Reservoir, Harbottle, Jesmond Dene, Leazes Park, Low Alwinton and Woodhorn Church.

**Treecreeper** *Certhia familiaris*

Counts of three came from Colt Crag Reservoir and Craster, two were at East Sleekburn and two were trapped and ringed at Bamburgh, while singles were noted at Airy Holm Reservoir, Brierdene (Whitley Bay), Corbridge, Cresswell, Derwent Reservoir, Prestwick Carr, Tynemouth, Wark (North Tyne) and Woodhorn Church.

**Rose-coloured Starling** *Pastor roseus*

One frequented a Bedlington garden from 17th-30th (Jack Earl/TB/PG *et al.*).



The popular Rose-coloured Starling in a Bedlington garden  
by Jack Earle on 18th October

**Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris*

Flocks moving towards roosting sites included 2,000 E over Prestwick Carr on 30th (GB) and 1,500 N at Budle Bay on 11th. Large gatherings of 1,600 were in fields at Cocklawburn on 29th and 800 near Shilbottle on 28th, while 250 were at Whittingham on 13th, 200 at Derwent Reservoir on 15th and up to 110 at Newbiggin (Quarry Cottage).

**Ring Ouzel** *Turdus torquatus*

It was an excellent month with coastal passage evident from 5th when one was at Holy Island, rising to 20 on the following day. A large influx on 7th produced an estimated 42 across the island, with only one remaining on 8th. Elsewhere during this period ten were at Budle Point on 6th and four here on 7th, while two to three were noted at Newbiggin on 6th and singles at Bamburgh and in-off at Seaton Sluice on 7th and at Low Hauxley on 9th; inland one flew S with Redwings *Turdus iliacus* at Colt Crag Reservoir on 7th and another was at Widdrington Moor Lake on 11th. A second arrival brought a further 12 to Holy Island on 15th, with one to two here on 19th, 21st and 29th. Four were at Budle Point on 12th and one here on 26th.

**Blackbird** *Turdus merula*

Peak numbers at Holy Island were 750 on 6th and 800 on 7th (MJC/AH/ASJ/ADM), while a further 120 arrived on 15th. Smaller island counts included 70 on 29th, 40-50 on 20th-21st and 25-27 on 30th-31st. Elsewhere, 30+ were at Bamburgh on 14th, 25 and 15 at Ross on 22nd and 17th respectively, 24 at Craster on 16th and 20 at Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 13th and in a Tynemouth garden on 21st. At least seven flew S with large numbers of Redwings *Turdus iliacus* at Colt Crag Reservoir on 7th, six were at Beal Point-Longbridge End on 20th, up to three at Newbiggin (Quarry Cottage) and one at Jesmond Dene.



**Fieldfare** *Turdus pilaris*

The first arrivals were two at Holy Island and one at Bamburgh on 5th, followed by 70 at Holy Island on 6th. A modest influx occurred during the final week of the month, with peak counts of 80 at Mindrum on 31st (RPo), 40 near Alwinton on 27th, 34 at Crooked Oak on 31st, 23 at Colt Crag Reservoir and 20 at Holy Island on 29th, 17 at Bellshiel Law (Rochester) on 27th and ten at Ross Village on 28th. One to six were reported from a further nine localities.

**Redwing** *Turdus iliacus*

On Holy Island, 112-128 on 4th-5th rose to 1,400 on the following day. A significant arrival on 7th produced a minimum 7,581 on the island, many of which passed straight through towards the mainland (MJC/AH/ASJ/ADM). On the same day a total of at least 2,570 flew S at Colt Crag Reservoir during the morning (MR) and 400 were at Alnwick Moor. Further passage at Holy Island during the month included 1,007 on 15th and 450 on 19th, while 400 were noted at Budle Point on 4th (from 30 the previous day). Elsewhere, 171 were at Ross Village on 14th and 90 here on 17th and at Gosforth Garden Village 100 moved S on 8th and 150 W on 9th. Flocks of 66-80 were moving W-SW at Bamburgh, Colt Crag Reservoir, Exhibition Park and Plessey Woods from 7th-9th, while there were further counts of 40-58 from Holy Island on 8th and 20th, 30-50 at Gosforth Garden Village on 5th, 10th and 20th and 40 at Howdon on 7th. In addition, 39 were noted at Exhibition Park on 3rd, 30-35+ at Bamburgh on 5th and 8th and 30 at Prestwick Carr on 8th and at Derwent Reservoir on 14th. One to 25 were noted at a further 23 widespread localities.



A Redwing at St. Mary's  
by Alan Jack  
17th October

**Song Thrush** *Turdus philomelos*

Peak counts at Holy Island were 450 on 6th and 353 on 7th (MJC/AH/ASJ/ADM), while a further 35-38 arrived on 13th-15th and 50 on 19th. Elsewhere, ten+ were at Bamburgh on 14th, while eight were noted at Newbiggin on 6th, St Mary's-Hartley on 7th and Gosforth Garden Village on 8th. Four were at Cramlington (Barns Park) on 12th and Craster on 16th and one at Jesmond Dene on 20th.

**Mistle Thrush** *Turdus viscivorus*

The largest gatherings were 13 at Simonside on 3rd (TRD/JD) and 12 at Low Cocklaw on 7th. Seven were at Bellshiel Law (Rochester) on 27th, while six moved S with a large influx of Redwings *Turdus iliacus* at Colt Crag Reservoir on 7th; five were at Bamburgh on 5th and four at Linbriggs (Upper Coquetdale) on 6th. Small numbers arriving at Holy Island included three on 6th-7th and singles on 13th, 15th and 20th. One to two were also noted at Big Waters, Gosforth, Harbottle, Leazes Park, Ross Village and Wark (North Tyne).

**Spotted Flycatcher** *Muscicapa striata*

A late bird was at Holy Island (Vicar's garden) from 29th-31st (MJC/ADM).



A Spotted Flycatcher on Holy Island  
by Mike Carr on 29th October

**Robin** *Erithacus rubecula*

Notable influxes occurred on Holy Island with 200 on 15th (MJC/BCh/AH/ADM/SR) and 93-100 on 6th-7th. There were counts of 50+ from Boulmer and 38 at Craster on 16th, while later in the month a further 25-30 were at Holy Island on 29th-30th. A total of 13 were trapped and ringed at Bamburgh during the month, two were noted at Rockcliffe and one at Jesmond Dene.

**Black Redstart** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

A female type was at North Blyth on 11th-12th (ADMc).

**Redstart** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

One to five were at Holy Island from 5th-8th, with a peak on 6th (RA/AH/BCh/ADM), while elsewhere during this period singles were noted at Lynemouth on 5th, Seaton Sluice WT on 7th, Berwick on 8th and St Mary's Island on 9th. The final record was another single at Holy Island on 19th.

**Whinchat** *Saxicola rubetra*

Two were at Holy Island on 6th-7th and singles here on 15th and 20th. Singles were also noted at Lynemouth on 7th, Newbiggin on 15th and Seaton Point (Boulmer) on 15th-16th.

**Stonechat** *Saxicola rubicola*

Peak counts were seven at St Mary's Island on 12th (ASJ), five at Cocklawburn Pond on 24th, Goswick-Longbridge End on 23rd and Holy Island on 15th and 24th and four at Bamburgh on 5th and at Chillingham Moor on 28th. Up to three were noted at Colt Crag Reservoir, Ross and Swallow Pond, while one to two were reported from Alnwick Moor, Berwick (Spittal), Buston Links, Cowden (A68), Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Grindon Lough, Howick, Ingram Valley, Longframlington Common, Low Newton, Lynemouth Flash, Newbiggin, Whittingham and Woodhorn Flash



**Wheatear** *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Two were at Holy Island (The Ouze) on 11th (IK) and singles at St Mary's Island on 5th and 7th, Berwick Little Beach on 13th, Ross on 14th and Holy Island Lough on 15th.



A Wheatear at Guile Point by Mike Carr on 14th October

**Dipper** *Cinclus cinclus*

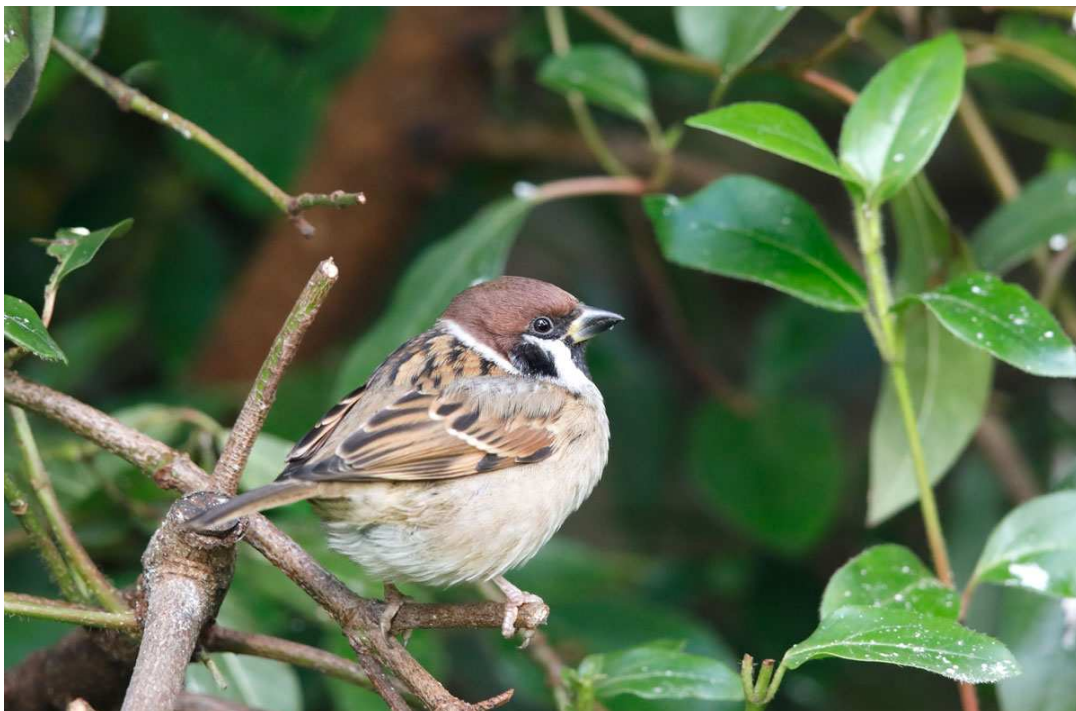
Two were at Thrum Mill (Rothbury) on 1st, and at Milkwell (Corbridge) on 2nd. Single birds were seen at eight sites including a site first at Seaton Sluice Harbour.

**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*

Only two reports this month, with up 80 at a Newbiggin garden all month and 70 plus at Cullercoats on 2nd (MN).

**Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus*

Migration was evident this month with an impressive count of 230 flying S. at Tynemouth in two hours on 12th (DRW). 18 flew S. at Spittal (Newbiggin) on 5th (GB). 17 flew S. at St. Mary's on 14th and 11 on 17th (ASJ). 25 were at Bell's Farm (Cresswell) on 21st, and at Widdrington Moor on 29th (CDH/MH/AA). 22 in a Corbridge garden on 17th. 20 birds were along a hedgerow at Prestwick Carr on 8th. One to 19 birds were at a further 13 sites.



A Tree Sparrow at Tynemouth by Colin Bradshaw on 19th October



**Dunnock** *Prunella modularis*

19 were counted at Craster on 16th (MJC). 12 were trapped and ringed at Bamburgh this month. 8 were at St. Mary's on 10th and 14th (ASJ). Two to three at three other sites.



Dunnock at Tynemouth by Colin Bradshaw on 19th October

**Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*

Five were at Lynemouth on 9th and at River Wansbeck at Morpeth on 15th (MJC/IRD). Three were in Jesmond Dene on 7th (MJCo). One to two seen at a further 21 locations.

**Pied Wagtail** *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

A good count was 54 at Prestwick Carr on 30th (GB). 16 were at Colt Crag on 2nd and 15 flying over Hazelrigg at dusk on 5th (MR/GB). A family group of four was at Newbiggin during the month (RS).

**Richard's Pipit** *Anthus richardi*

One was heard but not seen at St. Mary's Wetland on 15th (CB).

**Meadow Pipit** *Anthus pratensis*

50 were at Colt Crag on 7th. 33 were noted on Holy Island and 11 at Fenham Le Moor on (MR/MJC). 11 also on Holy Island on 21st and nearby, at Goswick 15 on 23rd. 17 flew S at Lynemouth on 9th and 16 likewise at Newbiggin on 8th and 15 at St. Mary's on 10th (MJC/ASJ). Six were seen at Derwent Reservoir on 28th and five at St. Mary's on 27th. Light passage S was noted at Cramlington and Cullercoats during the month.

**Olive-backed Pipit** *Anthus hodgsoni*

One was found at Straight Lonnen (Holy Island) on 7th but not seen again (ME).

**Water Pipit** *Anthus spinoletta*

One was at Seaton Point (Boulmer) on 28th (CSa). One was also at Lynemouth on that day (AP).

**Rock Pipit** *Anthus petrosus*

Some excellent numbers were seen this month. 33 were noted along Holy Island north shore on 24th and 26 were counted across the island on 21st. 22 were seen at Fenham Le Moor on 13th (MJC). 20 were at Annstead Point on 31st (TF). 11 were seen at Ross on 22nd and 10 at Boulmer on 25th. One to eight were at a further ten sites.

**Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelebs*

A total of 79 were counted across Holy Island on 7th, including 40 at the Strawberry Field (MJC/ASJ/ADM/AH). 30 were at Crooked Oak on 31st (IFo). 22 noted at Pier House (Berwick) on 21st (MHu). Eight were between Goswick and Longbridge End on 23rd and six at Holy Island on 29th.

**Brambling** *Fringilla montifringilla*

A substantial arrival occurred at Holy Island on 7th, with a total of 341 birds counted during the day. This included 100 feeding in the Strawberry Field area and 231 birds moving through W from the island towards the mainland (MJC/AH/ASJ/ADM). One to 14 birds were also seen on the island on several dates between 8th and 31st. Inland, a large feeding flock was seen in beech trees at Longframlington on 24th (JD). Nine were seen at Craster on 16th. 20 flew S at Gosforth on 8th (MJC). One to three were noted at eight further sites.

**Hawfinch** *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

One arrived and was watched drinking from a puddle at Coomb's Farm (Holy Island) on 7th before being flushed by dogs (ASJ).

**Bullfinch** *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Counts of ten were made at Swallow Pond on 24th and at Howick on 30th (GPK/PHA/AHA). Nine were at Craster on 16th (MJC). Eight attended garden feeders at Rothbury all month. Also on 30th, six were seen at Airy Holm Reservoir (IFo). Five were at East Sleekburn on 24th and a family group of four was at Spittal (Newbiggin) on 27th. One to three were seen at a further 13 sites during the month.

**Greenfinch** *Chloris chloris*

35 fed on rosehips at St. Mary's on 8th, with 20+ here on 19th (ASJ/MSH). 30 at Alnmouth G.C. on 30th fed on Sea Buckthorn berries (AB/LB). One to five at five other sites.



Not as common a sight these days.  
A Greenfinch at Tynemouth by Alan Jack on 23rd October

**Twite** *Carduelis flavirostris*

A large flock of 220 was noted at Goswick on 23rd with up to 62 at nearby Longbridge End on 27th and 30th (MJC/IDa/KDa). 30 on 21st at St. Mary's Island were unusual for this site (ASJ/BG). On Holy Island, up to 53 were seen by many observers from 19th to month's end. 23 flew S at Ross on 22nd and 22 were at Cocklawburn that day. 15 at Warkworth Gut on 29th. One to ten were seen at five other sites.



**Linnet** *Carduelis cannabina*

A large flock of 210 was seen leaving a roost at first light at Beal on 27th (ASJ). 191 were counted between Longbridge End and Goswick on 23rd (MJC). 130 were at Cocklawburn on 3rd (MHu). 60 were seen at Hallington on 14th (MR). 41 were at Holy Island north shore on 24th (MJC) and 22 at Ross on 22nd. One to 18 were observed at a further five sites this month.

**Common Redpoll** *Carduelis flammea*

Five were noted at St. Mary's, before flying S on 30th (ASJ). A single was observed heading SW from the Vicar's garden (Holy Island) on 21st (MJC).

**Lesser Redpoll** *Carduelis caberet*

A flock of 100 was at Colt Crag on 7th (MR) and 20 were at Howick Hall on 30th (PHa/AHa). Two coastal birds were seen at Bamburgh on 3rd and at Druridge Pools on 22nd. Five were at East Sleekburn on 21st with one to at four other sites.

**Crossbill** *Loxia curvirostra*

16 were seen at Hindhope Linn (Kielder) on 16th (AJH) and one to two at six other woodland sites.

**Goldfinch** *Carduelis carduelis*

60+ were at East Chevington on 3rd and at Bamburgh on 5th (MN/BRS). 45 were trapped and ringed at Bamburgh during the month. 40 spent the month at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) (RS). 40 were also at St. Mary's on several dates, with 30+ there on 19th (ASJ/MSH). 30 were also at Q.E.11 lake on 12th, Beal Point on 20th and East Cramlington on 28th. 29 were at Hallington on 14th. One to 12 were at eight further sites.

**Siskin** *Carduelis spinus*

Notable coastal movements were reported this month with a total of 680 seen at Budle Point between 21st and 26th, with a peak of 270 on 21st (RA/CGK/GPK). 150+ in small parties flew N at Bamburgh on 28th (BRS). At Ross, 147 arrived in off the sea on 22nd, with 55 here on 28th (MJC). 40 were at East Sleekburn on 21st (JR). 30 were feeding in alders at Derwent Reservoir on 14th (IFo). One to 25 were at nine other locations.

**Yellowhammer** *Emberiza citinella*

16 seen at West Ord on 13th and 15 at Beal and Low Cocklaw on 27th (MHU/ASJ/TBr). 11 between Goswick and Longbridge End on 23rd (MJC). One to five at eight other sites during the month, including a single on Holy Island.

**Little Bunting** *Emberiza pusilla*

One was heard calling, then found in elder bushes at the "mounds", St. Mary's on 16th (ASJ). It was flushed by dogs, then seen again in the gully near the wetland later that day (AC).

**Reed bunting** *Emberiza schoeniclus*

26 was a good count at St. Mary's on 16th, with 15 there on 5th and 20 at Boulmer on 16th (ASJ/BS). One to five were at a further five sites.

**Lapland Bunting** *Calcarius lapponicus*

Three were seen at Beal Point/Longbridge End on with singles seen in that area on three other dates (MJC/IBDa/KDa). One flew over Straight Lonnen (Holy Island) on 15th.

**Snow Bunting** *Plectrophenax nivalis*

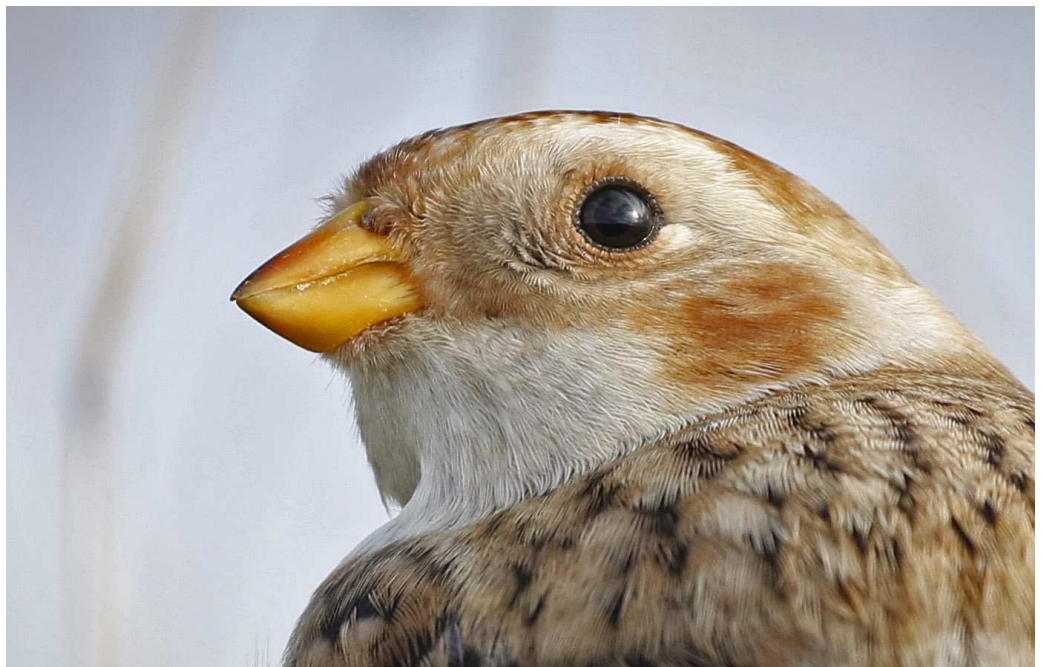
The first of the month were singles seen at Lynemouth on 3rd and Holy Island village on 4th and Newbiggin on 5th (MJC/GB). Five flew S at Ross on 14th. Four were at Holy Island on 24th and three here on 29th (MJC). Two were seen at Beal, Ross and again on Holy Island during the month and singles at all the above sites and at Boulmer.

A Snow Bunting up close

Holy Island

by Mike Carr

24th October





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

Three were still at Newton scrape until 1st (TRD/JD).

**Wood Duck** *Aix sponsa*

Unusual escapee with drake at St Mary's wetland on 13th and 17th (BS/AC).

**Hybrids**

No sightings

**Birds of Unknown Origin**

No sightings

**LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS**

R.Ahmed, A.Allen, A.H.Banks, M. & R.J.Bentley (MB/RB), T.Blake, J.S.Booth, G.Bowman, C.Bradshaw, T.Brewis (Tbr), A. & L.Bront, J.Bucknall (JBU), M.J.Carr, P.R.Cassells, B.Chambers (BCh), M.J.Cook (MJCo), E.Crabtree, A.Curry, T.Daley, I.B. & K.Davison (IBDa / KDa), T.R. & J.Dean, I.R.Douglas, J.Earl, T. & J.Farooqi (TF / JFa), I.Fisher, D.F.Forshaw, I.Forsyth (IFo), P.Gilbert, A.Hall, P.H. & A.Hanmer (PHa / AHa), A.S.Hart, C.Hartley, M.Henry, M.Hepple (MHp), 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, J.P.Lumby, P.R.Massey, L.J.McDougall, D.McKeown, A.D.Mclevy, M.McNeely (MMcN), T.Mitcham, A.D.Mould, M.Nattrass, A.J.Newson, N.F.Osborne, R.Poyer (RPo), A.Priest, A.J.Richards, J.Richardson, M.Richardson, C.Saunders (CSa), M.R.Smith, B.Steel, R.Stevens, D.R.Watson, T.Watson, C.Wright, K.W.York.

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), Helen Snaith (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).

North Northumberland Bird Club (R Poyer and J Lumby), Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

**Apologies for any accidental omissions**

Proof reading was by Mike Smith.

Mail distribution by Paul Stewart.

Clive Hammond is Data Manager

Edited by Steve Barrett [NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com](mailto:NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com)

**RECORD SUBMISSION**

Please email records for the month to [ntbc.records@googlemail.com](mailto: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](mailto: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: photographer, 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. 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 [ntbcorg@gmail.com](mailto:ntbcorg@gmail.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 [ntbcorg@jobentleyplus.com](mailto:ntbcorg@jobentleyplus.com) or [ntbcorg@gmail.com](mailto:ntbcorg@gmail.com)

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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://www.ntbc.org.uk)

## INLAND WEBS

### NEW LOCAL ORGANISER NEEDED

It's now 20 years since I picked up the role of Local Organiser for the Inland WeBS counts in Northumberland and if possible, I would like to hand over the reins in an organised fashion at some point before I die! OK, hopefully the latter point doesn't happen for a while yet but I'm sure you understand the sentiment. If anyone would like to take on the role from January 2020 I'd be delighted to hear from you. The effort required is around 2-3 hours per month and to suit your own timetable – a very basic knowledge of Excel would be of help. There is an end of year task for 'Birds in Northumbria' which requires a much stronger knowledge of Excel however I am happy to continue/help with this aspect for the foreseeable future. So, if you'd like to undertake a worthwhile role on behalf the NTBC, the BTO, RSPB, JNCC and WWT, a role which involves a bit of emailing, preparing tables, a bit of online data input and keeping in touch with the counters please do get in touch with me.

**Steve Holliday** 07786 213699

or email [steveholliday@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:steveholliday@hotmail.co.uk)

### Northumberland Locality and Tetrad List

This list was originally developed to help club members and others when doing tetrad surveys but we hope many will also use it for their monthly record submissions. Accurate names and locations of sites are just as important as the actual bird records for the historical context, and increases their value for searches regarding planning and development issues. This list has been updated and a new version is available as a download from our **website Recording page**.

The Committee are grateful to Mike Hodgson, John Day and Andy Mould for their work in bringing this list up to date.

**October Bulletin 2019**

**Photographic Supplement**



Whoopers at Lucker by Alan Jack on 27th October



A Goldeneye at Druridge Pools by Chris Barlow on 27th October





A Great Crested Grebe at Druridge Pools by Chris Barlow on 27th October



A Water Rail at Cresswell by Colin Bradshaw on 28th October





A Dunlin at Newton by Tim Dean on 1st October



A Turnstone at Newton by Tim Dean on 1st October





A Purple Sandpiper at Stag Rocks by Chris Barlow on 27th October



A Woodpigeon at Tynemouth by Colin Bradshaw on 12th October





The Amble Hoopoe by Duncan Watson on 5th October



A Song Thrush at St. Mary's by Colin Bradshaw on 15th October





A Robin at Tynemouth by Colin Bradshaw on 12th October



A Barred Warbler at St. Mary's by Colin Bradshaw on 19th October





A Lesser Whitethroat at Druridsge Pools by Chris Barlow on 29th October



A Blackcap at St. Mary's by Colin Bradshaw on 15th October





A Blue Tit at Tynemouth by Colin Bradshaw on 12th October



A Great Tit at Tynemouth by Colin Bradshaw on 19th October

# Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

**Bulletin 2019 No 11**

**MONTHLY SUMMARY November 2019**

**5th January 2020**



## CONTENTS

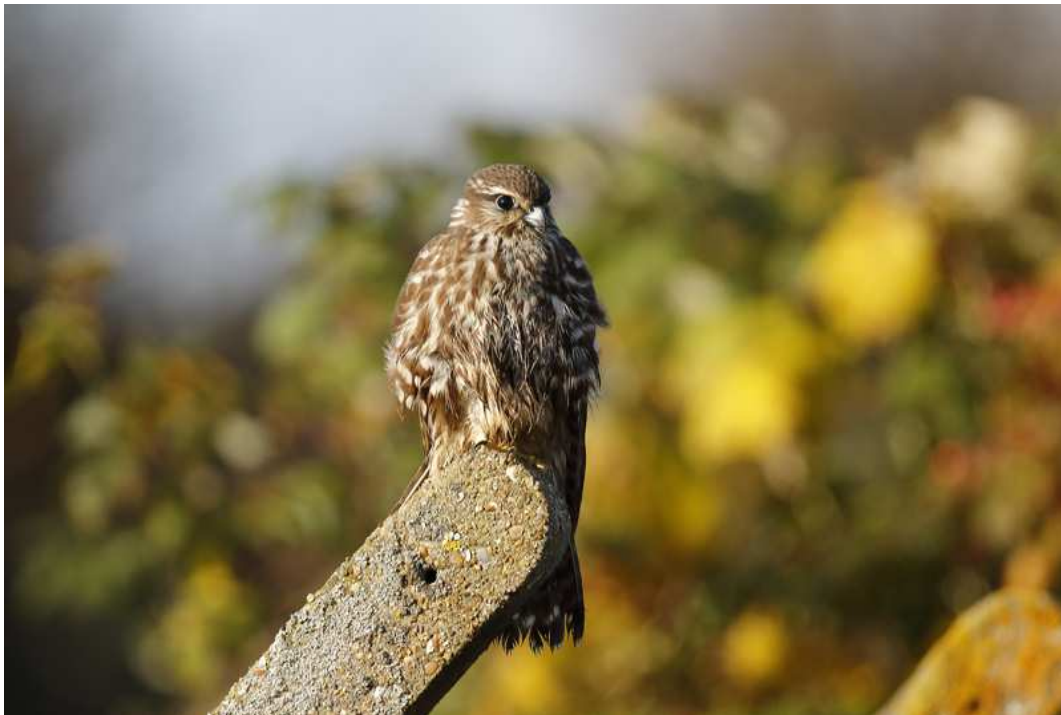
Urban Peregrines review

Alan Belshaw RIP

Birds in Northumbria - appeal for author

## CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS HIGHLIGHTS

Tundra Bean Goose	One over Holy Island on 9th.
Egyptian Goose	Three at Tynemouth / St Mary's then moved to Monks' House Pool.
American Wigeon	Returning drake still at Grindon Lough.
Black Scoter	Returning drake back at Cheswick/Goswick.
Sooty Shearwater	Single late bird off Snab Pt on 8th.
Red-necked Grebe	One or two at Newbiggin and Ross.
Black-necked Grebe	One past Seaton Sluice on 18th. Only fifth record for site.
Bittern	Single wintering at East Chevington.
Great White Egret	Late record at St Mary's on 3rd.
Long-billed Dowitcher	First-winter still present at Cresswell Pond all month.
Bonaparte's Gull	Adult at Stag Rocks, Bamburgh on 17th and 18th.
Glaucous Gull	Several records during month.
Iceland Gull	First-winter at North Shields Fish Quay from 12th.
Waxwing	Influx though mainly at Blyth and North Shields.
Shorelark	Single at Amble Links on 6th.
Cetti's Warbler	Still present at East Chevington.
Siberian Chiffchaff	One still at Holy Island school until 10th.
Firecrest	One at Newbiggin from 9th to 13th.
Spotted Flycatcher	One still on Holy Island until 10th making it joint latest ever in county.
Richard's Pipit	One at Holy Island Snook on 1st.
Water Pipit	Singles at Boulmer and Warkworth with three at Ross.
Hawfinch	One on Holy Island on 7th.
Lapland Bunting	Singles at Low Newton and Ross Back Sands.



A Merlin at Newbiggin Golf Club on 2nd November by Chris Barlow

## 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 9th January 2020.

See you there - **Steve Race on Wild Shetland**



**FIELD TRIPS**

Contact Steve Anderson [seaswan@btinternet.com](mailto:seaswan@btinternet.com)

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

3,000+ un-raced birds were at Fenham Flats on 2nd (ASJ). Records of pale-bellied *hrota* race birds included six N at Stag Rocks on 18th (MSH), four N at Newbiggin on 10th (GB), 200 at the Fenham-le-Moor and 200 at Beal Point areas of Lindisfarne NNR on 21st (TRD/JD), about 170 at Budle Bay on 29th (DF) and 57-152 there between 11th-30th, including 40 adults and 75 juveniles on 19th (DF/MSH/CGK). The only reports of dark-bellied *bernicla* birds came from Seaton Sluice, where a monthly total of 19 N included 13 N on 8th (SSWT).



A pale-bellied Brent Goose  
Fenham Flats  
by Alan Jack  
2nd November

**Canada Goose** *Branta canadensis*

Peak counts were 400 at Grindon Lough on 20th (MRS), 324 at Big Waters on 13th (a site record; AJJ per GB), 200 at Hartburn Reservoir on 14th (TB), 150 at Cresswell Pond on 20th (TB), 65-96 at Bothal Pond, Druridge Pools, and Killingworth and QEII CP Lakes, and 25-35 at Linton Ponds and West Hartford. Two to nine were also at Howdon and Newcastle Leazes Park.

**Barnacle Goose** *Branta leucopsis*

The Budle Bay-Harper's Heugh area held peaks of 1,800 on 9th and 20th (DF/CGK) and 1,000-1,600 between 10th-30th (DF/CGK/MSH *et al.*). Few were noted elsewhere, with 14-18 at Druridge on 9th-10th (MSH/IDR), five at Longhoughton Low Steads on 6th (BS) and one at Linton Ponds (CDH).

**Greylag Goose** *Anser anser*

826 at Big Waters on 13th (up from 556 on 1st) was a record count for the site (AJJ per GB). Other peak counts were 475 at Budle Bay on 30th (DF), 186 at Caistron on 17th (JD), 151 at Druridge Pools on 24th (IDR), and 41-68 at/over Cresswell and Linton Ponds, Grindon Lough and Wark. Two to 14 were also at Bothal Pond and QEII CP Lake.



**Pink-footed Goose** *Anser brachyrhynchus*

The largest gatherings involved 3,500 at Cresswell Pond on 20th (TB), 2,760 at a dusk roost at Widdrington Moor Lake on 1st (PRM), 2,200 at Longhoughton Low Steads on 9th (BS), 1,100 on stubble fields at St Mary's Island on 9th (AC), 1,000 at Hemscott Hill on 10th (TB), 1,000 on the west side of Cresswell Pond on 18th (MN), 550-800 at Blyth Links, Budle Bay, Druridge Pools, and Holywell Dene, and 200-300 at Big Waters, Holy Island, Newham Fen and Yearle. Groups of 12-50 were also at East Chevington, Red Row and Whitley Bay cemetery. A total of 150 N and 1,907 S at Seaton Sluice was a new November record count for the site (SSWT), 1,360 flew S at Ellington on 9th (TB), 385 S at Budle Bay on 18th (DF), about 360 S at Sandy Bay on 12th (BSt), a total of 300 S at Bilton Banks (near Shilbottle) on 16th and 20th (MKi), 300 S at North Shields on 30th (IJ), 60-200 N at Bamburgh, Castle Island, Cramlington, Holy Island and Stakeford, and 55-120 S at Newbiggin, Newham Fen, Newton Point, St Mary's and Tynemouth between 9th-19th. Far fewer were noted further inland, with 158 E at Shilbottle on 5th (MKi), 100 NE at Colt Crag Reservoir on 11th (MR), 80 SE at Derwent Reservoir on 8th (IFo), and 45-80 in various directions over Arcot Pond, Longhorsley, Prestwick Carr and Stamfordham. At Holy Island, flocks of about 500 N on 5th and about 1,000 N on 8th were not thought to be 'local' birds (ADM).



Pinkfeet landing at Cresswell Pond by John Richards on 6th November

**Tundra Bean Goose** *Anser serrirostris*

One flew S at Holy Island Snook on 9th (PRM).

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

Single Eurasian *albifrons* race birds were at Druridge Pools on 24th (TF) and Big Waters from 27th-30th (AJJ per GB).

**Mute Swan** *Cygnus olor*

Two flew N at Seaton Sluice on 3rd (SSWT). Peak counts were 64 at QEII CP Lake on 4th (DM/LJM), 45 at Hartburn Reservoir on 14th (TB), 41 at Killingworth Lake on 11th (LJM), and 40 (29 adults) at Big Waters on 1st (AJJ per GB), 16-22 at Bothal Pond, East Chevington and Howdon, and six to eight at Holy Island and Linton Ponds and Warkworth

**Whooper Swan** *Cygnus cygnus*

About 12 flew S at Newbiggin on 15th (BSt). Numbers in the Shortridge Hall, Warkworth area peaked at 50 on 30th (IBDa/KDa), with 25-48 between 12th-24th. The latter count, on 24th, included 45 adults (TD). Elsewhere, peak counts were 24 at Hemscott Hill on 4th (DM/LJM), 16 at Branton GP on 24th (IBDa/KDa), 16 (14 adults) at Low Newton scrape on 13th (TRD/JD), 14 at Hedgeley GP on 10th (IBDa/KDa), 12 (nine adults) at East Chevington on 10th (IK), and ten (seven adults) at Budle Bay on 30th (CGK). Four to six were also noted at Cresswell Pond, Prestwick Carr and Seaton Point (Boulmer), and one to two at Big Waters, Druridge Pools and East Chevington.

**Egyptian Goose** *Alopochen aegyptiaca*

Three N off Tynemouth on 9th (DRW) arrived in a stubble field containing some Pink-footed Geese a short while later at St Mary's Island (AC) and were still present there on 10th (JBu). Presumably, the same three individuals were at Monks' House Pool on 13th (MSH).

**Shelduck** *Tadorna tadorna*

An above average (for November) ten flew N at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). A peak of 490 was noted at Budle Bay on 2nd (DF), 82 were at Beal on 3rd (DF), and three at the Blyth Estuary on 10th (LJM). Singles were also at Cresswell Pond and Druridge Pools on two dates (TRD/JD/IDR).



Shelduck at Fenham Mill by Tim Dean on 21st November

**Mandarin** *Aix galericulata*

Two drakes were in a flooded field at Ridley Stokoe on 14th (TB) and a duck (along with a female Goosander) flew along the South Tyne there on 19th (MH/AA).

**Shoveler** *Spatula clypeata*

Six flew N at Ross Back Sands on 30th (MJC). Budle Bay continued to attract substantial numbers throughout the month, with a peak of 77 on 30th (CGK). Peak counts elsewhere were 32 at Gosforth Park NR on 24th (MJC/DJC), 30 at Holywell Pond on 2nd, 30 at Druridge Pools on 24th (IDR), 29 at Linton Ponds on 10th (CDH), and five to nine at Arcot Pond, East Chevington, Killingworth Lake and Low Newton scrape. Three were at Big Waters and Marden Quarry, and one to two at Grindon Lough and Holy Island 'rocket field pools'.

**Gadwall** *Mareca strepera*

Two moved N at Seaton Sluice on 14th (SSWT). Peak concentrations were 42 at Linton Ponds on 10th (CDH), 30 at Big Waters on 1st (AJJ per GB), 23 at Castron on 17th (JD), 22 at St Mary's Wetland on 2nd (MSH), 13-16 at the Blyth Estuary, Bothal Pond, East Chevington and Killingworth Lake, and five to nine at Arcot Pond, Druridge Pools and Howdon. Two to three were also at Budle Bay, Ladyburn Lake and Rockcliffe.

**Wigeon** *Mareca penelope*

The Seaton Sluice monthly total was 438 N and eight S (SSWT), and a total of 22 moved N at St Mary's Island on 7th and 14th (MSH). 1,050 were counted at Budle Bay on 2nd (KWY), 850 were at Cresswell Pond on 6th (AJR), 471 at Big Waters on 30th (MM per GB), 340-363 at the Coquet Estuary (RPo) and Druridge Pools (IDR), and 107-180 at Derwent Reservoir, Grindon Lough, Linton Ponds and Low Newton scrape. Groups of 70-98 were at Bothal Pond, Castron and off Seaton Point (Boulmer), while 37-45 were at Backworth Pond, Colt Crag Reservoir and off Ross Back Sands. More unusual were six at Airy Holm Reservoir (where the species is typically scarce) on 1st (IFo).

**American Wigeon** *Mareca americana*

A drake was at Grindon Lough on 13th (PRM) and 20th (MRS).

**Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*

A total of 21 moved N at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). Largest concentrations involved 322 at Derwent Reservoir on 4th (IFo), 133 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 21st (MR), 100 at Budle Bay on 2nd (DF/KWY), 100 at Castle Island on 17th (DM/PJA), 50-69 at Druridge Pools (IDR), Holywell Pond (KWY), Lynemouth Flash (MSH) and Newcastle Leazes Park (DM), and 17-45 at Arcot and Linton Ponds, Bothal Pond (TD), Big Waters, Boulmer flash, Ladyburn Lake, Low Newton, Newcastle Exhibition Park, St Mary's Wetland and Wark and Warkworth weir.

**Pintail** *Anas acuta*

The only reports concerned two at Budle Bay on 2nd (KWY), and singles at Big Waters on 1st (AJJ *per* GB), Colt Crag Reservoir between 4th-18th (MR), Cresswell Pond on 4th (DM/LJM/ADM<sub>c</sub>) and Druridge Pools on 17th (IDR).

**Teal** *Anas crecca*

A below-average 67 flew N and 14 S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). Budle Bay held a peak of 600 on 30th (CGK), 370 were at the 'rocket field pools', Holy Island on 27th (IK), 303 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 11th (MR), 300 at Cresswell Pond on 6th (AJR), 223 at Druridge Pools (IDR), and 100-169 at Derwent Reservoir, Grindon Lough and St Mary's Wetland. Counts of 50-93 came from Arcot, Bothal and Holywell Ponds, Big Waters, the Blyth Estuary, Castle Island, Low Newton scrape and Prestwick Carr, while 15-47 were at off Ross Back Sands and at Widdrington Moor Lake.

**Pochard** *Aythya ferina*

18 at Bothal Pond on 21st (TD) was the sole double-figure count. Seven were at Killingworth Lake on 11th (LJM), six at Big Waters on 2nd (GB), six at Widdrington Moor Lake on 24th (TF), and singles at Cresswell Pond and Ladyburn Lake.

**Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula*

A total of 16 flew N at Seaton Sluice between 4th-16th (SSWT). Peak counts were 70 at East Chevington on 4th (DM/LJM), 64 at Longhoughton Quarry Pond on 10th (BS), 54 at Killingworth Lake on 11th (LJM), 50 at Swallow Pond on 1st, 45-48 at Caistron, Hallington Reservoir and Swallow Pond, 21-33 at Big Waters, Bothal Pond, and QEII CP and Tynemouth Boating Lakes, and 11-17 at Arcot and Linton Ponds, and Castle Island. Six to nine were also at Colt Crag Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough, Ladyburn Lake and 'Northumberlandia' (Cramlington), and three at Derwent Reservoir and Jesmond Dene, and Newcastle Leazes Park.

**Scaup** *Aythya marila*

One flew N at Boulmer on 5th (BS). Cresswell Pond held four on 17th and 23rd (CDB/ADM<sub>c</sub>), three on 4th and 9th (MSH/ADM<sub>c</sub>), and one to two on various dates between 1st-23rd (CB/CH/PRM *et al.*). Singles were also at Big Waters on 29th (AJJ *per* GB), Holywell Pond on 2nd, Ladyburn Lake on 23rd (CB), Widdrington Moor Lake on 2nd (TB). One was further inland at Hallington Reservoir on 18th (MR).

A Scaup at Cresswell Pond  
by John Richards on 6th November

**Eider** *Somateria mollissima*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 448 N and 54 S (SSWT). A total of 51 moved N at Stag Rocks on 15th and 17th (DF) and three N at Holy Island. Blyth Harbour held 105 on 22nd (STH), 53 were off Ross Back Sands on 30th (MJC), 40 at Rockcliffe, Whitley Bay (IJ) and 16 at Boulmer. Two to nine were also at Amble Harbour, North Shields Fish Quay, Tynemouth and Warkworth weir.

**Velvet Scoter** *Melanitta fusca*

16 flew N and three S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). Northerly movement also involved three at Holy Island on 8th (PRM), two at the Long Nanny Estuary on 10th (IRD), two at St Mary's on 7th (JBu), and singles at Hadston on 12th (MH/AA), Snab Point on 5th (MH/AA) and Tynemouth on 8th (DRW). Nine were off Cheswick Black Rocks on 8th (CH) and one to two at nearby Cocklawburn on several dates (DF/CH). Two were off Ross Back Sands on 6th (CH).

**Common Scoter** *Melanitta nigra*

At Seaton Sluice, 1,519 flew N and 254 S during the month, including 643 N on 5th (SSWT), 430 moved N at Howick in four hours on 5th (BS), a total of 104 N at St Mary's between 6th-29th (MSH), and seven at Holy Island and Newton Point. A minimum of 1,320 at Cocklawburn on 6th contained 92% adult females (DF) and 1,200 were in the Cheswick-Goswick area on 17th (CH), while 201 were off Ross Back Sands on 30th (MJC). Far fewer were noted in the south of the county, with 35 off Druridge Pools on 17th (IDR) and two to ten at Newbiggin and Whitley Bay. More unusual were two females/immatures at Widdrington Moor Lake on 1st (TRD) and 4th (CH).

**Black Scoter** *Melanitta americana*

The adult drake (with a distinctive bill mark) was off Cocklawburn on 2nd and Cheswick Black Rocks on 30th (CH).

**Long-tailed Duck** *Clangula hyemalis*

At Seaton Sluice, 21 flew N and one S during the month (SSWT), a total of 15 flew N at Howick on 5th (BS), three N at Holy Island on 8th (PRM), two N at Snab Point on 5th (ADM<sub>c</sub>), and singles N at Newbiggin on 10th and St Mary's on 7th. Largest counts typically came from the north and involved 63 off Ross Back Sands on 6th (MJC) and 50 there on 6th (CH), and one to four at Budle Point-Stag Rocks, Cheswick and Holy Island. Cresswell Pond attracted five on 1st (TRD/PRM/ADM<sub>c</sub>) and one to four regularly between 4th-24th (CB/CDB/ADM<sub>c</sub> *et al.*), and one was at Monks' House Pool on 6th and 24th (KWY).



**Goldeneye** *Bucephala clangula*

97 flew N and 15 S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), 36 N at Howick on 5th (BS) and five S at Cullernose Point on 4th (DF). Good numbers at East Chevington north pool included a peak of 60 on 24th (TF), 40 were at Castle Island on 17th (DM/PJA), 32 were at Berwick on 22nd (MJC), ten to 16 at Caistron, Derwent Reservoir, Football Hole, Grindon Lough, Howick and QEII CP Lake. Five to nine were at Arcot and Cresswell Ponds, Boulmer, Colt Crag and Hallington Reservoirs, Killingworth, QEII CP and Widdrington Moor Lakes, and off Ross Back Sands, and one to four at Big Waters, Bothal Pond, Branton GP, Budle Bay, Cocklawburn, Druridge Pools, Foxton Bend, Hauxley and Ladyburn Lake.

**Goosander** *Mergus merganser*

Three flew N and one S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT) and one moved N at Howick on 8th (BS). Any sizeable gatherings were absent, with peak counts being just five at Rothbury on 20th (MJC), and four at the Aln Estuary (MKi), Branton GP (JD) and Marden Quarry (KWY). One to two were found at Airy Holm and Colt Crag Reservoirs, Big Waters, Caistron, East Chevington, North Shields Fish Quay (flew upriver) and Warkworth.

**Red-breasted Merganser** *Mergus serrator*

A moderate three flew N and three S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). Peak counts involved 17 at St Cuthbert's Island, Holy Island on 3rd (IK), 12 off Ross Back Sands on 30th (MJC), and five at Blyth Estuary (ASH/AN), Cambois (CH), and Stag Rocks (DF). Three to four were at Widdrington Moor Lake on several dates between 1st-23rd (CB/TRD/MSH), and three were at Cresswell Pond on 24th (AJR), off Druridge-Chevington (JD/IDR). One to two were also at Castle Island, the Wansbeck Estuary and Warkworth weir.

**Black Grouse** *Tetrao tetrix*

A total of 13 were at Far Town (Slaggyford) on 13th following four there on 5th (JSe).

**Red Grouse** *Lagopus lagopus*

30 at Hedgehope on 18th was the largest count (IRD) and at Alnwick Moor on 30th a covey of nine were revealed by a hunting Harrier (sp) on an area that, immediately prior, appeared bereft of life (MH). Elsewhere a pair were on moss, rather than heather moor, north of Halton Lea Gate and a single was at Simonside.

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

11 were at Beanley on 10th (TRD/JD) and one flew out of a garden at Widdrington Village on 30th (TB).

**Grey Partridge** *Perdix perdix*

Good numbers were seen at Craster with 15 on 3rd (BS) rising to 27 on 13th (MJC). Nine were flushed from the dunes at East Chevington on 15th (MH), five were at Druridge Pools NR and a single was calling at dusk from a stubble field at Big Waters NWT.

**Pheasant** *Phasianus colchicus*

Numbers at Druridge Pools NR continue to rise with an impressive peak of 64 there on 24th (IDR). A grand total of 35 were at Nedderton (Bedlington) on 15th (TB), three juveniles were at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin), two were at Castle Island and Foxton Bend (Alnmouth) and singles were considered unusual sightings at both Howdon and Tynemouth.

**Diver (sp)**

An unidentified individual was at Rockcliffe on 14th (IJ).

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

The monthly total passing Seaton Sluice was 202 (85N and 117S). Totals of birds on the sea included 12 at both Cambois on 13th (CH) and Ross Back Sands/Old Law Dunes on 30th (MJC), ten at Stag Rocks on 13th (DF), six at Marden Rocks (Alnmouth) and five at Black Rocks (Cheswick) and Druridge. One to four were reported either on the sea or heading past at Cocklawburn, Holy Island, Howick, Low Newton-by-the-Sea, Newton Point, Rockcliffe and St Mary's.

**Black-throated Diver** *Gavia arctica*

Two headed N past Cullercoats on 6th (ASJ) whilst singles were seen at Seaton Sluice heading S on 14th and N on 15th (SSWT) and N past Tynemouth on 8th (DRW). Single birds were also at Holy Island, Marden Rocks (Alnmouth), Rockcliffe and Ross Back Sands/Old Law Dunes.

**Great Northern Diver** *Gavia immer*

The monthly total of two N constituted a "very poor November showing" at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). Elsewhere, one flew N and then another headed S past St Mary's on 14th (MSH), two were at Budle Point on 30th and singles were seen on other dates at Alnmouth Bay, Boulmer, Howick, Rockcliffe, Ross Back Sands, St Mary's, Stag Rocks and Tynemouth.

**Fulmar** *Fulmarus glacialis*

Seaton Sluice reported only five records of birds moving N between 3rd-16th, then three birds were present off Old Hartley from 26th (SSWT). Four were at Snab Point (Cresswell) on 23rd and a single flew N past St Mary's on 28th.

**Sooty Shearwater** *Puffinus griseus*

Three were offshore at Druridge Pools on 1st (IDR) and one was seen well at close range heading N past Snab Point (Cresswell) on 8th (EC/JSB).

**Manx Shearwater** *Puffinus puffinus*

17 were offshore of Druridge Pools on 1st (IDR).

**Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Winter numbers continued to build up on the R Tweed with 21 counted between Horncliffe-Gainslaw House on 19th (CH). East Chevington peaked at 16 on 1st and 5th, nine were at Castle Island on 17th and one to seven were at Arcot Pond, Big Waters NWT, the Blyth Estuary, Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), on the sea at Boulmer, Budle Bay, Caistron, Cresswell, Druridge Pools NR, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Grindon Lough, Hallington Reservoir, Hauxley, Killingworth Lake, Linton Pond, Newton Pool, QE11 CP Lake, St Mary's Wetland and Tyne Green (Hexham).



A Little Grebe at Cresswell Pond by Colin Bradshaw on 17th November

**Red-necked Grebe** *Podiceps grisegena*

Two were at Ross Back Sands/Old Law Dunes on 30th (MJC), following a report of a single there on 6th (CH), whilst a single was observed heading N past Church Point (Newbiggin) on 9th (GB).

**Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus*

As usual for the time of year, numbers reduced this month with a peak count of three at Widdrington Moor Lake on 8th (EC/JSB), two at Fenham Flats on 2nd (ASJ) and only single birds at Blyth Harbour, Druridge Pools and on the sea at Low Newton.

**Slavonian Grebe** *Podiceps auratus*

Numbers built up in the north of the county with a peak of five at Stag Rocks on 13th (DF) and four at Holy Island from 17th (IK). Four were also at Ross Back Sands/Old Law Dunes on 30th (MJC) and one to three were at Budle Point, Howick, Marden Rocks (Alnmouth) and Widdrington Moor Lake. An adult at Derwent Reservoir on 8th was only the fourth record at that site (IFo).

**Black-necked Grebe** *Podiceps nigrocollis*

One heading N past Seaton Sluice (having earlier been reported from Whitburn) on 18th was only the fifth site record of this species (SSWT).

**Bittern** *Botaurus stellaris*

One flew over Chibburn reed bed at East Chevington on 2nd (IRD).

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

The North Blyth staithes roost held eight on 9th (STH) and then ten on 29th (ASH). Druridge Pools peaked at six on 17th, three were at QE11 CP Lake and one to two were seen at Allenbanks NT, Castle Island, Cresswell, East Chevington, Holy Island, Linton Ponds, Seaton Sluice, Tyne Green CP (Hexham), Valley Park (Cramlington), Warkworth Weir and Widdrington Moor Lake.

**Great White Egret** *Ardea alba*

At St Mary's one flew S close inshore in company with a Little Egret on 3rd (JBu).

**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*

The peak count at Lindisfarne NNR was 11 at Fenham Flats on 2nd (ASJ). Five were at Longbridge End (Lindisfarne NNR) on 17th on one to three were at the Aln Estuary, Beal Point, Big Waters NWT, Bog Houses, Boulmer, Branton GP, Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond, Hedgeley GP, Holy Island, Horton Burn (Cramlington), Long Nanny (Newton), Ross Back Sands, Sleek Burn, Swallow Pond, and on the R. Wansbeck at North Seaton and in the estuary.



A Little Egret at Cresswell Pond by Colin Bradshaw on 10th November (above) and on 17th November by Chris Barlow





**Gannet** *Morus bassanus*

At Seaton Sluice some 1,000 were noted throughout the month, mainly heading N with max 260N on 5th and a late 115N on 28th. On the latter date only 10% were juveniles which was much reduced from earlier in the month (SSWT). A sea watch at Stag Rocks on 15th produced 28N and four S (DF).

**Shag** *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

A record site total for November at Seaton Sluice with a total of 17N and 156S including an obvious movement of 145S on 6th (SSWT). An "exceptional number" of birds was also reported from Cheswick/Goswick Beach with 80 present on 17th (CH). Elsewhere 49 were at Ross Back Sands/Old Law Dunes on 30th (MJC), 34 were feeding close offshore at Cocklawburn on 6th (DF), 15 headed S at Tynemouth on 17th (DRW) and one to three were at several other locations.

**Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

57 was the peak count at both North Shields Fish Quay on 18th (KWY) and Blyth Harbour on 24th (STH). At St Mary's 25 flew S and two N in 45 minutes during the morning of 6th (MSH), 14 were at Ross Back Sands/Old Law Dunes on 30th (MJC) and 12 were at Colt Crag Reservoir on 6th (MR). One to nine were at Amble Harbour, Berwick Hill Bridge, Big Waters NWT, Castle Island, Cocklawburn, Cresswell, Derwent Reservoir, East Chevington, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Gosforth Park NR, Hallington Reservoir, Jesmond Dene, Leazes Park and QE11 CP Lake.

**Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus*

Two birds were present at the following sites, Holy Island on 1st (MJC), Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth) on 2nd (TB), Berwick on 22nd (MJC) and at Cullercoats on 26th (IJ). Single birds were noted at 21 sites during the month including a female which caught a Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus* at West Hartford on 25th (TB).



A Sparrowhawk at Cresswell by Colin Bradshaw on 10th November

**Goshawk** *Accipiter gentilis*

Only one record this month of a male at Budle Bay on 30th which was the observer's first patch record (CGK).

**Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*

Two birds were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 2nd and 4th (TB) and two were at East Chevington on 2nd & 5th (IRD). Single birds were at East Chevington on several dates (EC/JSB *et al.*), Widdrington Moor Lake on 9th (MSH), Prestwick Carr on 22nd (EC/JSB), Budge Fields (Druridge) on 28th (ADM), Ellington on 29th (TB), Warkworth Lane (Ellington) (TB) and Big Waters NWT on 30th (GB).

**Hen Harrier** *Circus cyaneus*

A ringtail was noted at one site on 11th and an adult female was noted another site on 30th.

**Red Kite** *Milvus milvus*

The only record this month was of a bird at Crooked Oak (Carterway Heads) on 1st (IFo).

**Common Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*

Five birds were noted at Prestwick Carr on 6th (ASJ) and at Kylloe Woods on 19th (MJC), and four birds were at Broomley on 7th (AJ/AJN/ASH/IK/TW) and at Berwick on 22nd (MJC). Three birds were seen at Widdrington Moor Lake on 2nd (TB) and three were also at Elyhaugh (nr Felton) on 21st (MJC). One to two were reported from 17 sites this month.

**Water Rail** *Rallus aquaticus*

Three birds were calling at Holy Island Lough on 1st (MJC) and three were either seen or heard at Gosforth Park NR on 18th (AJ) and 24th (MJC/DJC). East Chevington had two birds on 2nd and 5th (IRD) and two on 18th (MN). Single birds were either seen or heard at Arcot Pond, Big Waters NWT, Caistron, Cresswell, Druridge Pools NR, East Chevington, and Holy Island and at St Mary's Wetland.

**Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*

18 birds were counted at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 5th (DM), 14 were at Killingworth Lake on 11th (LJM), 13 at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 4th (GB) and 11 at QEI CP on 4th (DM/LJM). Nine were feeding on a sheep pasture next to Merryshield Gravel Pits (Stocksfield) on 18th (DLe) and six were at QEII CP on 10th (CDH). Five were at Castle Island on 17th (DM/PJA). One to three were noted at nine sites.

**Coot** *Fulica atra*

A record WeBS count was of 120 birds at Linton Ponds on 10th (CDH), 82 were at Big Waters NWT on 1st (AJ *per* GB), 65 were counted at Killingworth Lake on 11th (LJM) and 43 at QEII CP Lake on 10th (CDH). Bothal Pond had 15 birds on 21st (CDH), 14 were at Low Newton on 7th (PRM) and 12 were at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 5th (DM). One to ten birds were noted at Arcot Pond, Druridge Pools NR, East Chevington, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Grindon Lough and Leazes Park (Newcastle).

**Oystercatcher** *Haematopus ostralegus*

The highest counts came from Budle Bay, with 125 on 9th (CGK) and 110 on 20th (DF). There was a monthly maximum of 66 in the Blyth Estuary on 2nd (LJM), 51 at the high-tide roost at Longhoughton Steel on 13th (MKi) and 50 at Cullercoats Bay on 5th (MN). 47 were noted at North Blyth staithes on 9th (STH) and 30 were at Low Newton scrapes on 7th (PRM). Counts of below 20 came from Hadston Carrs, Druridge, Newbiggin golf course, the Coquet Estuary, Seaton Point, Boulmer and Stag Rocks (Bamburgh).

**Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus*

Budle Bay had the largest flocks, with an estimated 1,100 on 25th (DF) and 900 on 30th (CGK). There were 900 at Cresswell Pond on 24th (KWY, AJR), numbers having risen from 250 on 4th (DM) and declining to 400 by 30th (MN). Prestwick Carr had 800 on 25th (IK), falling to 75 on 30th (GB). There were 510 at the Coquet Estuary on 5th (RPo) and 300 at Caistron on 17th (JD). Colt Crag Reservoir had 150 on 11th (MR) and Druridge Pools had a maximum of 149 on 24th (IDR). There were 128 at the Blyth Estuary on 10th (LJM), 111 at Coney Garth, Bothal Ponds (TD) and approximately 100 at Boulmer Flash on 3rd (JR) and Grindon Lough on 13th (PRM). Smaller counts came from Blyth Links, Holy Island and Low Newton. Seaton Sluice Watch Tower had a low monthly total of 28 S on 2nd. An unusual count came from Cramlington, with 12 birds noted on the Moor Farm roundabout on 17th (DM).

A Lapwing

Cresswell

Colin Bradshaw

10th November



**Golden Plover** *Pluvialis apricaria*

The largest flocks were at Budle Bay, with 1,200 on 9th (CGK) rising to an estimated maximum of 3,300 on 25th (DF). Prestwick Carr had 1,500 on 25th (IK) and ca.1,000 were at Goswick Sands (Beal) on 3rd (DF). The Coquet Estuary had a maximum of 1,000 on 9th (RPo). There were 500 at Warkworth Gut on 15th (IRD) and 300 at Beukley (Stagshaw) on 19th (MR). Smaller flocks were at the Blyth Estuary, Druridge Pools, Cresswell, Monks' House, Seahouses, Boulmer, Whittingham, Grindon Lough and Paxton Dene, Longhorsley. A pair were observed feeding after dark on the sports field at the Royal Grammar School (Jesmond) on 14th (GB).



Golden Plover in formation at Cresswell by Colin Bradshaw on 18th November

**Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola*

The highest counts came from Budle Bay, with 140 on 9th (CGK), and Fenham Flats, with 130 on 2nd (ASJ). There were 67 at Boulmer on 21st (BS) and 53 at high tide on the South Aln Estuary on 24th (TD). Counts of fewer than 10 birds came from Beal Point and Fenham Mill, Lindisfarne, Newbiggin beacons, the Blyth Estuary, Cresswell Pond and Druridge Pools.

**Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula*

The largest flocks were at the Blyth Estuary, with 78 on 30th (BS) and Budle Bay, and 56 on 9th (CGK). There were 44 at Chevington Burn on 8th (AJ) and 32 at the South Aln Estuary on 24th (TD). Smaller numbers were recorded at Boulmer, with 17 on 21st (BS), and singles were noted at Fenham Mill on 21st (TRD/JD) and Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 22nd (IRD).

**Curlew** *Numenius arquata*

There were peak counts of 447 at Longhoughton Steel on 17th (BS) and 440 birds roosting at Budle Bay on 18th (DF). Druridge Pools had 134 on 24th (IDR) and there were 100 at the Long Nanny, Newton on 10th (IRD). There were 60 at Monks' House on 24th (MR) and 55S at Newbiggin on 19th (STH). Blyth Links had 39 on 22nd (STH) and there were 34 at the Coquet Estuary on 5th (RPo) and 30 at Cresswell Pond on 4th (DM). Smaller flocks were reported at Gloucester Lodge, Seaton Sluice and Cocklawburn, with ten or fewer birds at Low Newton, Castle Island in the Wansbeck Estuary, Stag Rocks, Bamburgh and East Chevington.



A Curlew at Cresswell Pond

18th November Colin Bradshaw



**Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica*

Beal again had the highest count, with an estimated 400 on 21st (TRD/JD). There were 80 at Budle Bay on 9th (CGK) and 32 at Boulmer on 21st (BS). There were 23 at the high-tide roost at Longhoughton Steel on 13th (MKi). Counts of 10 and below came from Fenham Mill, Lindisfarne, Newbiggin, Low Newton, Stag Rocks, Bamburgh, Cresswell Pond and the South Aln Estuary.

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

Druridge Pools had a maximum count of 45 on 6th (AJR). There were two birds at Budle Bay on 2nd (DF) and 9th, 19th and 30th (CGK). A single was present at Cresswell Pond on 23rd (CB).

**Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*

Most birds appeared to have passed through the region with a smaller number than last month remaining. A high of 75 was recorded at Boulmer on 13th (MKi) with 41 at North Blyth staithes on 9th (STH), 22 at Stag Rocks on 22nd (IDR) and 20 at Low Newton on 13th (TRD/JD). One to ten were seen at the Aln Estuary, Buston Links (Alnmouth), Cresswell Pond, Fenham Mill (Lindisfarne NNR) and North Shields Fish Quay. An interesting inland record was of two on flooded ground at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay on 21st (TRD/JD).

**Knot** *Calidris canutus*

The highest counts came from Lindisfarne NNR with ca.600 at Fenham Flats on 2nd (ASJ) and the same estimated at Beal Point on 21st (TRD/JD). Budle Bay held 118 on 11th increasing to 300 on 30th (DF/CGK). Similarly, reports from the River Coquet Estuary increased from 25 on 5th to 62 on 30th (RPo/CSa). One-12 were seen at Boulmer, Cresswell Pond, Longhoughton Steel and Newbiggin.

**Ruff** *Calidris pugnax*

As last month, birds were concentrated in the Cresswell Pond-Druridge Bay area with one at Cresswell Pond on 4th rising to six by 23rd (CB/MSH/KWY *et al.*). Four were seen at Druridge Pools on 4th reducing to two by 19th (CH/IDR/TRD/JD).

**Sanderling** *Calidris alba*

Lower numbers were reported this month as birds presumably moved through the area. East Chevington beach attracted the highest number with 48 seen on 15th (MH). Elsewhere, 42 were at Boulmer on 13th (MKi), 38 at Hadston Carrs (Druridge Bay) on 1st (PRM), 34 at St Mary's Island on 19th (KWY) and 21 at Low Newton on 6th (AJR). At Newbiggin 16 were reported on 9th CDB) and eight were at Buston links (Alnmouth) on 4th.



A Sanderling at Low Newton by Tim Dean on 13th November

**Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*

Numbers persisted at Lindisfarne NNR with a minimum of 800 at Fenham Flats on 2nd (ASJ) and a maximum of 261 recorded at Budle Bay on 19th (DF). Other three-figure counts were 183 at the River Blyth Estuary on 30th (BS) with a report of 107 at North Blyth staithes on 9th (STH) probably referring to the same birds. The highest count at Cresswell Pond was 175 on 24th (KWY) and 105 were at the River Coquet Estuary on 7th (CSa). At Boulmer 31 were recorded on 13th and 26 were at St Mary's Island on 19th. One to 12 were at Beal Point, Low Newton, Newbiggin and the River Aln Estuary.

**Purple Sandpiper** *Calidris maritime*

As usual the highest numbers were seen at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) with 80-110 reported from 2nd- 24th (DF/MR). Other notable groups were 68 at Berwick Quay on 18th, 35 at Low Newton on 13th, 31 at Cambois-Newbiggin on 13th, 26 at Seahouses on 24th, 18 at Newbiggin on 19th and 12 at Seaton Point (Boulmer) on 23rd. One to nine were seen at Cheswick Black Rocks, Cullercoats, Low Newton, Newbiggin, North Shields Fish Quay, Seaton Sluice and Tynemouth.



A Purple Sandpiper at North Shields FQ by Chris Barlow on 30th November



A Purple Sandpiper at Low Newton by Tim Dean on 23rd November



**Long-billed Dowitcher** *Limnodromus scolopaceus*

The 1st-winter bird at Cresswell Pond was reported up to 23rd (PRM/DM/CB *et al.*).

**Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola*

Winter arrivals were noted at the coast with four at Holy Island on 1st (TF/BS/MJC) with two at St Mary's Island on 1st (MN) and Bamburgh on 3rd (ADM). Two were also seen inland at Plessey Checks (Cramlington) on 6th (STH) and Colt Crag Reservoir on 11th (MR). Singles were reported from Belford, Big Waters, Boulmer, Corbridge, East Chevington, Fontburn, Mickley Square, Seaton Sluice and Tynemouth.

**Jack Snipe** *Limnocyrtus minimus*

A notable count of six was made at Horncliffe (River Tweed) on 19th after a hard frost (CH). Two were seen at West Hartford on 6th and 9th (STH/LJM). Singles were at Arcot Pond, Cresswell Pond, Holy Island and St Mary's Wetland.



A Jack Snipe at Cresswell Pond by Tim Dean on 19th November

**Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago*

A massive count of 144 was made at Druridge Pools on 23rd where birds were flushed by a Peregrine (CB). A count at Cresswell Pond on 18th revealed 87 (CB), 47 were at West Hartford on 9th (STH) and 41 at Prestwick Carr on 11th (MH). Gosforth Park NR attracted 34 on 24th (MJC/DJC), 17 were seen at Holy Island on 22nd (ADM), 16 at Arcot Pond on 17th (STH), 14 at Howdon on 16th (CB) and ten at Big Waters NWT. One-six were reported from Backworth Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Longhorsley Moor, Long Nanny Estuary, Low Newton scrape, Lynemouth, Prestwick Carr, St Mary's Wetland and Widdrington Moor Lake.

**Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*

Singles were seen near Great Whittington on 1st and 2nd (ALT), Berwick Hill bridge on 6th (AHB) and Chainbridge (River Tweed) on 19th (CH).

**Redshank** *Tringa totanus*

The highest count was at Budle Bay on 18th with 167 being present (DF). Further south, 125 were at North Blyth staithes on 9th (STH), 83 at Cresswell Pond on 4th (DM), approximately 70 at Boulmer flash on 3rd (JR) with 70 at Cullercoats on 5th (MN). Lower counts were 38 at the River Coquet Estuary on 20th, 30 at Low Newton on 7th and Boulmer on 13th, 16 at Hadston Carrs (Druridge Bay) on 1st and 12 at Stag Rocks on 22nd. One-five were seen at Bothal Pond, Druridge pools, East Chevington and Newbiggin GC.

**Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*

Birds were reported from the favoured areas of Lindisfarne NNR with six at Fenham Flats on 2nd (ASJ) and a maximum of five at Beal Point on 1st but only a single by 13th (TF/DF). A single was at Warkworth Gut on 1st (CSa).



**Kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla*

Few records came from Seaton Sluice apart from 65 N in four hours on 14th and 28th (SSWT). On 5th, 500 flew N in two hours at St Mary's Island (ASJ) and on the same day, 155 moved N in one hour at Cresswell, Snab Point (MH/AA).

**Bonaparte's Gull** *Chroicocephalus philadelphia*

An adult was seen at Bamburgh Stag Rocks on 17th (RA?) and was again present there briefly on 18th (MSH).

**Black-headed Gull** *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Gatherings of 600 were in Budle Bay on 9th (CGK) and 475 in the Druridge Pools area on 17th (IDR). Smaller counts of 180 came from the QEII CP Lake (CDH) and 30-120 at Big Waters NWT, Bothal Pond, Castle Island, Cocklawburn, Cramlington, Exhibition Park and Jesmond Dene. A Polish-ringed bird was again at Bamburgh for the third year running (CH).

**Little Gull** *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

The observers at Seaton Sluice recorded 27 passing N or S with 20 feeding offshore on 4th, the only day that birds were noted there (SSWT); a single was at St Mary's Island on 5th (ASJ).

**Mediterranean Gull** *Ichthyaetus melanocephalus*

During the month, up to 20 came to food at Quarry Cottage, Newbiggin (BS) and a maximum of 12 were counted in Newbiggin Bay on various dates throughout (STH/CH/TB). Six were recorded at Seaton Sluice with one to two elsewhere at ten sites in the south east and at Budle Bay and Howick. A 2nd-winter bird with a yellow darvik ring 2X2R, marked on Coquet Island as a *pullus*, was seen at Lynemouth Power Station on 7th (MJC).

**Common Gull** *Larus canus*

Budle Bay held maximum gatherings of ca.2,000 on 9th and 20th (CGK/DF) and a similar sized group was on the Druridge Pools fields on 24th (AJR). Inland at Grindon Lough 120 were present on 13th (PRM) and up to 25 were recorded at seven other localities.

**Great Black-backed Gull** *Larus marinus*

Several counts at Budle Bay recorded 50-130 birds of varying ages (CGK/DF) with ten to 60 at Bamburgh, Castle Island, East Chevington and North Shields Fish Quay (DM/DF/CDB).

**Glaucous Gull** *Larus hyperboreus*

Single 1st-winter birds were recorded on dates from 3rd-14th at Boulmer, the Coquet Estuary, Newbiggin, North Shields Fish Quay, St Mary's Island and Seaton Sluice (JBu/AC/ASJ/ADM/BS/CSa/SSWT).



A Glaucous Gull at North Shields by Alan Jack on 15th November

**Iceland Gull** *Larus glaucoides*

A single Immature bird (variously aged as 'juvenile/1st-winter/2nd-winter'), was at the North Shields Fish Quay regularly from 14th-30th (ASJ *et al.*) with one seen at Swallow Pond on 17th considered to be the same bird.

**Herring Gull** *Larus argentatus argenteus*

Large counts of 1,340 (DF) and 500 (CGK) came from Budle Bay on 2nd and 9th respectively with 30-40 at Bamburgh, Castle Island, Druridge Pools and North Shields Fish Quay (IDR/DF/CDB/DM) and up to 15 at three other coastal localities.

**Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus fuscus graelsii*

Very few remained, mainly adults, with only one or two noted at Castle Island, Derwent Reservoir, Grindon Lough and Woodhorn Flashes.

**Sandwich Tern** *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

A single 1st-winter bird flew N at Holy Island on 8th (PRM).

**Great Skua** *Stercorarius skua*

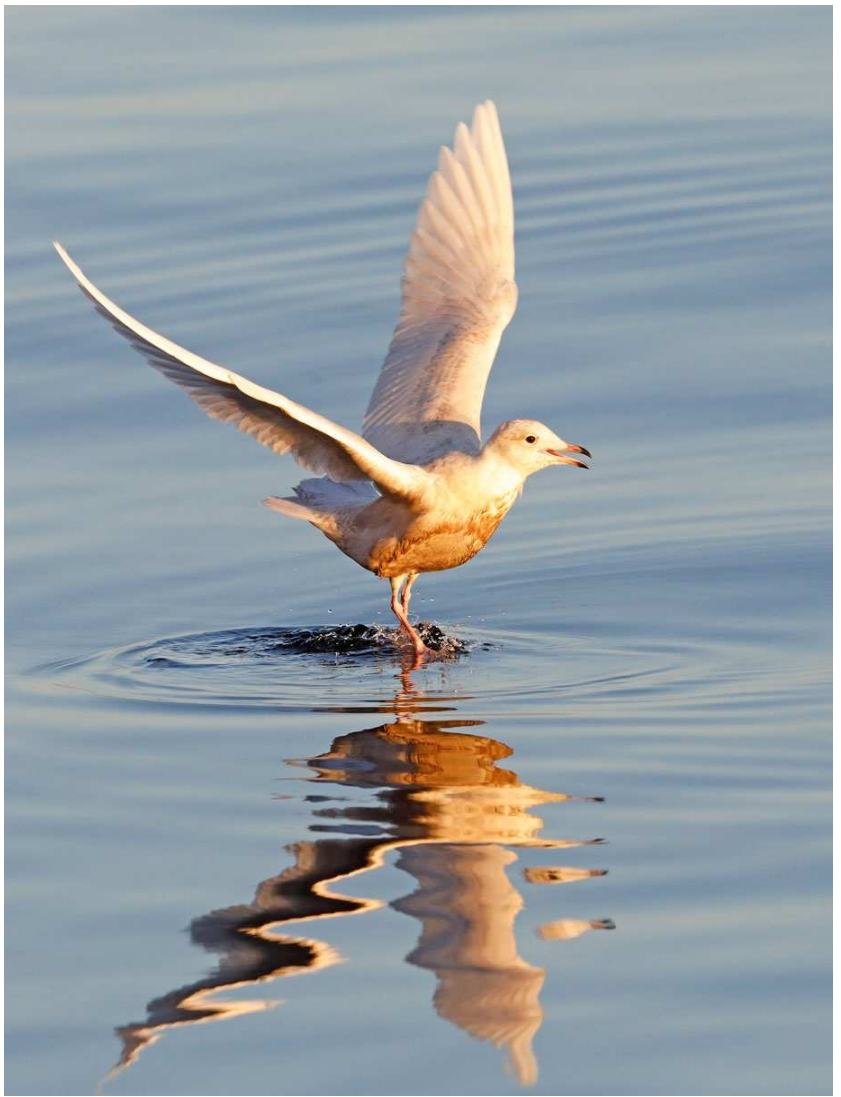
Four flew N during the month at Seaton Sluice, two on 5th and 15th (SSWT) and a single moved N at Howick on 8th (BS).

**Pomarine Skua** *Stercorarius pomarinus*

A monthly total of six, all immatures, flew N at Seaton Sluice from 8th-28th (SSWT) with other records of two together N at Boulmer on 5th (BS) and two N at Low Hauxley on 7th (MJC).

**Arctic Skua** *Stercorarius parasiticus*

Two moving S at Seaton Sluice on 5th was the only record (SSWT).



An Iceland Gull reflects at NSFQ by Colin Bradshaw on 18th November

**Little Auk** *Alle alle*

A monthly total of 58 came from Seaton Sluice with the busiest periods of 33 N from 5th-8th and 11 N from 15th-17th (SSWT). During this first period 40 were seen on 5th at Howick (BS) and during the second period 20 passed Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 15th (IJ). One to three were recorded at four other sites throughout the month..

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

Seaton Sluice recorded no large scale movements with a maximum day count of 180 N on 8th (SSWT).

**Common Guillemot** *Uria aalge*

On various dates throughout, ten were offshore at Newbiggin, five at Howick and one to three at three other localities.

**Razorbill** *Alca torda*

Only two records, three at Bamburgh Stag Rocks and a single at Howick.

**Puffin** *Fratercula arctica*

One or two were recorded moving offshore at five localities on dates throughout.

**Feral Pigeon** *Columba livia*

Around 100 feeding at Old Hartley on 18th with 50 there on 21st at Stakeford Road Bridge on 5th and at Big Waters NWT on 17th (RS/GB). Three were at Druridge Pools NR on 24th and present at Jesmond Dene on 17th.

**Stock Dove** *Columba oenas*

Pre-roost gatherings at Howdon of 120 on 9th and 82 on 1st (CB) with one to four at Big Waters, Halton lea Gate, Jesmond Dene, North Shields and Tynemouth.

**Woodpigeon** *Columba palumbus*

On 4th at Arcot Pond around 500 flew from roost (LJM), 300 at Derwent Reservoir on 5th (IFo), 200 at Buston Links on 4th (STH), 170 at Craster on 13th (MJC), 150 at Arcot Pond on 17th, 140 at Arcot Lane on 6th with 100 at Big Waters NWT on 3rd and Colt Crag Reservoir on 29th. Five to 20 were at four other locations.



A Woodpigeon lunches at Tynemouth by Colin Bradshaw on 9th November

**Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto*

A large count of 61 around farm buildings at North Moor Farm (East Cramlington) on 6th (STH), a maximum of 14 at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) during the month (RS), 13 at Ogle on 3rd, 12 at Berwick Hill on same date (AHB) and six at Wark on 19th.

**Barn Owl** *Tyto alba*

All reports were of singles at Holywell Pond on 2nd, Holy Island on 3rd & 27th, Whittingham on 4th and Prestwick Carr on 30th with one road casualty at High Weldon (Longframlington) on 18th.

**Tawny Owl** *Strix aluco*

Males called at Ellington with three on 7th, two on 24th and singles on 4th and 18th. Singles were at 12 other widespread localities,

**Little Owl** *Athene noctua*

One was heard singing at Shiremoor on five evenings during the month (CGK) and one seen on bunkers at Meggies Burn (Blyth) on 29th (EC/JSB).

*Asio sp*

One 'in - off' at Seaton Sluice on 15th (SSWT).

**Long-eared Owl** *Asio otus*

One 'in - off' at Howick on 8th (BS).

**Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus*

Three hunted at St Mary's from 13th till month's end (ASJ/MNC) with a single at the wetland on 8th (AC). Singles also at Holy Island on 4th and Housesteads on 14th.



A Short-eared Owl hunts at St. Mary's - Alan Jack on 30th November



**Swift** *Apus apus*

On 26th one was found feeding briefly in rain around buildings before roosting in the tower of St George's Church. It left the roost at 8.00 am in thick fog the following morning of 27th and flew off N (ASJ).

**Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis*

Two was the only multiple count frequenting rock pools at St Mary's Island on several dates (ASJ) with regular sightings of single birds at Tyneview Park (Benton), Longhoughton Steel, Cresswell Pond and Northumberland Park (North Shields). Singles were also at ten other widespread localities.



A Kingfisher at Beacon Point by Chris Barlow on 10th November

**Great Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos major*

All sightings were of singles at St Mary's Island area and Valley Park (Cramlington) on three dates and at five other locations with one trapped and ringed at Bamburgh on 6th (BRS).

**Green Woodpecker** *Picus viridis*

One was at Dukeshouse (Hexham) on 9th and yaffling at Broomley Fell on 27th (AJH/AJR).

**Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*

Three birds were on Holy Island on 22nd (ADM) and two were at Newbiggin GC on 2nd (CDB), Widdrington Moor Lake on 2nd and 4th (TB), Holy Island on 9th (PRM) and two were still showing interest in a high pine tree in the observer's garden in Morpeth on 29th (TD). Up to two birds were noted at West Hartford throughout the month (TB). Single birds were at 15 sites.

**Merlin** *Falco columbarius*

Two were at Holy Island on 4th (ADM) and two were at Beal on 11th (DF). Single birds were on or near the coast at Cresswell, Fenham Flats, Holy Island, Newbiggin GC, St Mary's Island & Tynemouth and a bird was noted inland at Prestwick Carr on 5th.

**Peregrine** *Falco peregrinus*

Two birds, a male and a female, were at St Mary's Island on 7th (ASJ) and two were on a small rocky outcrop surrounded by water at Fenham Flats on 8th (AA). Single birds were seen at or near the coast at Beal, Boulmer, Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond, Craster, Holy Island, Long Nanny (Newton), Lynemouth, Newbiggin GC, St Mary's Island, Seaton Sluice, Stag Rocks (Bamburgh), Tynemouth and Widdrington Moor Lake. Other single birds were seen at Brocolitia on 13th (PRM) and one flew WNW towards the "Peregrine Pub" at Chapel House (Newcastle) on 17th (MH).

**Ring-necked Parakeet** *Psittacula krameri*

More than 30 were at Richardson Dees Park (Wallsend) on 26th (MNC) with four at Heaton Park (Newcastle) on 17th, a pair nest prospecting (DM/PJA/MJCo). Three were at Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 25th one flew W at the Royal Grammar School (Newcastle) on 12th with a single heard over Brandling Park (Newcastle) on 29th.

**Jay** *Garrulus glandarius*

Six at Gosforth Park NR on 10th was the high count (MJC), with four at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 3rd (TB) and three at Bedlington on 3rd, Dukeshouse Hexham and Hillside East (Rothbury) on 9th and Humford Mill (Bedlington) on 11th. One to two were at 19 widespread localities.

**Magpie** *Pica pica*

There was one large count of 26 at Howdon on 17th (CB) with four at Druridge Pools NR on 17th and 24th, three there on 10th, a single on 9th and at Jesmond Dene.



A Magpie at Tynemouth by Colin Bradshaw on 9th November

**Jackdaw** *Corvus monedula*

At Killingworth Lake around 125 flew W on 11th and 54 flew SW at West Hartford on 6th (LJM) with 20 at Whitley Bay Cemetery on 17th (IJ). Eight were at Jesmond Dene and six at Druridge Pools NR.

**Rook** *Corvus frugilegus*

On 18th 54 were at Carrycoats Hall (MR) and one at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 22nd (IDR).

**Carrion Crow** *Corvus corone*

Unprecedented numbers of 97 were at Howdon on 25th (CB), 12 was the peak count at Druridge Pools NR on 24th (IDR), with six at Jesmond Dene and Whitley Bay Cemetery on 17th.

**Hooded Crow** *Corvus cornix*

One was present daily at Low Steads (Longhoughton) from 2nd till month end (BS) and one at Linton on 10th (TB).

**Raven** *Corvus corax*

Two were at Hareshaw Common (Bellingham) on 7th, Harwood Forest on 9th Branton on 14th and Whittingham on 15th (PRM/ADM/IBDa/KDa/CW). Singles were at Holy Island and Kielder.

**Waxwing** *Bombus garrulus*

Laurel Park (North Shields) was the hot spot with 42 the peak on 25th (ASJ), seven to 31 were there on four other dates and 15 to 28 nearby in North Shields on three dates. 40 were at Blyth Civic Centre on 26th (IDR) with five to nine at Holy Island on 10th, two there on 8th, 11 at Castle Island on 17th and four N at Cocklawburn on 18th. Singles were at five other locations.

**Coal Tit** *Periparus ater*

Six were on feeders at Tynemouth on 3rd (CB), two at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) all month, Low Newton on 7th and Jesmond Dene on 17th. Singles were at three other locations.

**Marsh Tit** *Poecile palustris*

On 21st four were at Elyhaugh (nr Felton), three at Rothbury on 20th (MJC), two at Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth) on 2nd and one regularly on feeders all month at Rothbury.

**Willow Tit** *Poecile montanus*

Four were at Craster on 3rd and at Prestwick Carr on 13th (BS/AJ) with two there on two other dates. Two at Callerton on 9th, Newbiggin on same date, Big Waters NWT on 17th and Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 18th. Singles were at Alnwick Moor, Low Hauxley NWT, Ponteland, Swallow Pond and Whitley Bay.

**Blue Tit** *Cyanistes caeruleus*

On 17th 20 were at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) (IJ), eight the peak count at Druridge Pools on 9th (IDR) being seen there on three other dates with two at Whitley Bay Cemetery and Jesmond Dene on 17th and Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) all month.

**Great Tit** *Parus major*

Six were at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) on 17th (IJ), four at Druridge Pools NR on 9th (IDR) and Jesmond Dene on 10th (MJCo) with two at Laurel Park (North Shields) on 30th and Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) all month.

**Skylark** *Alauda arvensis*

More than 50 were in fields at St Mary's Island on 2nd with 35 there on 1st (ASJ), 30+ at Widdrington Moor Lake on 9th (MSH), 25 at Beaconhill (Cramlington) on 30th (STH), 15 at Long Nanny (Newton) on 10th and 10 at Holy Island on 3rd. One to eight were at four other locations.

**Shore Lark** *Eremophila alpestris*

One was at Amble Links on 6th (CSa).

**Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

Three juveniles moved S at Seahouses Farm (Howick) on 10th (TF), two juveniles in Vicar's Garden (Holy Island) on 9th and 10th (PRM/ASJ/ADM), two in the Cresswell area on 10th and the final sightings of singles at Cresswell on 13th and Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 14th (CH/RS).

**Cetti's Warbler** *Cettia cetti*

At East Chevington, birds were heard singing at both the north and south pools on 11th (ADMc), at the south pool on 1st (PRM) and at the north pool on 25th (ADMc).

**Long-tailed Tit** *Aegithalos caudatus*

Two flocks totalling 38 (16 and 22) were at Druridge Pools on 9th, while 28 were noted here on the following day (IDR). Another large 'tribe' of 36 was at Scotswood Riverside on 25th (AJ) and 24 were reported from Prior's Park (Tynemouth) and 15 + at Lynemouth Flash on 9th. Elsewhere, 11-13 were noted at Cramlington (Valley Park), Craster, Grindon Lough and East Chevington and ten at Brier Dene (Whitley Bay), Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Colt Crag Reservoir, Cramlington (Southfield Green), Ellington and West Sleekburn. Counts of eight to nine came from Cramlington (Barns Park and Northburn), while eight were trapped at Bamburgh on 6th, one of which was a control of a bird ringed at Fontburn on 3rd October 2019, a movement of some 43km (BRS). A peak of seven at Holy Island (Snook House) on 1st and 10th was a good island record, with four to five at the same locality on 9th and 22nd and four at the Vicarage garden on 4th; seven were also noted at Cramlington (Alexandra Park) on 16th. One to six were reported from a further seven localities.



A Long-tailed Tit at Tynemouth by Colin Bradshaw on 9th November



**Willow Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochilus*

A very late individual was at Howick Burn mouth on 8th (BS).

**Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita*

At Holy Island, four were noted on 1st (MJC), one on 3rd and two on 16th. Three were at Howick Burn mouth on 8th and two at both Branton GP and Newbiggin (Mound) on 9th. Singles were reported from Boulmer on 5th, Branton GP on 24th, Brunton Airfield on 19th, Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 29th, Craster on 13th and 18th, Low Newton and Lynemouth on 7th, Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 10th and Ponteland and St Mary's Island on 13th.

A single bird of the **Siberian race** *P.c.tristis* was at Holy Island (School) from 4th-10th (ADM).

**Pallas's Warbler** *Phylloscopus schwarzi*

This once fairly reliable, Siberian gem has become increasingly rare in recent years. With no reports so far this year, news broke of an apparently exhausted bird feeding among kelp on Brier Dene beach (Whitley Bay) on 24th November. It was photographed by a casual birder and identified some weeks later (*per* ASJ).

**Yellow-browed Warbler** *Phylloscopus inornatus*

At Holy Island, a single was at Captain's Garden on 1st (TF) and Chare End gardens on 5th, the latter assumed to be a new arrival on strong overnight easterlies (ADM). It was not the October bird from the Vicarage Garden/Churchyard area.

**Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla*

Four at Holy Island on 3rd reduced to one on 4th (ADM). Singles were also noted at Holywell Pond on 19th, North Shields (Laurel Park and Northumberland Park) on 30th and 27th respectively, Prestwick Carr on 25th and Rothbury on 26th-28th.



A male Blackcap in Tim Dean's Rothbury Garden on 27th November. An unusual record here.

**Firecrest** *Regulus ignicapilla*

One was seen and photographed at Newbiggin (Mound) on 9th (LAR) and 13th (Hector Galley).

**Goldcrest** *Regulus regulus*

A light influx produced 24 at Holy Island on 5th, an increase from five on the previous day. There were counts of at least ten from Allenbanks on 24th, Hadston Carrs on 1st and Hexham (Tyne Green) on 2nd, while eight were at Craster on 13th. Three to six were still at Holy Island from 8th-10th and at least six at Wark (North Tyne) on 16th. Three to four were noted at Low Newton and St Mary's Island during the first week with one to two reported from a further 11 localities. An interesting anecdote involved an exhausted bird found hiding in a fish box aboard a boat six miles out of Holy Island on 2nd; it was taken into the wheelhouse where the heating was turned on and it slept for three hours before reviving. It was released three miles offshore and flew off strongly and confidently towards the island. Another life saved thanks to islander Shaun Brigham (IK).

**Wren** *Troglodytes troglodytes*

A coastal influx produced counts of eight to 16 at Holy Island from 3rd-10th with a peak on 4th, 16 at Craster on 13th and a peak of 15 at Druridge Pools on 10th (ADM/MJC/IDR). Eight were noted at Bamburgh Castle wood on 3rd, five at Newbiggin GC on 2nd and three at Newbiggin (Church Point) on 9th. One to two were reported from a further four localities.



A Wren at Tynemouth by Colin Bradshaw on 9th November

**Nuthatch** *Sitta europaea*

Four were at Humford Mill (Bedlington) on 22nd and Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth) on 2nd (TB), while up to three were reported from Heaton Park and Jesmond Dene. Two were noted at Allenbanks and Bywell and singles at Arcot Hall GC, Beanley, Ellington, Harbottle, Rothbury and Wark (North Tyne).

**Treecreeper** *Certhia familiaris*

There were counts of four from the Elyhaugh area (Felton) on 21st and Otterburn on 20th (MJC). Three were reported from Craster and Gosforth Park NR on 13th and 24th respectively, while one to two were noted at Allenbanks, Big Waters, Budle Bay, Cramlington (Valley Park), Heaton Park, Hexham (Tyne Green), Prestwick Carr, Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth) and Wark (North Tyne).

**Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris*

There was an impressive count of 20,000 in the roost at Big Waters on 2nd (GB), while another traditional roost site at Holy Island Lough increased from 8,600 on 8th to 10,500 by 27th (PRM/IK). In addition, some sizeable gatherings were noted across the county, with 300 at Derwent Reservoir on 6th, Druridge Pools on 17th and Paxton Dene (Longhorsley) on 14th, 250 at Old Church Wood (Longhorsley) on 12th and 200 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 8th, Cocklawburn on 18th, Crooked Oak (Derwent) on 4th and Marden Estate (Tynemouth) on 18th. Elsewhere, 150 were noted at Blyth, 100 at Boulmer and 50 at Cresswell Pond.

**Ring Ouzel** *Turdus torquatus*

Two were at Holy Island (Vicarage Garden) on 4th (IK).

**Blackbird** *Turdus merula*

Migrants continued to arrive at Holy Island during the first week of the month, with counts of 54 on 1st, a peak of 170 on 3rd (ADM), 160+ on 8th and 24 on 9th. A total of 26 were in hedgerows at Cramlington (Plessey Checks) on 6th, 18 were noted at Craster on 13th, 15 at Corbridge on 8th and 12 at Colt Crag Reservoir and Brier Dene (Whitley Bay) on 4th and 17th respectively. Three to six were reported from Druridge Pools, Jesmond Dene, Newbiggin (Quarry Cottage), North Shields (Laurel Park) and Whitley Bay Cemetery.





A Blackbird by Alan Jack on Holy Island on 2nd November

**Fieldfare** *Turdus pilaris*

Some notable inland movement was noted on 3rd-4th, with 500+ at Whittingham, 350 SE at Derwent Reservoir and 250 SW at Chapel House Estate (Newcastle) on 4th (CW/IFo/MH); on 3rd a total of 320 passed SW over Mickley and 140 moved SW at Arcot Pond. Feeding flocks included 300 at Ford on 20th, 160 at Plashetts (Kirkwhelpington) on 29th and 100-120 at Derwent Reservoir, Hallington Reservoir and Waren Mill. Elsewhere, 50-80 were noted at Big Waters, Branton GP, Colt Crag Reservoir, Crooked Oak (Derwent), Holy Island and Wark (North Tyne) and 30-45 at Ellington, Meldon, Paxton Dene (Longhorsley), Prestwick Car and Rothbury. One to 14 were reported from a further seven localities.

**Redwing** *Turdus iliacus*

The largest gatherings were 100 at Broomley Fell on 27th (AJR) and 90 at Ford on 20th. A roost at Cramlington (Whitelea Chase) contained 69 on 6th, while 32-60 were noted at Holy Island on five dates from 1st-8th. Elsewhere there were counts of 25 at Meldon on 14th and 20 at Branton GP on 7th, Corbridge on 16th, Hexham on 15th, Old Church Wood (Longhorsley) on 12th and Snod's Edge on 8th. One to 15 were reported from a further ten localities.

**Song Thrush** *Turdus philomelos*

Migrant arrivals continued early in the month, with 20 at Budle Bay on 9th (CGK), while at Holy Island there were ten on 3rd and eight on 9th. Two were reported from Heaton Park on 17th and Leazes Park on 5th and singles were noted at Corbridge on 15th-16th, Druridge Pools on 24th and Jesmond Dene on 17th.

**Mistle Thrush** *Turdus viscivorus*

17 at Waren Mill on 19th was the largest gathering (JR). Elsewhere, four were reported from Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 1st, Corbridge on 11th and Walkerville on 13th and three were at Whitley Bay Cemetery on 17th. One to two were also reported from Allenbanks, Arcot Hall GC, Big Waters, Howden, Leazes Park and Stannington Station.

**Spotted Flycatcher** *Muscicapa striata*

The late individual reported from Holy Island in October remained faithful to the Vicar's garden / Churchyard area to at least the 10th making it the joint latest record for the county (following birds at Berwick and Holy Island in 1984). Unfortunately no local birders were on site to confirm whether or not the record had been broken (ADM *et al.*).

**Robin** *Erithacus rubecula*

On Holy Island there were counts of 12-14 from 4th-10th (ADM). Four were at Bamburgh Castle wood on 3rd and at Beal on 4th and three at Druridge Pools on 10th and 24th. Elsewhere one to two were reported from Brier Dene (Whitley Bay), Jesmond Dene, Newbigin (Church Point and Quarry Cottage) and Whitley Bay Cemetery.



**Black Redstart** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Two were at Holy Island on 1st (TF/RA) and at Cullercoats Bay from 24th-26th (ASJ/MN/IJ), while singles were noted at Boulmer from 13th-16th (MKi/BS) and at Newbiggin (Church Point) on 9th (GB/CDB).



A Black Redstart at St. Mary's by Alan Jack on 29th November

**Stonechat** *Saxicola rubicola*

Peak counts were five at East Chevington on 4th (DM/LJM) and the Long Nanny on 10th (IRD), four at Druridge Pools on 10th, Ross Back Sands/Old Law on 30th and St Mary's Island (two pairs) on 1st and three at Colt Crag Reservoir on 6th, Newbiggin GC on 2nd and West Hartford on 9th. Elsewhere, two were reported from Cocklawburn, Holy Island, Lynemouth and Prestwick Carr and singles from Cresswell Pond, Buston Links, Hareshaw Common (Bellingham), Hauxley NWT, Longhoughton Steel and Stag Rocks (Bamburgh).

**Wheatear** *Oenanthe oenanthe*

One was at Holy Island on 9th (PRM).

**Dipper** *Cinclus cinclus*

Two were seen on the River Pont at Berwick Hill and at Otterburn this month. Singles were noted at another four sites, including one singing at a stream in a Morpeth garden (TD).

**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*

Up to 80 were present at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) all month (RS). A maximum of 16 fed at garden feeders at Chapel House and 15 at Marden Estate and six at Shilbottle this month. The regular Cullercoats flock dispersed after the ivy bush roost site was much reduced.

**Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus*

50 were in bushes at West Chevington on 15th (MH). 12 attended garden feeders at Longbenton from the 8th with 12 at Newton Point on 18th and ten at nearby Low Newton on 7th. Ten were also at Cullercoats on 26th. One to five were at another eight sites.

**Duncock** *Prunella modularis*

14 were counted at Craster on 13th (HRS). Four were at Newbiggin during the month (RS). Two were at Lynemouth on 10th and in a Marden garden all month.

**Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*

Five were seen at Lynemouth sewage works on 7th (MJC). Single birds were seen at a further 16 sites this month.

**Pied Wagtail** *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

Six were seen at St. Mary's on 7th (ASJ). Druridge Pools held up to three birds during the month, with three at East Chevington beach on 4th and 29th.

**Richard's Pipit** *Anthus*

One was seen at Snook (Holy Island) on 1st (MJC).

**Meadow Pipit** *Anthus pratensis*

27 were counted in stubble on 13th (MJC). 19 in fields at Beacon Hill (Cramlington) on 6th (STH). Eight passed through Derwent Reservoir on 8th (IFO). Eight were also at St. Mary's on 15th (ASJ). One to three were seen at five other sites.

**Water Pipit** *Anthus spinoletta*

Three were found at Ross Back Sands / Old Law dunes on 30th and singles were seen on 3rd at Warkworth Gut and Seaton Point, the latter remaining all month (MJC/CSa/BS).

**Rock Pipit** *Anthus petrosus*

The month's highest count was at Warkworth Gut on 3rd of 25 birds (CSa). 18 were feeding in tide wrack at Low Newton on 6th, with ten there on 13th (AJR/TRD/JD). 13 were seen in the Ross Back Sands area on 30th and 12 were on Holy Island on 22nd with up to nine there during the first week. One to four were noted at five other sites. One of the race *Littoralis* was observed at Holy Island on 9th (PRM).

**Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelebs*

35 fed along the tide line at Budle Bay in frosty conditions on 30th (CGK). 15 were at Druridge Pools on 10th increased to 19 by 24th (IDR). One to four were seen at four further sites.

**Brambling** *Fringilla montifringilla*

Small numbers were reported this month, with seven at Holy Island on 1st and singles there on two other dates. Elsewhere, two were at Low Hauxley on 7th and a single on 2nd at Howick.

**Bullfinch** *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Ten were observed at Whitley Bay G.C. on 19th (KWY). Nine + were seen on 24th at Hauxley and eight at Kyoie Woods on 19th (AJR/MJC). Six were seen during the month at Prestwick Carr, Eylhaugh near Felton, North Seaton and at garden feeders in Rothbury. One to five were seen at 18 other sites.

**Greenfinch** *Chloris chloris*

Poorly reported this month, with ten at St. Mary's on 9th and six at Crooked Oak on 4th the largest groups (ASJ/IFo). One to three were at five other sites.

**Twite** *Carduelis flavirostris*

The Snook area at Holy Island held the biggest number this month, with 37 there on 3rd, increasing to 59 to 74 on 9th and 165 by 22nd (ADM/ASJ/PRM). Around 45 were at the regular site of Chevington burn mouth on 6th (CSa). 40 were seen at Bell's Farm (Cresswell) on 23rd (CB). 30 were noted at Beal Point on 4th (ADM). 19 were at Warkworth Gut on 3rd and four to 15 at three further sites.

**Linnet** *Carduelis cannabina*

The flock at Beal remained from last month, with around 190 seen on 9th (ASJ). Two groups totalling 120 were at Buston Links on 4th (STH). 90 were seen at Crooked Oak on 1st and 6th (IFo). 47 were counted along Holy Island's north shore on 9th (MJC). 13 to 40 were noted at three other sites this month.

A Linnet

Chris Barlow

Lynemouth

7th November







Another Linnet - Alan Jack at St. Mary's on 11th November

**Lesser Redpoll** *Carduelis caberet*

15 were seen at Derwent Reservoir on 5th and 14 at Colt Crag Reservoir the following day. Ten were at Druridge Pools on 14th, with a single there on 10th. Two to three were at two other sites.

**Crossbill** *Loxia curvirostra*

Small groups totalling around 30 were at Kielder in the observatory area on 13th (AJR). 12 were at Harwood Forest on 9th (ADMc). Seven flew S at Castle Island on 17th and seven were at Cragside on 23rd. Six were at Kyloe Woods on 19th and Corbridge Common on 29th, with four there the previous day. At the coast, two flew N on 13th.

**Goldfinch** *Carduelis carduelis*

50 were at Buston Links on 4th and 45 at Druridge Pools on 9th were the month's largest gatherings (STH/IDR), along with 45 at Newbiggin on 25th (RS). 32 were seen at Alexander Park (Cramlington) on 16th. 30 plus were noted at Blyth Estuary and Monkseaton early in the month and at St. Mary's Wetland on 30th. One to 23 were observed at a further nine sites during the month.

**Siskin** *Carduelis spinus*

100 were at Castron on 17th (JD). 50 remained at Branton during the first two weeks of the month. 48 were seen at Otterburn on 20th. One to 25 were seen at 16 additional sites, including at the coast, seven in off the sea at St. Mary's, ten + at Bamburgh and nine on Holy Island.

**Yellowhammer** *Emberiza citrinella*

Small numbers were reported with 20 feeding at Prestwick Carr on 25th. Ten were in stubble at Big Waters on 17th (GB). Eight were noted at Craster on 13th (MJC). One to two were seen at four other sites.

**Reed bunting** *Emberiza schoeniclus*

18 were in bushes and then roosting in the wetland reed bed at St. Mary's on 13th (ASJ). Six were at Druridge Pools on 9th (IDR). Four were inland at Colt Crag on 4th (PRM). One to three at a further eight sites.

**Lapland Bunting** *Calcarius lapponicus*

One was found in stubble at Low Newton on 7th (PRM). Another flew N at Ross Back Sands on 30th (MJC).

**Snow Bunting** *Plectrophenax nivalis*

A feeding flock of 23 was watched at the north shore, Holy Island on 9th (ASJ). Groups of 16, 11 and five flew N at Stag Rocks on 18th (DF). 12 were at Dunstanburgh Castle on 13th (MJC). Ten flew S at Tynemouth on 17th (DRW). Five were noted at Ross Back Sands on 6th (CH). One to five were seen this month, at ten other locations, including a first-winter bird well inland at Plenmeller on 19th.



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

Two were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 24th (TF). Presumed escapes.

**Bar-headed Goose** *Anser indicus*

Three were at Warkworth from 12th through to end of month (BS).

**Muscovy Duck** *Cairina moschata*

Two noted at QE II CP, Ashington on 4th and 10th (CDH / DM)

**Hybrids****Gadwall** *Mareca strepera* x **Shoveler** *Spatula clypeata*

Unusual hybrid at Big Waters on 2nd (GB) believed to be of this parentage.

**Birds of Unknown Origin**

No sightings

**LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS**

A.Allen, A.H.Banks, C.D.Barlow, M. & R.J.Bentley (MB/RB), T.Blake, J.S.Booth, G.Bowman, C.Bradshaw, A. & L.Brun, J.Bucknall (JBU), D.J.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, I.R.Douglas, T.Farooqi (TF), I.Fisher, D.F.Forshaw, I.Forsyth (IFo), C.D.Hampton, P.H. & A.Hammer (PHa / AHa), A.S.Hart, C.Hartley, M.Henry, M.Hepple (MHP), A.J.Hewitt, M.S.Hodgson, S.T.Holliday, A.S.Jack, A.Janes, I.Johnson, I.Kerr, M.Kirby (MKi), C.G.Knox, G.P.Knox, D.Leat (DLe), J.P.Lumby, P.R.Massey, S.V. & A.J.McCormick, L.J.McDougall, D.McKeown, A.D.Mclevy, A.D.Mould, M.Nattrass, A.J.Newson, R.Poyer (RPo), A.J.Richards, J.Richardson, M.Richardson, I.D.Robson, L.A.Robson, C.Saunders (Csa), J.Selvidge (JSe), M.R.Smith, F. & J.Southern (FSO / JSo), B.Steel, R.Stevens, A.L.Todd, D.R.Watson, C.Wright, K.W.York.

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), Helen Snaith (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).

North Northumberland Bird Club (R Poyer and J Lumby), Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

**Apologies for any accidental omissions**

Proof reading was by Mike Smith.

Mail distribution by Paul Stewart.

Clive Hammond is Data Manager

Edited by Steve Barrett [NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com](mailto:NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com)

**RECORD SUBMISSION**

Please email records for the month to [ntbc.records@googlemail.com](mailto: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](mailto: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. 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 [ntbcorg@jobentley.plus.com](mailto:ntbcorg@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 [ntbcorg@jobentley.plus.com](mailto:ntbcorg@jobentley.plus.com)

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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://www.ntbc.org.uk)

## URBAN PEREGRINES

At the December meeting Zoe Smith, the Peregrine Project Officer from the Hawk and Owl Trust, gave a presentation about the work of the Trust and the exciting developments at Sculthorpe Moor in Norfolk which is about to triple in size. Her account of Urban Peregrines focused on Norwich Cathedral Peregrine Project where, once the concerns of the Cathedral authorities had been assuaged, the breeding falcons became a major attraction. The technical difficulties of establishing a nest platform on a listed historic building were substantial, but nevertheless overcome. We were shown many webcam sequences illustrating the private lives of these birds, and some quite tragic events had been caught on record. A female fledged at Norwich in 2012 was recorded at the R Tyne in 2015. Zoe also described the "Peregrine Network" a new initiative to connect peregrine sites across the country to better enable them to work together to protect and understand Peregrine falcons.

The Hawk and Owl Trust are establishing an Urban Peregrine Winter Roost Survey- the methodology is to survey the tallest building in your area every fortnight at dusk to see if Peregrines are roosting there. Volunteers are being sought in urban areas including Tyneside. The survey runs from October- February every year. If you would like to get involved or to download an information pack contact zoe.smith(at) [hawkandowltrust.org.uk](http://hawkandowltrust.org.uk)

## ALAN BELSHAW RIP

Many of our older club members will be saddened to learn of the death of Alan Belshaw on 5th December, aged 89. Alan was one of the very early members of the club, served on the Committee for several years and acted as Treasurer between 1962-1965. He was responsible for printing and supplying members with many of the monthly bulletins in the early 1960s and also several of the club's earliest Annual Reports (on a Gestetner duplicator, nearly all in his living room in North Shields with the stencils typed up by his wife, Connie!). Although a keen birdwatcher, he was also a ringer who trained several youngsters and others to become ringers. He was involved in the early days of Bamburgh Ringing Station, formed the Tynesiders Ringing Partnership (with the late Fred Colley) and ringed many thousands of birds in the county. One of his favourite projects was a study of breeding Wheatears in the Cheviots around Alwinton (and a smaller 'holiday' study area in Perthshire). He also visited many farms in south-east Northumberland to ring Swallow nestlings. A nest-box scheme he helped to initiate at Eshott in 1964 is still in existence today, albeit on a smaller scale. He moved to southern Scotland later in life to be nearer to his family. Our condolences go out to Connie and his family.

Mike Hodgson

**BIRDS IN NORTHUMBRIA 2019**

**Author needed** – Just one further section author is needed - to write the **Rails to Waders text**. Guidance notes and help provided. A rewarding role that shouldn't be too time consuming and can be completed between now and **August 2020**.

**Photographs** - Photos are always welcome for consideration. All members are free to submit images (taken within the county during 2019). 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 2020**.

**Back papers** - Papers from members (on any bird-related topic in the county) are always welcome for publication. BiN 2019 is our 50th Anniversary addition and so any paper on this theme would be particularly welcome. To discuss a possible paper for BiN 2019, or a future BiN, please contact me **ASAP**.

For any of the above, please contact Andy Mould on 0191 2664265, or mobile 0780 362 3768, or email: [highroller10@btinternet.com](mailto:highroller10@btinternet.com)

Iceland Gulls at North  
Shields Fish Quay

right; by Alan Jack on  
18th and below; by Colin  
Bradshaw on 19th  
November





# Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2019 No 12

MONTHLY SUMMARY December 2019

4th February 2020



## CONTENTS

Willow Tit Survey

## CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Tundra Bean Goose	One at Hoppen Kiln flash on 22nd in a lean year for the species.
Green-winged Teal	Drake at Big Waters from 7th-15th.
Black Scoter	Returning drake still at Cheswick/Goswick.
Long-tailed Duck	High count of 122 at Ross Back Sands on 15th.
Smew	Redhead at Widdrington Moor lake all month plus another at Caistron on 15th.
Manx Shearwater	Single late bird south at Seaton Sluice on 16th.
Red-necked Grebe	Singles at Ross Back Sands, Holy Island harbour and East Chevington.
Slavonian Grebe	Peak count of 31 at Ross Back Sands on 15th.
Marsh Harrier	Two wintering at East Chevington. First prolonged winter occurrence.
Grey Plover	High count for locality of 61 at Boulmer on 21st.
Long-billed Dowitcher	First-winter still at Cresswell Pond all month.
Glaucous Gull	Singles at North Shields Fish Quay and St Mary's.
Iceland Gull	Juvenile at North Shields Fish Quay all month.
Little Auk	One to three seen at several sites.
Black Guillemot	Singles at Holy Island and Farne Islands plus one showing well at Bamburgh.
Stock Dove	Still good numbers at Howdon wetland with 82 on 16th.
Short-eared Owl	Popular gatherings of up to 5 at St Mary's and Holywell.
Ring-necked Parakeet	High counts of 17 at Moorside allotments, Fenham on 2nd and nine at Gosforth.
Hooded Crow	Returning wintering bird at Linton.
Waxwing	Influx mostly in south east of county with peak count of 126 at Blyth.
Cetti's Warbler	Still present at East Chevington and also at Holy Island.
Black Redstart	One at Boulmer all month north of village.
Eastern Yellow Wagtail	First record for county with one showing incredibly well at Prestwick Carr from 14th.
Water Pipit	Single at Boulmer all month at Seaton Point.

November correction  
should be 7th October.

The Hawfinch on 7th November

The Eastern Yellow Wagtail

Prestwick Carr

Alan Jack

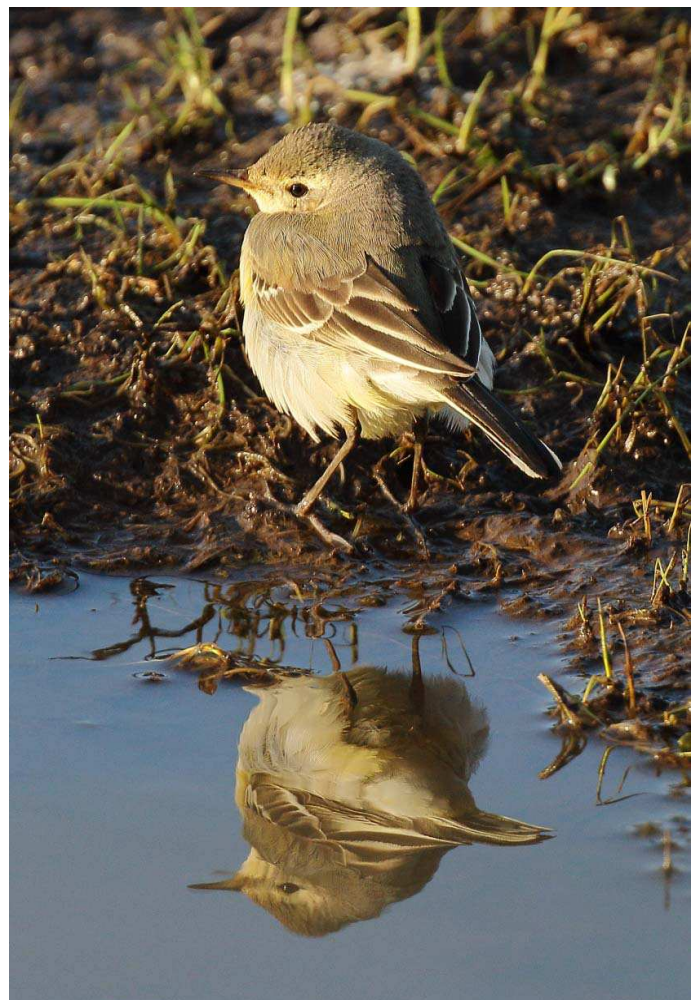
15th December

## INDOOR MEETINGS

NTBC indoor meetings are held at Northern Rugby Club, McCracken Park, Great North Road, Newcastle, NE3 2DT starting at 7.00pm and generally finish between 9.00pm-9.30pm. The next meeting is on 13th February.

Mike Henry

**RAPTORS, WRYNECKS AND ROSEFINCHES in SOUTHERN SWEDEN**



## FIELD TRIPS

Contact Steve Anderson [seaswan@btinternet.com](mailto:seaswan@btinternet.com)

## CLASSIFIED LIST

### Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

1,500-2,000 pale-bellied *hrota* race birds were at Budle Point on 28th (DF). Other peak counts involving birds of this race were 700-800 at Harper's Heugh (Budle Bay) on 28th (DF/MSH), ten at Monks' House Pool on 17th (IDR), and eight N at Stag Rocks on 23rd (TRD/JD). Two flew S at Boulmer and one was at Hemscott Hill (near Cresswell Pond). Five, of the dark-bellied *bernicla* race, flew S at Spittal Bay on 8th (MHu). Un-raced birds involved two to five at/over Boulmer, Cresswell Pond and East Chevington.

### Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Peak gatherings were 550 at Grindon Lough on 15th (MRS), 254 at Big Waters on 1st (GB), 234 at Derwent Reservoir on 6th (IFo), 145 at Druridge Pools on 21st (IDR), 107 at Amble Braid (DM *et al.*), 56-91 at Bothal Pond, Killingworth Lake, the Tweed Estuary and West Stobswood Pool, and 24-36 at Castle Island, High Cocklaw (Berwick), Linton Ponds, Newcastle Leazes Park and QEII CP. Two to seven were also at East Chevington, Ladyburn Lake, Monks' House Pool and Warkworth Lane Ponds.

### Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Numbers at the Harper's Heugh-Budle Bay-Ross area peaked at an estimated minimum of 2,500 on 28th (DF), with 700-2,000 between 4th-26th (DF/CH/MSH), and 300 were at nearby Ross Back Sands on 15th (MJC). The sole report in the south of the county was of a single bird at Linton Ponds on 15th (CDH).

### Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Parties of 68-80 flew S at East Ord on 12th (MHu) and Prestwick Carr on 22nd (IK), and 34 moved N at Ord Moor on 29th (MHu). Peak concentrations concerned 1,600-2,000 at Newham Bog on 31st (DF), 770 at Derwent Reservoir on 4th (IFo), 450 at Big Waters on 15th (GB), 310 at East Holywell on 23rd (MNC), and 300 at Brenkley on 31st (thought to be part of the same flock regularly at Big Waters; GB). Smaller groups of 50-80 at Hoppen Kiln Flash, Prestwick Carr and Velvet Hall (near Horncliffe), and 11-31 at Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough, Linton Ponds, Old Hartley and Plenmeller Common. Two to eight were also at Bothal Pond, Castle Island, QEII CP and St Mary's Island.



Greylags at Hedgeley by Tim Dean on 31st December

### Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 704 N and 926 S (SSWT), about 1,400 moved over Low Cocklaw during the month (TBr), 700 flew S at Druridge Pools on 21st (IDR), 340 N at Fenham Mill on 31st (DF), 200-220 S/SW at Newham Fen (DF), Prestwick Carr (IK) and Sandy Bay (BSt), 156 W at Cocklawburn (MHu), and 100 N at Brenkley. Groups of 35-78 flew over (various directions) Amble, the Blyth Estuary, Castle Island, Cramlington, Hipsburn and the Wansbeck Estuary. About 4,000 were at Hoppen Kin Flash on 22nd (DF), about 3,000 at Doddington on 3rd (TRD/JD), 3,000+ at East Chevington (STH/IFo), 2,965 (counted from photos) at Holywell at 30th (MNC), 1,850 at Low Middleton on 10th (DF), 1,750 at Hemscott Hill on 31st (AJR), 1,300 at Druridge Pools on 31st (IDR/JF), 1,000 at Gloucester Lodge (Blyth) on 6th (MSH), and 300-500 at Bothal Pond, Elford, Longhirst, Milfield and Outchester. Counts of 15-19 came from St Mary's Island and Woodhorn Flashes, and three were at Derwent Reservoir.

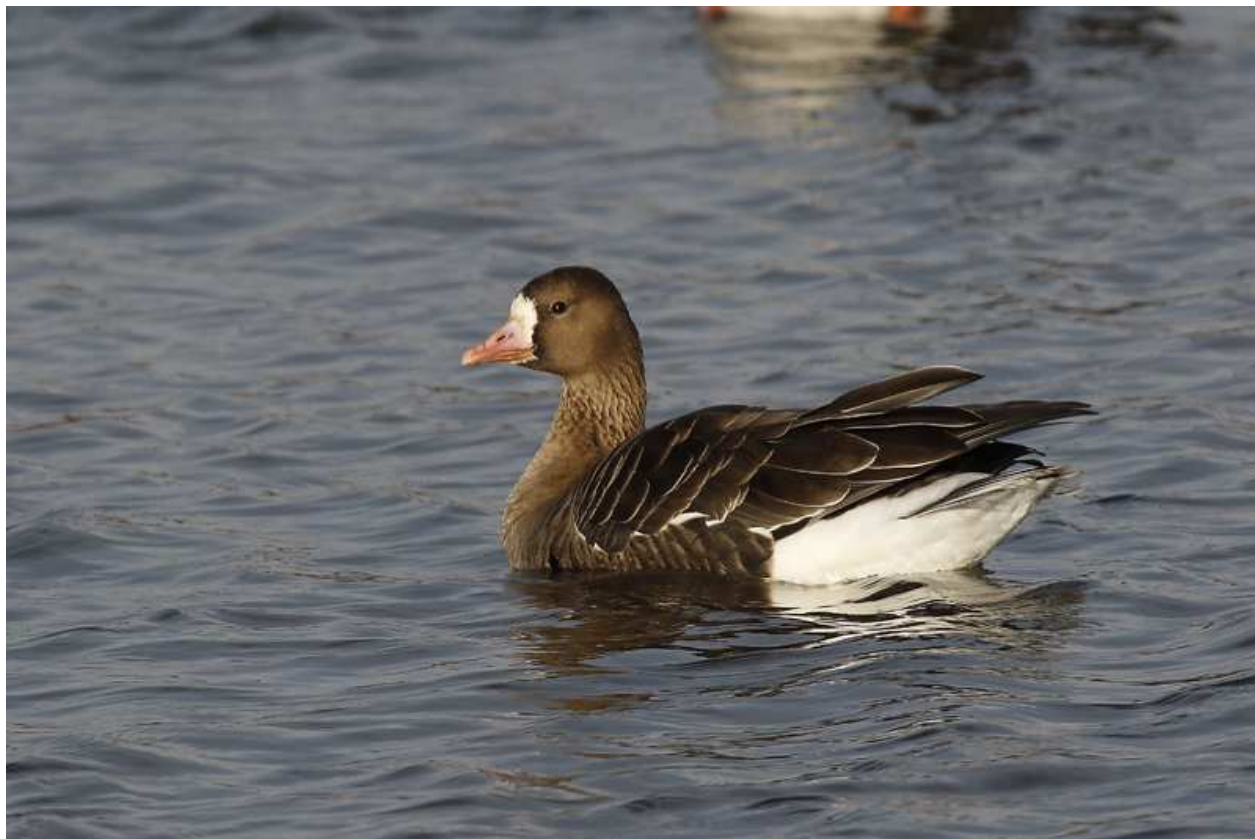


**Tundra Bean Goose** *Anser serrirostris*

One was at Hoppen Kiln Flash on 22nd (DF).

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

A single Eurasian *albifrons* race bird was at Big Waters regularly between 1st-22nd (GB/AJJ). Birds of this race also included two at Druridge Pools on 5th (IDR) and one there on 31st (IDR/JF), and one at Cresswell Pond-Hemscott Hill on several dates between 5th-29th (CH/TF/JFa).



A White-fronted Goose at Big Waters  
Chris Barlow on 14th December

**Mute Swan** *Cygnus olor*

Largest counts were 61 at QEII CP on 15th (CDH), 37 at Killingworth Lake on 11th (LJM), 25-34 at East Chevington, Howdon, Shortridge Hall (near Warkworth) and the Tweed Estuary, and 16 at Big Waters. Four to eight were also at Druridge Bay CP, Druridge Pools and Holy Island, and one to two at nine further sites.

**Whooper Swan** *Cygnus cygnus*

Four came in off the sea at Holy Island north shore and headed S on 1st (MJC). A count of 138 at Velvet Hall (Tweed Valley) on 23rd consisted of 96 adult and 42 immature birds (MHu). Counts of 50-52 at Loanend and Thornton Park (near Horncliffe) may have involved birds from the above 'herd'. Other peak counts were 39 at Warkworth on 2nd (BS), 28 at Low Newton scrape on 18th (SVM/AJM), and nine to 18 at Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools-East Chevington, and Norham. Two to four were also Castron, Ross Back Sands, Shield on the Wall and West Ord.

**Shelduck** *Tadorna tadorna*

The key wintering site of Holy Island held 812 on 12th (DF) and 70 were at Budle Bay on 3rd (AJR). Elsewhere, eight flew N at Stag Rocks on 28th (MJC), eight were at Howdon on 25th (CB), five to seven at Cresswell Pond and Druridge Pools, and one to two at the Blyth Estuary, Boulmer Hauxley Reserve and Holywell Pond.

**Shoveler** *Spatula clypeata*

Early in the month Budle Bay attracted good numbers, with a peak of 71 on 2nd but this declined to one by 26th and none by 28th (DF). In the Druridge Bay area, 43 were noted at East Chevington north pool on 22nd (TF/JFa), 30 at Druridge Pools on 28th (IDR/JF), 14 at Cresswell Pond on 31st (AJR), and 14 at Linton Ponds on 11th (IRD). Five to eight were also at Big Waters, Holywell Pond, Killingworth Lake and Monks' House Pool, and three to four at Holy Island Lough and Marden Quarry.

**Gadwall** *Mareca strepera*

Swallow Pond held 52 on 30th (GPK), 50 (mostly in pairs) were at East Chevington north pool on 28th (MH), 37 at Hedgeley GP on 14th (IBDa/KDa), 36 at Warkworth Lane Ponds (BS), 35 at the Blyth Estuary on 1st (MSH), 15-20 at Big Waters, Castron, Killingworth Lake, Linton Ponds and St Mary's Wetland, and six to ten at Bothal Pond, Holy Island Lough, Marden Quarry and QEII CP Lake. Two to four were also at Arcot Pond, Druridge Pools, Hauxley Reserve, Howdon and Woodhorn Flashes.

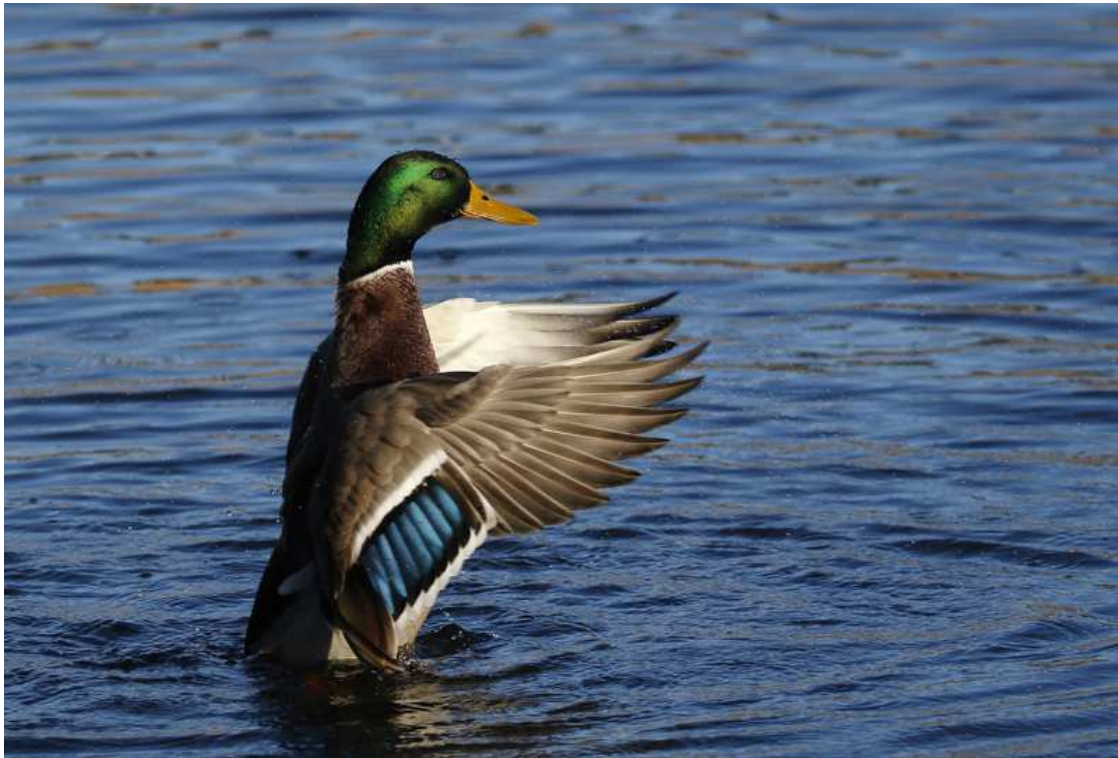


**Wigeon** *Mareca penelope*

Four flew N and two S at Seaton Sluice on 28th (SSWT). About 1,200 were at Budle Bay on 3rd (AJR), 920 were counted at Cresswell Pond on 3rd (IRD), 385 at Grindon Lough on 19th (PRM), 350 at Druridge Pools on 26th (IDR/JF), 347 at Derwent Reservoir (IFo), 232-265 at Big Waters and Warkworth Lane Ponds, and 107-138 at Bothal and Linton Ponds, and the Coquet Estuary. Counts of 65-71 came from Backworth Pond and Boulmer, and 20-34 from Colt Crag and Hallington Reservoirs, and New Water Haugh.

**Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*

Peak counts involved 155 at Big Waters on 1st (GB), 142 at Calot Shad, the Tweed Estuary on 16th (MHu), 107 at Cresswell Pond on 17th (STH/IFo), 52-96 at Airy Holm, Colt Crag and Derwent Reservoirs, Arcot Pond, Castle Island, Cocklawburn Pond, Druridge Pools and Newcastle Leazes Park, and 20-49 at Backworth, Bothal and Cocklawburn Ponds, Catcleugh and Hallington Reservoirs, Grindon Lough, Holy Island Lough, Ladyburn Lake, Marden Quarry, Monks' House Pool, St Mary's Wetland, Wansbeck Estuary and Wark. Groups of 15-19 were at Brocolitia, Newcastle Exhibition Park, Plenmeller Common and Warkworth.



A drake Mallard at Killingworth Lake by Chris Barlow on 12th December

**Pintail** *Anas acuta*

There were no reports from Lindisfarne NNR. Five were at East Chevington on 15th (TD) and singles there on several further dates. Singles were also at Colt Crag Reservoir on 23rd (MR), Druridge Pools on 21st and 28th (IDR/JF), and Grindon Lough on 9th (AJR).

**Teal** *Anas crecca*

On 28th, 43 flew N and 43 S at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). Peak counts were 720 at Holy Island (660 at the Rocket Field Pools and 60 at the lough) on 14th (IK), 425 at Budle Bay on 28th (DF), 228 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 17th (MR), 210 at Cresswell Pond (IRD) and Middle Ord Pond (MHu), and 129-180 at Arcot Pond, Druridge Pools and Grindon Lough. Groups of 69-88 were at the Blyth and Coquet Estuaries, Castle Island, Monks' House Pool, Prestwick Carr, and St Mary's Wetland, and ten to 38 were at Backworth, Bothal and Linton Ponds, Hallington Reservoir, Ross Back Sands, Tyne Green (Hexham) and the Wansbeck Estuary.



A Drake Teal at Howdon wetland by Colin Bradsahw on 26th December

**Green-winged Teal** *Anas carolinensis*

A drake found at Big Waters on 8th (AJJ) remained until 15th at least (GB/PCF).

**Pochard** *Aythya ferina*

The peak count (and only double-figure count) came from Killingworth Lake, with 31 on 26th (GB). Elsewhere, four to five were at Linton Ponds (IRD) and QEII CP Lake (CDH), two to three at Branton GP, Cresswell and Holywell Ponds, East Chevington, Ladyburn and Widdrington Moor Lakes, and Marden Quarry. A drake was at Budle Bay on 28th (CGK).

**Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula*

Peak counts were 66 at Killingworth Lake on 11th (LJM), 52 at Swallow Pond on 26th (GPK), 36-39 at East Chevington (DM), QEII CP Lake (CDH) and Widdrington Moor Lake (BS), 21-25 at Arcot and Linton Ponds, Ladyburn Lake, and ten to 19 at Big Waters, Bothal Pond, Newcastle Leazes Park, West Stobswood Pool and Widdrington Moor Lake. Six to nine were also at Druridge and Monks' House Pools, 'Northumberlandia' (Cramlington) and Warkworth Lane Ponds, and one to four at Airy Holm and Hallington Reservoirs, Castle Island, Cocklawburn Pond, Grindon Lough, Howdon, Newcastle Exhibition Park, Paddy Freemans Lake (Jesmond Dene) and Shield on the Wall.

**Scaup** *Aythya marila*

At Cresswell Pond, four were noted on 1st and 8th, three between 2nd-5th, two on 12th (CH) and one between 11th and 19th (ADM/CH *et al.*). Two were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 19th (TRD/JD), and singles at Hallington Reservoir on 17th (MR) and Swallow Pond all month (ASJ/GPK).

**Eider** *Somateria mollissima*

117 (40-50 adult drakes) were at Blyth South Harbour on 7th (GB/LAR), 111 at Holy Island North Shore on 31st (MJC/ADM), 96 at Ross Back Sands on 22nd (MJC), 46 at Seahouses harbour (ADM) and 30 (mostly in pairs, some drakes displaying) at St Mary's Island (DLo). Counts of 12-14 came from Cocklawburn and Stag Rocks, six to eight were at the Coquet Estuary and Seaton Sluice, and one at the Wansbeck Estuary.

**Velvet Scoter** *Melanitta fusca*

Three flew S at Seaton Sluice on 28th (SSWT). Four were at Cheswick Sands on 15th (CH), two off Ross Back Sands on 15th and one there on 22nd (MJC), and two off Druridge Pools on 30th (IDR/JF).

**Common Scoter** *Melanitta nigra*

The monthly Seaton Sluice total was 185 N and 17 S, including 160 N and 17 S on 28th (SSWT). A large concentration in the north of the county involved 1,400 at Cheswick Sands on 31st (CH) and about 1,200 at nearby Cocklawburn on 2nd (DF). Other peak counts were 491 at Ross Back Sands on 22nd (MJC), 300 at Beadnell Bay on 31st (JPL), 219-220 at Spittal Bay (MHu) and Stag Rocks (ADM) on 18th, 70 at Newbiggin (GB), and 30-40 off Cambois and Druridge Links. Nine were at Holy Island.

**Black Scoter** *Melanitta americana*

The regularly returning drake was at Cheswick Sands on 15th (CH).

**Long-tailed Duck** *Clangula hyemalis*

One flew S at Birling Carrs on 31st (BS). Off Ross Back Sands, 122 were counted on 15th and 78 on 22nd (MJC), while 13 were at Cheswick Sands on 15th (CH), five at Cocklawburn on 31st (MHu), and three at Stag Rocks (DF). Two were at Cresswell Pond on 11th (IRD) and one regularly between 5th-19th (IRD/CH/TD *et al.*), while singles were also at Monks' House Pool on three dates between 3rd-22nd (DF/BS/IDR).

**Goldeneye** *Bucephala clangula*

13 flew N at Budle Point on 28th (CGK) and four N at Seaton Sluice on 1st (SSWT). Largest counts involved 80 at East Chevington north pool on 29th (TF/JFa), 56 at the Tweed Estuary on 12th (TBr/MMcN), 40 at Castle Island on 7th (GB/LAR), 34 at New Water Haugh (River Tweed) on 29th (MHu), and 26 at Holy Island north shore (MJC/ADM). Groups of ten to 18 were at Berwick Old Bridge, Big Waters, Bolam Lake, Castron, Colt Crag Reservoir, Football Hole, Killingworth, QEII CP and Widdrington Moor Lakes, and West Ord. Five to seven were at Boulmer, Grindon Lough, Hallington Reservoir, Hauxley Reserve and Howick, three to four at Cambois, Meadow Haven (Berwick) and Warkworth, and one to two at Bothal, Cresswell and Holywell Ponds, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Ladyburn Lake, Stag Rocks and Warkworth.

**Smew** *Mergellus albellus*

A 'redhead' was at Widdrington Moor Lake all month (TB/BS *et al.*). Another 'redhead' was a surprise find during a WeBS visit to Castron on 15th (TRD).

**Goosander** *Mergus merganser*

11 were at Branton GP on 14th (IBDa/KDa), six at Killingworth Lake on 11th (LJM), three to four at Boulmer (TRD/JD), Tyne Green (SW) and West Ord (MHu), and one to two at Airy Holm, Derwent and Hallington Reservoirs, Castron, Dilston, Holywell Pond, Marden Quarry, Morpeth, Newcastle Leazes Park and Wark.

**Red-breasted Merganser** *Mergus serrator*

24 off Ross Back Sands on 15th increased to 36 on 22nd (MJC), ten were at the Blyth Estuary on 15th (BS), ten off Druridge Links on 31st (IDR/JF), eight at the Wansbeck Estuary on 7th (GB), and three to five at Cambois, Cresswell Pond, Spittal and Widdrington Moor Lake. One to two were also at East Chevington north pool and Stag Rocks.





A pair of Red Breasted Mergansers at Druridge Pools  
22nd December by Chris Barlow

**Black Grouse** *Tetrao tetrix*

Singles were at Plenmeller Common and Winnows Hill (Slaley).

**Red Grouse** *Lagopus lagopus*

22 were at Plenmeller Common on 19th (PRM) and up to three were at Alnwick Moor on two separate dates.



A Red Grouse on Alnwick Moor  
Tim Dean on 24th December

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

An estimated total of 30 birds at Bilton Banks on 1st were likely game releases for the local shoot (MKi). Five were at Alnwick Moor on 24th (TRD/JD).



**Grey Partridge** *Perdix perdix*

Several double-figure counts included 20 at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 27th (TBr), 12 at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) all month (RS) and totals of ten at Broxfield Farm (Alnwick), Doddington, Druridge Pool and Links, and Hemscott Hill Links (Cresswell) on various dates. Eight were at Coopies Lane (Morpeth) and one to six were at Big Waters NWT, Prestwick Carr, St. Mary's and Woodhorn Flashes.

**Pheasant** *Phasianus colchicus*

Druridge Pools and Links peaked at 24 on 29th (IDR/JF) whilst 17 were at Alwinton on 7th (JR). Elsewhere one to five birds were at Amble Braid, Cresswell Links, East Chevington, Hauxley and Shorestone. A very pale leucistic/albino bird was in a field near Furnace Bridge (Bedlington).

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

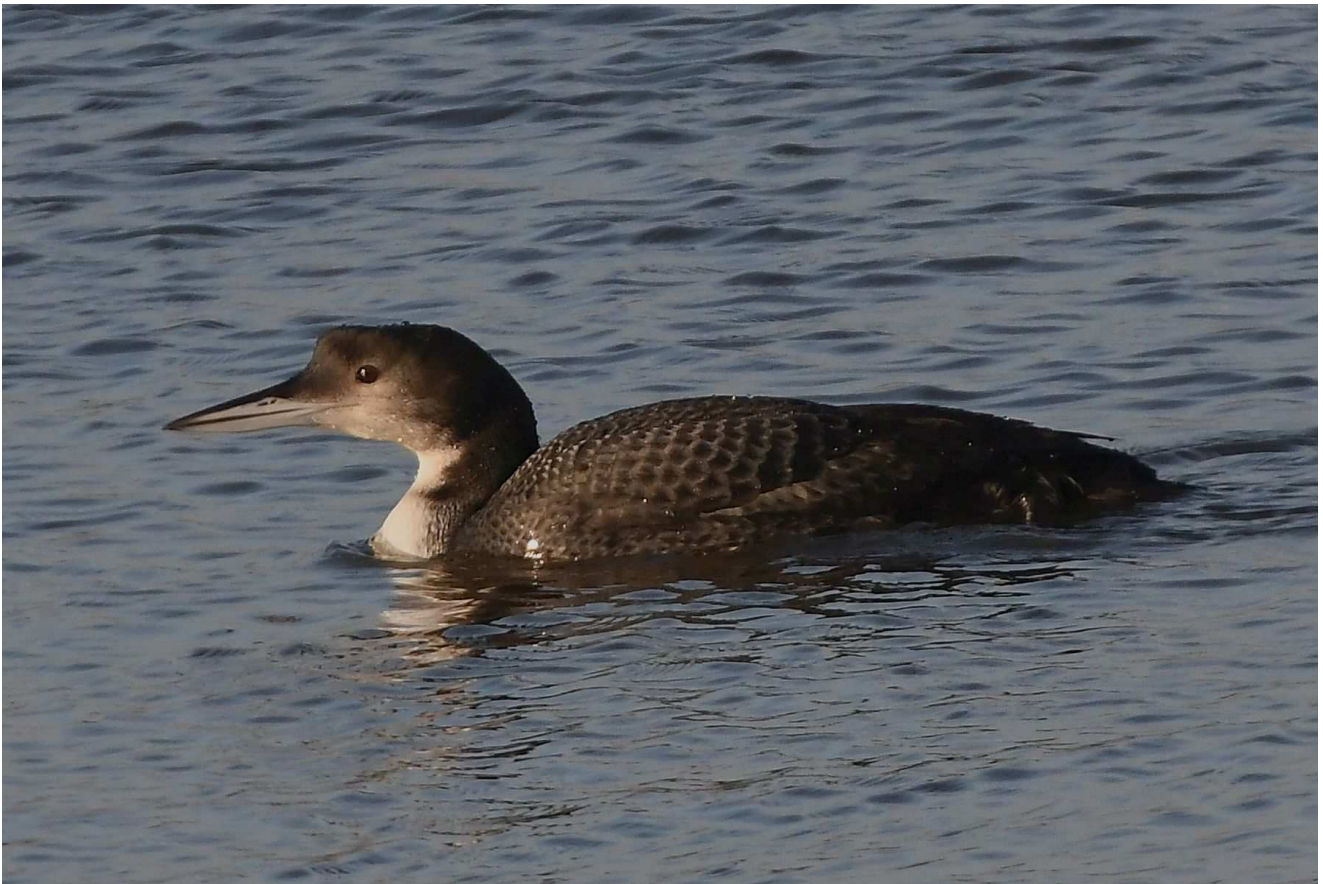
A total of 46 (21N, 25S) headed past Seaton Sluice during the month in 15 hours of watching. The highest total on the sea from that location was ten on 24th (SSWT). At Holy Island 31 were viewed off the North Shore on 31st with a further two in The Sound (MJC/ADM) whilst, slightly further north, 26 were off Cheswick Sands on the same day (CH). Ross Back Sands peaked at 17 on 22nd (MJC), Druridge Bay had a maximum count of 15 on 31st (IDR/JF) and one to four were reported from many other coastal viewpoints.

**Black-throated Diver** *Gavia arctica*

Three was the peak at Ross Back Sands on 15th (MJC) and singles were at Berwick Pier, Cambois, Cheswick Sands, Holy Island, Spittal Bay (Berwick) and Stag Rocks.

**Great Northern Diver** *Gavia immer*

The favoured haunt of Ross Back Sands hosted a peak of three on 22nd (MJC), and two were seen at Cheswick Sands, Holy Island and Stag Rocks. There was only one sighting from Seaton Sluice Watch Tower all month and singles were also at Budle Point, Druridge Bay Country Park, Druridge Bay (offshore), East Chevington North Pool, and heading N at St Mary's. One swam into Cresswell Pond on 19th, obligingly coming close to the busy hide (TRD/JD).



An obliging Great Northern Diver. By Tim Dean  
Cresswell Pond on 19th December

**Fulmar** *Fulmarus glacialis*

A total of approx. 160 at the Farne Islands on 18th included many back on ledges (ADM/JRKH/GWi). 54 were on cliffs at Nessend (Holy Island) on 1st (CH), 30 were at North Shore (Holy Island) on 31st (MJC/ADM) and 14 were back on breeding ledges at Old Hartley on 20th (MSH). Nine were around cliffs at Spittal (Newbiggin) on 27th and a single was at Stag Rocks on 28th.

**Sooty Shearwater** *Puffinus griseus*

Correction from previous bulletin: three offshore at Druridge Pools on 1st November should be 1st October.

**Manx Shearwater** *Puffinus puffinus*

A single flew S past Seaton Sluice on 16th (SSWT).

Correction from previous bulletin: the record of 17 offshore at Druridge Pools on 1st November (IDR) should be 1st October.

**Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

A WeBS visit to Caistron on 15th produced a total count of 19 birds (TRD). 16 were present in the Wansbeck Estuary, and part of the river either side of the weir, on 7th (GB) with the same number counted from Horncliffe to Gainslaw House on the R. Tweed on 9th (CH). The peak at East Chevington was 12 on 15th (TD), eight were at Castle Island on 15th (DM), six were at QE11 CP on 15th and one to five were seen at Big Waters NWT, the Blyth Estuary, Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), on the sea at Boulmer, the R. Coquet between Warkworth-Amble, Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Bay CP, Druridge Pools, Hallington Reservoir, Haughton Castle, Hauxley, Holy Island Lough (unusual for this site in winter), Killingworth Lake, Kitty Brewster (R. Blyth), Tyne Green (Hexham) and Whiteadder Water (Berwick).

**Red-necked Grebe** *Podiceps grisegena*

Singles were at Ross Back Sands on 4th and 22nd (CH/MJC) Holy Island Harbour on 15th (IK) and the south pool at East Chevington on 29th (TF/JFa).

**Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus*

At least six were on the sea at Birling Carrs on 31st (BS), two were at Colt Crag Reservoir and singles were at Seaton Sluice and Stag Rocks.

**Slavonian Grebe** *Podiceps auritus*

Good numbers were off Ross Back Sands on several dates, peaking at an impressive 31 on 15th (MJC). This concentration depleted records from elsewhere with peak counts from other sites being four at Stag Rocks on 22nd and only singles at Budle Point, Cheswick Sands and St. Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island).

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

12 were present during a WeBS visit to the Tweed Estuary on 12th (TBr/MMcN), nine were on staithes at North Blyth on 22nd (STH) and six were at Monks' House Pool on 17th (IDR). One to four were at Airy Holm Reservoir, Amble Braid, Arcot Pond, Big Waters NWT, Castle Island, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools & Links, East Chevington North Pool, Hauxley, Leazes Park (Newcastle), QE11 CP, Seahouses, Tyne Green (Hexham), Warkworth and West Hartford.

**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*

At Holy Island, four on the causeway and a further bird at Castle Point on 1st constituted this month's highest count (MJC). Three were in the Blyth Estuary on 15th (BS) and Gosforth Park NR on 26th (TW) whilst one to two were at Alnmouth, Boulmer, Branton GP, Budle Bay, Colt Crag Reservoir, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pool & Links, East Sleekburn, Fenham-le-Moor, Holy Island, Horton Burn (Cramlington), Ross Back Sands, the R. Wansbeck (at the Estuary, Castle Island and North Seaton) and Whiteadder Water (Berwick).

**Gannet** *Morus bassanus*

The only sightings were two heading N past Druridge Links on 30th and singles past Boulmer, Church Point (Newbiggin) and Seaton Sluice.

**Shag** *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

At least 100 were offshore at Budle Point on 28th (CGK), Ross Back Sands peaked at 52 on 22nd (MJC) whilst at Holy Island a total of 49 (39 on the North Shore and ten in the Sound) were present on 31st (MJC/ADM). Elsewhere 32 were at Stag Rocks on 28th, a minimum of 20 on the Farne Islands on 18th, 18 were at Saltpan Rocks on 24th and 16 were at both Redshin Cove (Berwick) and Cocklawburn. 14 were at the Meadow Haven (Berwick) roost on 1st and seven in Blyth Harbour on 7th included one with a blue ring 'BHR' on its left leg. One to five were reported from several other coastal sites.

**Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

58 flew N past Amble Braid in three flocks on 28th (DM). On the R. Tyne 128 were roosting on staithes at Howdon on 16th (CB) whilst North Shields Fish Quay peaked at 113 on 24th (STH). 37 were in Blyth Harbour on 13th, 35 were at Ross Back Sands on 22nd, 33 at North Shore (Holy Island) on 31st, 25 in Amble Harbour on 17th and 24 recorded during a WeBS visit to Cocklawburn on 24th. One to seven were reported from 13 other scattered sites.

**Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus*

Three birds, a juvenile female, an adult female and an adult male, were at three different locations on Holy Island on 31st (MJC/ADM). Two birds were at Humshaugh on 21st (SW), Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 26th (TBr) and at Westerhope (Newcastle) on 29th (MH). Single birds were at 26 sites.

**Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*

Two birds, a juvenile and a sub-adult male, were noted in the East Chevington/Druridge area on 3rd, 25th and 28th (MH/AA), and a female and a juvenile were noted at East Chevington on 31st (AJR/MN). Single birds were also noted at Druridge Pools, East Chevington and Widdrington Moor Lake throughout the month (IRD *et al.*).

**Hen Harrier** *Circus cyaneus*

A ringtail was seen at a site on 7th, before being chased off by Carrion Crows *Corvus corone* (IK).

**Red Kite** *Milvus milvus*

Three birds were at Carterway Heads on 6th and three were also seen at Derwent Reservoir on 16th (IFo), while on the 17th a separate juvenile and two older birds were at Winnows Hill (Slaley) (MH/AA). Single birds were noted at Derwent Reservoir on a number of dates throughout the month (IFo), Heddon-on-the-Wall on 7th (SW), Brocksbushes (Corbridge) on 12th (AJR) and at Carterway Heads on 13th and Snods Edge on 14th (IFo).

**Common Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*

Six birds were along the Cloudy Crag escarpment (Alnwick Moor) on 13th (MH). Five were noted at Greenhead on 15th (SW) and at Derwent Reservoir on 22nd (IFo) and four were at Fourstones on 9th (AJH), Winnows Hill (Slaley) on 17th (MH/AA) and at Plenmeller Common on 19th (PRM). Three birds were at Horton Grange (Blagdon) on 3rd (MH/AA), West Hartford on 9th (TB), Greenhead on 28th (SW) and Prestwick Carr on 31st (GB). Two birds were observed at five sites and singles were reported from 19 locations.

**Water Rail** *Rallus aquaticus*

At Holy Island Lough six birds were heard fighting/squealing at the same time in three widely separated areas of the reed beds (IK). Three birds were calling at Gosforth Park NR on 26th (AJ) and two were at Druridge Pools on 1st (IDR), Cresswell Pond on 22nd (TF/JFa) and East Chevington North Pool on 28th (TB). Single birds were either seen or heard at Arcot Pond, Big Waters NWT, Cresswell Pond, Hauxley NR, Holywell Pond, Holy Island Lough & Prestwick Carr.

**Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*

20 birds were counted at Castle Island during WeBS count on 15th (DM/PJA), 17 birds were at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 12th (GB), 12 were noted at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 11th (DM), 11 were at QEII CP on 15th (CDH). One to seven birds were noted at 13 sites.

**Coot** *Fulica atra*

Counts of 108 & 102 birds were at Linton Ponds on 11th & 15th (IRD/CDH), 102 were also at Woodhorn Flash on 22nd (MSH). Other high counts were 54 birds were at Killingworth Lake on 11th (LJM) and at QEII CP on 15th (CDH) and 50 were at Big Waters NWT on 1st (GB) and 32 at Bothal Pond on 31st (IDR/JF). One to twelve birds were at seven sites.

**Oystercatcher** *Haematopus ostralegus*

St Mary's Island had 138 on 20th (MSH) and Saltpan Rocks at Cocklawburn had 118 on 24th (MHu). There were 88 at Budle Bay on 3rd (DF) and 69 at Holy Island north shore, on 31st (MJC/ADM). North Blyth Staithes had 45 on 22nd (STH) and West Ord (Berwick) had 30 on 23rd (MHu). Counts of fewer than 30 birds came from Rocky Island, Seaton Sluice, the Blyth Estuary, Ladyburn Lake and Hauxley NR.

**Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus*

The highest count came from Prestwick Carr on 7th, where ca500 were gathered on flooded fields (IK). The Blyth Estuary and Cresswell Pond had 400+ on 1st and 3rd respectively (MSH), and there were 392 at Beal on 17th (DF) and 341 at Druridge Pools on 6th (IDR). Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) had 281 on 16th (TD) and Shotleyfield, near Airy Holm Reservoir, had 250 on 6th (IFo). On 28th, there were flocks of 200 at the North Pool, East Chevington (DM/G&AIB/LAR) and at Winshields (SW). St Mary's Island had 180 on 20th (ASJ) and the WeBS count at the Tweed Estuary on 12th was 168 (TBr/MMcN). There were 114 at Cocklawburn on 31st (MHu). Counts of fewer than 100 birds came from Plenmeller Common, Seahouses, the Coquet Estuary, East Hartford, Big Waters NR and Monks' House Pool, and a solitary individual was noted at Grindon Lough on 19th (PRM).

**Golden Plover** *Pluvialis apricaria*

The largest flocks were at Budle Bay again, with 2,000–3,000 at Ross Farm on 23rd and 28th (DF). There were ca1,000 at Prestwick Carr on 7th (IK) and 620 at Druridge Pools on 31st (AJR). The Coquet Estuary had 560 on 1st (RPo) and Boulmer had 488 on 16th (BS). There were ca400 at Doddington on 3rd (TRD/JD). Flocks of 300 were noted at Alnwick Moor on 13th (MH), Cresswell Pond on 19th (TB) and Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) on 31st (IDR/JF). There were flocks of 100 to 250 birds at Seahouses, Longhoughton, Shotleyfield, Cocklawburn, the Blyth Estuary and the Town Moor, Newcastle. Smaller groups were recorded at Grindon Lough, Big Waters, Plenmeller Common and Ord Moor, Berwick.

**Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola*

There was a flock of 61 at Boulmer on 21st (BD) and 46S in Budle Bay on 3rd (DF). There were 12 at Beacon Point, Newbiggin on 5th (STH), seven at the Blyth Estuary on 1st (MSH) and a single bird at Cocklawburn on 3rd (MHu).

**Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula*

The largest flocks were at the Blyth Estuary again, with 82 on 15th (LJM) and at Budle Bay, with 60 on 28th (CGK). There were 50 at the high-tide roost at Chevington Burn mouth on 24th (TD) and 33 at Beacon Point, Newbiggin on 5th (STH). The Long Nanny had 25 on 8th (TD) and Black Rocks had 24 on 31st (CH). Smaller numbers were recorded at Berwick Little Beach, St Mary's Island, Stag Rocks, Boulmer and Cullercoats.

**Curlew** *Numenius arquata*

The highest counts came from Boulmer, with 413 on 16th (BS), Budle Bay, with 340 on 3rd (DF) and Cresswell Pond, with 275 at high tide on the sand bank on 15th (TD). There were 125 at Druridge Pools on 26th (IDR/JF), 112 at Cocklawburn on 24th (MHu) and 100 in fields at Seahouses on 18th (ADM). Shoreston Hall had 79 on 28th (MSH), Ross village had 70 on 22nd (MJC) and there were 68N from St Mary's Island on 9th (SSWT). There was a flock of 60+ at Low Hauxley on 7th (MSH), 54 at Howdon on 30th (CB) and 40 at both Marden Farm (Tynemouth) on 13th (MN) and East Chevington on 17th



(STH/IFo). Reports of smaller flocks came from the Blyth and Coquet Estuaries, Beacon Point, Newbiggin and Berwick Little Beach.

**Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica*

There were 48 at both Boulmer on 21st (BS) and Holy Island north shore, on 31st (MJC/ADM). Budle Bay had 33 on 17th (DF) and a single Norwegian colour-ringed bird on 31st (DF). Reports of fewer than ten birds came from Newbiggin, Little Beach, Berwick and the Blyth and Coquet Estuaries.

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

There were singles at Cresswell Pond on 19th (TRD/JD) and 22nd (TF/JFa) and at Howdon on 21st (CB), Druridge Pools on 29th (IDR/JF) and the Coquet Estuary on 31st (MKi).

**Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*

An influx into the area was apparent with some high counts reported. At Berwick Little Beach the peak number was 116 on 4th (MHu), an estimate of 100 was made at the Farne Islands on 18th (ADM/JRKH/GWi), 85 were at Holy Island North Shore on 31st (ADM/MJC) and a minimum of 80 was seen at St Mary's Island on 20th (MSH). Birds were present in the Newbiggin area with 42 in the village bay on 12th (CH) and 33 at Beacon Point on 5th (STH). In the River Blyth Estuary, 24 were at North Blyth staithes on 22nd (STH), 18 were at the estuary on 12th (JR) and three upstream at Kitty Brewster on 7th (GB). On 6th, 29 were found feeding on the quay at North Shields Fish Quay (LJM/DM) with 15 on 24th (MN). Elsewhere 20 were at Low Newton on 8th, 18 at Berwick (Old Bridge) on 25th and 11 at Dunstanburgh on 26th. One to five were at Amble Braid, Boulmer, Cocklawburn, New Water Haugh (River Tweed), Seaton Sluice and Tynemouth Boating Lake during the month.

**Knot** *Calidris canutus*

Birds remained concentrated in the Lindisfarne NNR area but in reduced numbers compared to last month. At Budle Bay, 200-222 were counted between 3rd-26th (DF/AJR) and 90 were seen at Beal on 7th (DF). The only other reports received were 38 at the River Coquet Estuary on 1st (RPo) and seven at Seaton Sluice on 24th and two at Amble on 31st.

**Ruff** *Calidris pugnax*

Druridge Pools and Cresswell Pond continued to hold birds during the month with a maximum of five counted at Cresswell Pond from 1st-19th (ADM/TB/MSH *et al.*) and four at Druridge Pools from 11th-31st (IRD/IDR/JF/MN). A single was at Prestwick Carr on 6th (AA).

**Sanderling** *Calidris alba*

Higher numbers were reported this month with the peak being 93 at high tide on Chevington Burn beach on 24th (TD). A feeding flock was present in the bay at Newbiggin on 12th and 29th with 54 on 12th (CH) and approximately 90 on 29th (CDH/STH). A count at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) revealed 70 on 5th (STH). At Boulmer, 13 were present on 1st (DF) increasing to 75 by 14th (TD). A high-tide roost at East Chevington beach attracted 70 on 25th but only 35 on 28th (MH). Other counts received from the Druridge Bay area were between eight-16 during the month (IDR/JF/MHu/DM). Other reports were 66 at Berwick Little Beach on 4th (MHu), 60 at Low Newton on 8th (TD), 53 at St Mary's Island on 22nd (ASJ), 43 near Foxton Hall Golf Club on 26th (MKi), 21 at North Shields Fish Quay on 21st(GB) and 12 at Cocklawburn on 17th (MHu).

**Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*

The numbers at Lindisfarne NNR were much reduced from November with the peak count being 65 at Budle Bay on 3rd (DF). Notable numbers were still reported from the River Blyth Estuary during the month with a minimum of 300 on 1st (MSH) and a minimum of 250 still present on 15th (BS/LJM). Probably the same group were reported from North Blyth staithes on 22nd when 228 were counted (STH). At Boulmer six were seen on 1st (TRD/JD) increasing to 164 on 21st (BS). Birds remained at the River Coquet Estuary all month with 152 counted on 1st (RPo) and 106 on 31st(MKi). A high-tide roost at Cresswell Pond attracted 100 on 15th (TD). Elsewhere, 70+ were at St Mary's Island on 20th, approximately 50 at Newbiggin on 29th and 15 were at the Long Nanny Estuary 8th. Four were feeding in stubble fields at Amble-Hauxley, and one-two at Stag Rocks and Druridge.

**Purple Sandpiper** *Calidris maritime*

A 'disappointing count' of only 26 was made at Stag Rocks on 3rd (AJR) with only one present on 23rd (TRD/JD). Low numbers were reported from other locations with 17 at Newbiggin on 12th (CH), 16 at Tynemouth Pier on 20th (ASJ), 15 at Boulmer on 21st (BS), 12 at Holy Island North Shore on 31st (MJC/ADM), ten at Low Newton on 8th (TD) and ten at Dunstanburgh on 26th (AJH). One-eight were at Berwick Little Beach, Cocklawburn, Farne Islands, North Blyth staithes (very unusual here) North Shields Fish Quay, Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay), Seaton Sluice and Snab Point (Cresswell).

**Long-billed Dowitcher** *Limnodromus scolopaceus*

The 1st-winter bird at Cresswell Pond was reported from 2nd-20th (ADM/TB/TRD/JD).

**Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola*

Three were reported from Howick with one on 3rd and two on 30th (JAR). Singles were recorded at Bewick Moor, Brenkley (Blagdon), Corbridge Common, Ford Moss, Holy Island (a wing found by the Harbour), Langleeford, and Plessey Checks (Cramlington). As expected, there were instances of birds being found in unusual locations. One was seen flying along City Road, Newcastle, eventually landing in the back yard of the Premier Inn on 2nd (GB). One was also found sitting in a Willow bush at Riverside Country Park (Prudhoe) on 12th (DLe).

November 2019-Additional Woodcock records- At Holy Island, two were seen on 3rd (Snook and churchyard), one at the Snook on 3rd, three on the Island on 5th, and two on 8th (excavations and village) (ADM).

**Jack Snipe** *Limnocyrtus minimus*

Two were at Big Waters on 15th (GB) and two in a damp field at High Hauxley on 28th (DM/GB). Singles were at Cresswell Pond on 15th (TD) and in the St Mary's Island area on 6th (Wetland) and at the gully on 23rd (MSH/ASJ).

**Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago*

52 were in a damp stubble field at High Hauxley on 28th (DM/GB). 18 were at Arcot Pond on 24th (STH) and Arcot Lane Flash on 30th (DM), 15 were at St Mary's Wetland on 6th (MSH), 15 at Monks' House Pool on 17th (IDR), 12 at Holy Island Lough on 1st (MJC), 11 at Big Waters on 15th (GB) and ten at Hauxley NWT on 28th (DM). One-nine were reported from Bothal Pond, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Howdon and Longhorsley Moor.

**Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*

One was heard several times along the river at Doddington on 3rd (TRD/JD).

**Redshank** *Tringa totanus*

The River Blyth Estuary continued to hold birds with 240 on North Blyth staithes on 22nd (STH) and 150 at Kitty Brewster on 7th (GB). A minimum of 150 was counted at St Mary's Island on 20th (MSH), 137 was the maximum reported from Newbiggin on 12th (CH), 130 were at Howdon on 21st (CB), 113 at Budle Bay on 26th (DF), 100 at Cresswell Pond on 15th (TD) and at least 100 at Tynemouth pier on 20th (ASJ). Birds were reported from locations along the River Tweed with a WeBS count on 12th revealing 85 being present, 52 were at the Old Bridge on 25th, 44 were at Berwick Little Beach on 4th and 18 at New Water Haugh on 4th (all MHu). 45 were counted at the River Coquet Estuary on 1st (RPo) and also at Beal on 7th (DF), 42 at Amble Braid on 28th (DM) and 40 were at Low Newton on 8th (TD). One-14 were seen at Amble-Hauxley, Bothal Pond, Cocklawburn, Druridge Pools, Seaton Sluice and the River Wansbeck Estuary.

**Kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla*

A single bird off Holy Island at the month end was the only record (MJC/ADM).

**Black-headed Gull** *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

The largest flocks comprised 600 at Airy Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield) on 20th (IFo) and 400 at St Aidan's Dunes (Seahouses) on 9th (IDR). Elsewhere, smaller gatherings of 100-200 were in the Blyth Estuary, Colt Crag Reservoir and Druridge Pools/Bay, 25-100 at Bothal Pond, Castle Island, Ellington Pond, Exhibition Park, Jesmond Dene and Leazes Park and a handful at five other sites.

**Mediterranean Gull** *Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus*

Numbers similar to last December remained in the Newbiggin area with a maximum count of 31, almost all adults, on 12th (CH) and smaller counts of up to 20-23 on a number of other days (STH/BS). Woodhorn Flashes held 13 on 22nd, four were at Cresswell Pond (MSH/ADM) with one or two at four other localities in the south east and a single bird at Monks' House Pool.

**Common Gull** *Larus canus*

At Gainslaw (nr. Berwick), 560 were counted on 29th (MHu) and a roost at Colt Crag Reservoir on 27th held 280 (MR). Concentrations of 150-175 were at Big Waters NWT (GB), Budle Bay (DF) and Cocklawburn (MHu), 25-55 at Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough and Newton (Long Nanny) with up to 12 elsewhere at six other localities.

**Great Black-backed Gull** *Larus marinus*

The maximum counts were 85 at Castle Island (DM), 66 in Budle Bay of which almost half were adults (DF) and 30-45 at Colt Crag Reservoir, Druridge Pools/Links and the River Tweed Estuary (MHu). Three single-figure counts came from Derwent Reservoir, Seahouses and Wark (North Tyne).

A reflecting Greater Black-backed Gull

drinks at North Shields Fish Quay

Alan Jack on 11th December



**Glaucous Gull** *Larus hyperboreus*

Single 1st-winter birds were noted at North Shields Fish Quay on 3rd (ASJ) and at St Mary's Island on 20th (MSH).

November Bulletin correction The photograph labelled Glaucous Gull should read Iceland Gull.

**Iceland Gull** *Larus glaucoides*

A 'juvenile' was recorded on four days from 1st-24th at North Shields Fish Quay (ASL/MN).



Chris Barlow close up to an Iceland Gull at North Shields Fish Quay on 1st December

**Herring Gull** *Larus argentatus argenteus*

A large gull roost at Colt Crag Reservoir on 27th held 1,350 (MR), 450 were found during a WeB Survey in the River Tweed Estuary on 12th (TBR/MMcN) and 182 were in the River Blyth Estuary, also on 12th (JR). Castle Island held 76 on 15th (DM) and a maximum of many counts in the Druridge Pools/Links area was 45 on 26th (IDR/JF). Counts of around 15 came from Seahouses and Shoreston (IDR).



A young Herring Gull fancies a coke. QEII CP on 21st December by Chris Barlow



**Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus fuscus graelsii*

Surprisingly, no birds were reported this month.

**Little Auk** *Alle alle*

Three were at Ross Back Sands on 22nd (MJC), two flew S at Seaton Sluice on 26th (SSWT) and singles were seen on other dates at Stag Rocks (AJR) and the Farne Islands (ADM).

**Common Guillemot** *Uria aalge*

Eight were seen on the Farne Islands on 18th (ADM) and elsewhere one to five were recorded on dates throughout from nine coastal localities between Berwick and St Mary's Island.

**Razorbill** *Alca torda*

Fifteen were offshore at Budle Point on 28th (CGK) whilst on the same day 11 were noted at Stag Rocks (MJC). One to four were reported from Bamburgh, Druridge Bay, Holy Island and Ross Back Sands

**Black Guillemot** *Cephus grylle*

One was seen from the boat off North Wamses, Farne Islands on 18th (ADM) with probably the same individual reported at Bamburgh Stag Rocks from 22nd-28th (BS *et al.*) and a different bird was off Snipe Point, Holy Island on 31st (ADM *et al.*).

**Puffin** *Fratercula arctica*

Eight were present at Bamburgh Stag Rocks on 28th (MJC), five at Holy Island on 31st (MJC/ADM) and up to four at Boulmer, Cheswick Sands and Newton.

**Feral Pigeon** *Columba livia*

A high count of 113 at Haymarket (Newcastle) on 14th, 58 at Asda Gosforth on 11th (DM), 56 were at Shorestone (IDR) on 17th, 19 at Newbiggin town centre on 10th and present at Jesmond Dene.

**Stock Dove** *Columba oenas*

A pre-roost gathering of 82 was noted at Howdon on 16th (CB), 36 at Widdrington Lane on 3rd (MSH) with seven at Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 16th and five there on 31st and at Ellington on 19th. One to four were at eight other locations.

**Woodpigeon** *Columba palumbus*

Large gatherings of 700 were at Crooked Oak Lane on 31st with 500 there on 19th (IFo), around 600 at Prospect Hill (Morpeth) on 15th and East Sleekburn on 18th (DLe/JR) with 500 at Prestwick Carr on 9th, Northumberlandia (Cramlington) on 24th and Seaton Burn on 29th (STH/LJM/CB). 80 were at Castle Island on 15th, 35 at Longhorsley Moor on 31st with one to eight at eight other locations.

**Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto*

A high count of 30 came from Berwick Hill on 28th (AHB), 12 at Seahouses on 30th (JPL) and the peak count at a Newbiggin Garden during the month (RS). Two to four were at five other widespread localities.

**Barn Owl** *Tyto alba*

All sightings were of single birds at Longhorsley Moor in daylight on 1st, Howick on 8th, Widdrington Station, Longhirst Fair Moor (Morpeth) on 19th, Holywell Pond on 21st and Woodhorn on 23rd.

**Tawny Owl** *Strix aluco*

Two were heard all month at Howick (JR) and at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 9th (TD) with singles at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) regularly (TBr), at Manor Drive (Longbenton) with a male on 4th and female on 9th (AJ). One was at Ellington on 4th, Derwent Reservoir on 5th, Humshaugh on 6th and 26th, Brownieside on 15th, Simonburn on 18th and Harbottle on 19th.

**Little Owl** *Athene noctua*

One was regularly at Druridge during the month (IDR) and at Dinnington on 8th (PCF).

**Long-eared Owl** *Asio otus*

One was at Holy Island on 3rd & 4th (ADM) with one at a confidential roost in SE Northumberland on 31st.

**Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus*

Five was the peak count east of Holywell Pond on 30th with four there on 28th (ASJ), three at St Mary's from 1st to 9th (ASJ *et al.*) with one at Holy Island on 31st (MJC/ADM).

**Swift** *Apus apus*

November Bulletin amendment The Swift was at St George's (Cullercoats)

**Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis*

Two were on the rocks at St Mary's Island on many dates during the month (ASJ), at Jesmond Dene on 22nd (MJCo) and squabbling over a perch at Prestwick Carr on 31st (PCF). One or two were present at Northumberland Park (North Shields) all month and at Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay), Seaton Sluice and Cresswell Pond regularly, Big Waters on two dates and a male at Boulmer all month. Other singles were at Colt Crag Reservoir, East Chevington, Hoppen Kiln Flash, Howick Dene, Netherton and Widdrington Moor Lake.

A Kingfisher poses for John Richards

31st December

Cresswell

**Great Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos major*

Four was the high count at Ford Moss on 15th (IRD), with two at Humford Mill Bedlington on 5th, Furnace Bridge nr. Bedlington on 10th, West Sleekburn on 15th, Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 19th, Jesmond Dene on 22nd, Wark (N.Tyne) on 26th and Humshaugh on 31st. Singles were at 13 widespread localities.

**Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*

Four were seen at Prestwick Carr on 9th (STH) and two birds were at Derwent Reservoir on 6th & 11th (IFo), Big Waters NWT on 15th (GB) and two were still showing interest around a high Pine tree in the observer's garden at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 23rd (TD). Single birds were reported from 22 locations throughout the month.

**Merlin** *Falco columbarius*

Two unsexed birds were at Boulmer on 21st (BS) and single birds were noted on or near the coast at Druridge Pools, Elwick, Linton, Shoreston and at West Stobswood Pool Linton, while singles were at three inland sites (MR/MH/AA and TRD/JD).

**Peregrine** *Falco peregrinus*

Two adults were interacting at Derwent Reservoir on 14th but flew off SW (IFo). Single birds were seen at Belford Moor, Cocklawburn, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Fenham Mill (Lindisfarne), Holy Island Holywell Pond, Longhirst, Longhoughton Steel and at Low Hauxley.

**Ring-necked Parakeet** *Psittacula krameri*

A flock of 17 flew E/SE over Moorside Allotments (Fenham) on 2nd (GB), nine was the maximum for the month at Gosforth Home Farm (MJc/DJc), five at Heaton Park on 20th with four there on 24th and a single on 23rd (TW). Three flew SE at Royal Grammar School (Newcastle) on 17th with a single there on 17th with two at Percy Park Rugby ground (Tynemouth) on 22nd.

**Jay** *Garrulus glandarius*

Five were at Ellington on 26th, three at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 19th (TB) and in the observer's garden at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 30th (TD). One to two were at seven other locations.

**Magpie** *Pica pica*

There was a roost count of 99 at Balliol Business Park (Longbenton) on 30th with 49 there on 12th (ADM), 51 at Beaconhill (Cramlington) on 12th, 23 at Northumberlandia (Cramlington) on 28th (STH) and 15 at Wansbeck Estuary on 15th. One to nine were at eight other widespread localities.

**Jackdaw** *Corvus monedula*

750 came in to roost at QEII CP on 28th (DM) with roosts around 500 at Ross on 4th and Netherton on 7th (CH/JR) and 350 at Sainsbury's Supermarket, Red House Farm on 30th (MN). Pre-roost gathering at Monkseaton numbered 300-350 most evenings (MSH), 150 at Prestwick Carr on 8th, 108 at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 24th, 100 at Birling Carrs (Warkworth) on 3rd, 77 at Hartburn Reservoir on 7th, 70 at Bebside on 10th, 60 at Alwinton on 7th and 42 at R Blyth Estuary on 12th.

**Rook** *Corvus frugilegus*

At Ross 400 roosted on 4th (CH), around 270 at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on the same date (TBr), on 7th 200 were at Netherton and 100 at Alwinton (JR). 60 were at Derwent Reservoir on 19th, 44 at Newbiggin GC on 5th, 34 at Hartburn Reservoir on 7th and 30 at Druridge Pools & Links on 1st with two to 12 at three locations.

**Carrion Crow** *Corvus corone*

On 12th 48 were at R. Blyth Estuary (JR), 40 at West Hartford on 16th (STH) with 16 at Dudlees MOD Range, 14 at Featherwood MOD Range and 11 at Ferneyrigg (near Kirkwhelpington) all on 7th (JR). One to nine were at seven other localities.

**Hooded Crow** *Corvus cornix*

One was noted at Linton on 19th (TB).

**Raven** *Corvus corax*

Five were at Siloans MOD Range on 22nd (JR) with two at Howick on 1st, Bellsheil Law on 7th, Colt Crag Reservoir on 17th, Dudlees MOD Range on 22nd, Belford Moor on 25th and Ross Back Sands on 30th. Singles were at Branton, Holy Island and Thrunton Crag.

**Waxwing** *Bombycilla garrulus*

Blyth Civic Centre was the popular location this month with a peak of 126 counted from a photograph taken on 2nd (ASJ) and 30 to 87 counted on five other dates until 17th. 77 were at Monkseaton on 29th (KWY), 62 the peak at Laurel Park (North Shields) on 4th (ASJ) with 45/47 there on the two preceding days and 30 at Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 1st (MNC). 15 were at Laurel Park on 9th and two there on 1st with 10 at Thropton on 30th and eight at Addison Road (North Shields) on 25th.

Waxwings

North Shields

Alan Jack

3rd December

**Coal Tit** *Periparus ater*

High counts of 27 were at Humford Mill (Bedlington) on 5th (JR), 20 at Hoppen Kiln Flash (nr Lucker) on 4th (IDR), 18 trapped & ringed at Spindleston on 31st (BRS), 15 at Druridge Bay CP on 30th (IDR/JF) and 14 at Bebside on 26th (JR). One to ten were at seven other locations.

**Marsh Tit** *Poecile palustris*

Three was the peak count at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 13th with one to two there on several other dates (NFO). Two together at Fontburn on 17th (TD) with single visiting feeders at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) and Rothbury almost daily and at Bolam Lake on 18th.



**Willow Tit** *Poecile montanus*

Three were at Big Waters NWT on 8th and Prestwick Carr on 15th (PCF) with two regularly at both sites during the month and at Wallsend Swallow Pond from 18th to 31st. Two were at Branton GP and Brierdene (Whitley Bay) on 21st, Callerton Village and Linton Ponds on 29th. Singles were at 13 other widespread localities.



A Willow Tit

Prestwick- Carr

29th December

Colin Bradshaw

**Blue Tit** *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Large counts of 65 came from Kielder Village on 11th (ADM), 25 at Hoppen Kiln Flash (nr Lucker), Low Cocklaw (nr Berwick) on 4th and at Bebside on 26th. 23 were at Humford Mill, Bedlington on 5th, 22 trapped and ringed at Spindleston on 31st, 20 at Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 16th and at Humshaugh on 31st, 16 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 9th with one to ten at 12 other widespread localities.

**Great Tit** *Parus major*

At least 40 were at Kielder Village on 11th (ADM), 21 trapped and ringed at Spindleston on 31st (BRS), 20 at Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 16th (MNC) with 16 at Humford Mill (Bedlington) on 5th and Furnace Bridge (Bedlington) on 10th. On 4th 15 were at Hoppen Kiln Flash and at Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth) on 31st with one to ten at six other locations.

**Skylark** *Alauda arvensis*

21 were at Cresswell on 1st (IDR), ten at Big Waters NWT on 31st (GB) with nine at Boulmer on 22nd (BS) and eight at Fenham le Moor on 8th (MH/AA). One to five were at five other widespread localities.

**Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

On 18th one hawked up the main road at West Monseaton (MNC).

**Cetti's Warbler** *Cettia cetti*

The regular birds at Holy Island Lough and East Chevington North Pool were heard calling / singing again on 1st and 28th respectively (IK/MJC/TB).

**Long-tailed Tit** *Aegithalos caudatus*

There were numerous large gatherings during the month, beginning with 30 at Druridge Pools on 5th, with 15 here on the following day (IDR). A 'tribe' of 25 was at Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 16th, a total of 23 were ringed on two dates at Mickley Square at the end of the month, 22 were found at Hexham on 30th and 21 at Humford Mill (Bedlington) on 5th. Counts of 14 came from a Cramlington (Northburn) garden on 30th, Grindon Lough on 19th and West Sleekburn on 15th, while 13 were at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 27th. Elsewhere, 11-12 were noted at Big Waters NWT, Castle Island, Cramlington (High School and Valley Park), Humshaugh, Longdyke (Shilbottle), North Seaton and Woosington and ten at Cramlington (Southfield Green), Colt Crag Reservoir, Furnace Bridge (Bedlington), Marden Quarry and Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth); four to seven were reported from Branton GP, Corbridge, Derwent Reservoir, East Hartford, Jesmond Dene, Leazes Park, Longbenton, Newcastle City Centre, Wooler and Yearle. Four at Holy Island on 1st was more unusual.



A Long-tailed Tit by John Richards in a Hexham garden on 20th December

**Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita*

Singles were noted at Branton GP on 1st (IBDa/KDa) and High Light (North Shields) on 24th (MN).

**Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla*

Three wintering birds were noted during the month, all attracted to garden feeders. A female was at Morpeth on 6th (AB/LB) and another at Swarland during the month and a male was at Wylam (IK).

**Goldcrest** *Regulus regulus*

Four at Windyhaugh (Upper Coquetdale) on 7th was the largest number reported. Elsewhere, one to two were noted at Druridge Pools, Hazelrigg, Holy Island, Leazes Park, Linton, North Seaton, Northumberland Park (North Shields), Wark (North Tyne) and West Sleekburn.

**Wren** *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Two to six were reported from Druridge Pools throughout (IDR). Five were noted at Shorestone on 17th, Stag Rocks-Budle Point on 18th and Cocklawburn on 24th and four at Bedlington (Furnace Bridge and Humford Mill) on 10th and 5th respectively. Singles were reported from Hoppen Kiln Flash, Jesmond Dene and Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth).

**Nuthatch** *Sitta europaea*

A total of ten were heard calling at Bolam Lake on 15th (AJ), eight were at Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth) on 31st, five at Wark (North Tyne) on 26th and three at Humshaugh and Jesmond Dene. One to two were reported from Bedlington (Furnace Bridge and Humford Mill), Bothal, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Dilston, Harbottle, Northumberland Park (North Shields) and Rothbury.

**Treecreeper** *Certhia familiaris*

Four at Bolam Lake on 18th was the highest count (MJC). Three were noted at Gosforth, Humshaugh, Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth) and Wark (North Tyne), two at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) and singles at Arcot Hall GC, Bedlington (Furnace Bridge and Humford Mill), Corbridge, Druridge Bay CP, East Sleekburn, Kielder Village, Leazes Park, Northumberland Park (North Shields), Prestwick Carr, Rising Sun CP (Wallsend), Rothbury, Tyne Green (Hexham) and Windyhaugh (Upper Coquetdale).



**Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris*

A large flock of 3,000 was feeding on pastures at View Law (Longhorsley) on 4th (AB/LB) and a murmuration of 2,500 was noted over Belford on 29th. Another feeding flock, at Smeafield numbered 1,000 on 11th while of particular interest was a tight flock of 650 high and W in-off the sea at East Ord at dawn on 19th. A flock of at least 400 was at Colt Crag Reservoir on 4th, 250 were at Hemscott Hill (Cresswell) on 1st and 120-150 were noted at Druridge Pools and Paxton Dean (Longhorsley) on 30th-31st. Elsewhere, 60-80 were noted at Fontburn, Melton Park (Hartburn) and Shilbottle and 20-30 at Chibburn links, Druridge Pools, Knowesgate and Shorestone. A flock of 50 at Seaton Sluice included a bird wearing a thin blue plastic leg ring, which didn't look like a BTO ring.



A Starling at North Shields on Christmas Day by Colin Bradshaw

**Blackbird** *Turdus merula*

A 2km stretch at Horton Burn (Cramlington) produced a count of 38 on 31st (LJM). There were 15 at Ross Village on 22nd and ten were noted at both Ellington Pond and Hallington Reservoir. Counts of six to eight came from Holy Island, Humford Mill (Bedlington) and Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth, while three to four were at Bothal, Druridge Pools, Hoppen Kiln Flash and Shorestone.



A male Blackbird by Colin Bradshaw at North Shields on 25th December.



**Fieldfare** *Turdus pilaris* / **Redwing** *Turdus iliacus*

A mixed flock of about 400 was at Fenham-le-Moor on 11th (DF).

**Fieldfare** *Turdus pilaris*

The largest gathering was 250 at Carterway Heads on 20th (IFo), while nearby there were counts 120 from Airy Holm and Derwent reservoirs on 12th and 26th respectively. Other large flocks included 180 at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 16th and 162 at Colt Crag Reservoir and 130 at Norham on 23rd. Counts of 80 came from Fontburn, Humshaugh and Winnows Hill (Slaley), while 50-60 were noted at Broomhaugh, Doddington, Lilburn, Paxton Dene (Longhorsley) and West Ord. Elsewhere, 30-46 were reported from Bothal Pond, Dinnington Village, High Buston, Houxty, Howick, Linden Hall and Shorestone, 20 at Castle Island, 17 at Dyke Neuk (Morpeth) and one to 15 at a further 14 localities

**Redwing** *Turdus iliacus*

There were some notable mid-winter flocks, with 150 at Carterway Heads on 20th (IFo), 120 at Gosforth on 24th, 80 at Beacon Hill (Cramlington) on 7th and 60 at Crooked Oak on 16th and Humshaugh on 31st. There were 55 at Bolam Lake on 18th, 50 at Corbridge on 20th and 40 roosted in Humshaugh Churchyard on 6th. Counts of 30-35 were received from Howick, Low Cocklaw (Berwick), View Law (Longhorsley) and Warkworth and 20-26 were noted at Big Waters NWT, Bothal Pond, Byker, Colt Crag Reservoir, Dyke Neuk (Morpeth), Fontburn, Haughton Castle and Leazes Park. Flocks moving S at Chapel House of 12, 20 and 20 on 1st, 3rd and 5th respectively were presumed to be different passage birds. One to 15 were reported from a further 15 localities.



A Redwing

Colin Bradshaw

North Shields

Christmas Day

**Song Thrush** *Turdus philomelos*

One to two, mainly in song, were reported from Amble Braid, Bamburgh, Brandling Park (Jesmond), Byker, Exhibition Park, Fawdon, Jesmond Dene, Prestwick Carr and Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth).

**Mistle Thrush** *Turdus viscivorus*

Ten at Bothal Pond on 28th was the largest count (TD), followed by seven at Jesmond Dene (Matthew Bank) on 3rd. Four were noted at Knowesgate on 7th, three at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 11th and two at Annitsford, Cocklawburn Pond on 3rd, Leazes Park, North Shields on 25th, North Shields FQ on 21st and Shorestone on 17th. Elsewhere, singles were reported from Bamburgh, Big Waters NWT, Byker, Corbridge, Druridge Bay CP, Druridge Pools, Gosforth, High Hauxley and Howden.

**Robin** *Erithacus rubecula*

A 2km stretch at Horton Burn (Cramlington) produced a count of 11 singing birds on 31st (LJM). Ten potentially new arrivals were at Holy Island on 31st and seven were at Stag Rocks-Budle Point on 18th. There were also four at Furnace Bridge (Bedlington) on 10th, three at Jesmond Dene and Shorestone, one to two at Druridge Pools and singles at Bothal, Druridge Bay CP and Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth).



A Robin by Colin Bradshaw at Howdon on 6th December

**Black Redstart** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

A female / immature was at Boulmer throughout the month and into 2020 (BS/NNBC).



A Black Redstart at Boulmer by Chris Barlow on 31st December

November correction the Black Redstarts recorded as St. Mary's should be Cullercoats



**Stonechat** *Saxicola rubicola*

In the Druridge Pools-East Chevington area seven were noted (south of the burn) on 28th (MH) and two pairs were at both sites on 15th (TD). Elsewhere, peak counts were five at Holy Island on 1st, four at Cocklawburn Pond/Saltpan Rocks on 3rd, two at Berwick GC, Boulmer, Cresswell Links, Colt Crag Reservoir, Howick, Old Law dunes, Prestwick Carr, Seaton Sluice, Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) and St Mary's Island and singles at Amble Braid, High Hauxley, Lynemouth Flash, Upper Coquetdale, Ross Back Sands and Watty Bells Cairn (MoD)



A pair of Stonechats by Alan Jack at St. Mary's on 1st December





**Dipper** *Cinclus cinclus*

Two were seen at Berwick Hill on 29th (AHB). Nine sightings of single birds this month, including one over a Morpeth garden at dusk (TD).

**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*

77 were noted at a roost site in a hedge at Cramlington High School on 22nd and 24th and 20 were at Southfield Green on 1st (DM). 51 were counted over 2 km along Horton Burn (Cramlington) on 31st (LJM). 50 were at Low Cocklaw on 27th (TBr).

**Tree Sparrow** *Passer Montanus*

Around 61 were counted at Hauxley on 28th (DM *et al.*). A minimum of 20 were seen at Prestwick Carr on 23rd, with 14 there earlier in the month (DLo). 15 were at Dunstanburgh on 26th. Two to 14 were noted at 12 other sites.

**Dunnoek** *Prunella modularis*

Poorly reported this month, with four at Druridge Pools and Links, three at Furnace Bridge and at two Newbiggin sites the only multiple counts. Singles were at two sites.

**Eastern Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla tschutschensis*

One was initially discovered by P. Cassels feeding on flooded fields at Prestwick Carr on the 14th, and later confirmed by call analysis, represents the first occurrence in the county of this Eastern species (PC/MJC/NFO *et al.*).

There were many photographs of the popular Prestwick Carr Eastern Yellow Wagtail . Here is a selection;



Prestwick Carr

Tim Dean

18th December



The Wagtail eats a Prestwick treat- a blood worm. Colin Bradsaw on 15th December



EYW by Chris Barlow on 14th December





The Wagtail shows its colours  
John Richardson  
17th December

**Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*

Two were seen at Byker, Marden Quarry and at Brier Dene (Whitley Bay) during the month. Singles were noted at 12 other sites.

**Pied Wagtail** *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

Eight were at Hexham on 3rd (SW). Five noted at Holy Island north shore on 31st (MJC/ADM). Four at St. Mary's on 20th (ASJ). One to two were at a further six locations.

A Pied Wagtail

Cullercoats

Alan Jack

13th December





**Meadow Pipit** *Anthus pratensis*

20 was a good inland count for December at Colt Crag on 4th (MR). Eight were seen at Prestwick Carr on 22nd and St. Mary's on 7th and five at the latter site on 21st (GB/ASJ). Seven noted at East Chevington on 25th (MH). One to three were at a further seven sites during the month.

**Water Pipit** *Anthus spinoletta*

One was present at Boulmer all month (BS/NNBC/MJC).



A Water Pipit by Chris Barlow on 31st December at Seaton Point

**Rock Pipit** *Anthus petrosus*

19 were counted at the north shore of Holy Island on 1st, with 14 across the island on 31st (MJC/ADM). Seven were along the shore at Old Law on 22nd with the same number at Boulmer on 30th (MJC). Five were at St. Mary's on 6th and 16th (MSH/ASJ). Four were seen at Cullercoats on 12th with one singing to and chasing a rival on one occasion (ASJ). One to three were noted at five other coastal sites.



A Rock Pipit at Boulmer by Chris Barlow on 31st December

**"Scandinavian Rock Pipit"** *Anthus petrosus littoralis*

Two were seen at Sandham Bay (Holy Island) on 31st (MJC/ADM).

**Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelebs*

At Crooked Oak, 50 seen on 3rd had increased to 100 by 6th at nearby Crooked Oak Lane, then 200 on 19th (IFo). Flocks of 46 were at High Shaw and Middle Ord (Berwick) during the month. 35 were found at Kielder Village on 11th (ADM). 25 at Druridge on 26th (IR/JD). One to 14 were seen at another 13 sites.



A Chaffinch at Prestwick Carr on 29th December by Colin Bradshaw

**Bullfinch** *pyrrhula pyrrhula*

16 was a good count at Prestwick Carr on 22nd, as was 12 at Chugdon Wood on 19th and 12 at Branton on 26th (IK/TB/IBda/Kda). Eleven were noted at Castle Island on 15th (DM/PA). Ten were at Wark on 10th (PRM), and at DBCP on 28th (DM). Nine seen at Havannah on 30th (GB). Eight fed daily at feeders in a Rothbury garden and eight were at Hauxley on 28th. One to six were seen at an impressive further 37 locations this month.



An agile Bullfinch

at North Shields

Alan Jack

3rd December

**Greenfinch** *Chloris chloris*

Five were at Byker on 2nd and at St. Mary's on 10th (GB/ASJ). One to three were seen at six further sites, including Holy Island village.

60 was the largest flock this month, seen at Druridge Bay/East Chevington on 25th, 44 were there on 27th (MH). 50 were down the coast at Hemscott Hill links on 5th, with lesser counts on other days (IDR). 40 at the N end of the Druridge links road on 9th (AJ). Some overlap may have been involved within these groups ? At Cocklawburn 34 on 12th and 38 on 24th were seen (MHu). 19 were at Old Law dunes on 22nd (MJC). Three were at Nessend (Holy Island) on 1st (CH).

**Linnet** *Linaria cannabina*

50 were noted in a mixed finch flock at Druridge Pools/Links on 1st (IDR). Around 40 were at Sandham Bay on 1st, with 40 at Buston links on 3rd (MJC/STH).

**Lesser Redpoll** *Acanthis caberet*

20 were in a mixed flock on 15th at East Chevington (TD). Eleven were caught during ringing at Corbridge Common on 29th (DLe). Ten were at Branton on 1st and one to six at nine other sites during the month.

**Crossbill** *Loxia curvirostra*

50 plus were counted at Sidwood on 24th and 30 plus at Stonehaugh on 7th (PRM). One to five were seen at only three other sites this month.

**Goldfinch** *Carduelis carduelis*

A large flock of 250 was at Druridge Pools/Links on 1st, with lesser counts made here on several other days (IDR). 60 were at Howick on 29th (JAR). One to 35 were noted at 13 further locations.

**Siskin** *Spinus spinus*

Around 80 were at Corbridge Common on 15th (DLe). 80 also at Greenriggs on 19th (SW). 50 counted at Derwent Reservoir on 22nd (IFo). 44 seen at Houxty on 4th (AJ). Flocks of 40 at Branton and Colt Crag during the month. One to 20 were at six further sites.

**Yellowhammer** *Emberiza citronella*

A feeding flock of around 65 was in stubble at High Cocklaw on 13th (TBr). 54, also in stubble, were at Prospect Hill (Corbridge) on 15th (DLe). 30 were seen at Shoreston on 17th (IDR) and 18 at Howick on 29th (JAR). 12 were noted at Doddington on 3rd (TRD/JD). Elsewhere, one to eight were at ten other sites.

**Reed Bunting** *Emberiza schoeniclus*

28 were counted in stubble at Shoreston on 28th (IDR). Nine were seen at St. Mary's on 1st and eight were at Old Law on 22nd (ASJ/MJC). One to five were at ten more sites this month.

**Snow Bunting** *Plectrophenax nivalis*

11 frequented the Quarry area of Holy Island on 1st (MJC). Ten at Nessend that day could have involved this group (CT). Singles were seen at Buston, Blyth, Boulmer and Budle Bay during the month.

**ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN**

**Escapes**

**Red-breasted Goose** *Branta ruficollis*

The record last month should have referred to Red-breasted Merganser.

**Bar-headed Goose** *Anser indicus*

Three were still at Warkworth until 2nd (BS / RPo). There was also a single at Derwent Reservoir on 6th (IFo).

**Muscovy Duck** *Cairina moschata*

Two were still at QE II CP, Ashington on 28th (DM/GB / LAR).

**Hybrids**

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

Four were seen at Big Waters on 15th (DM / PJA).

**Gadwall** *Mareca strepera* x **Shoveler** *Spatula clypeata*

This unusual pairing was seen again, this time at Holywell Pond on 21st (GB). A photo of this hybrid can be found on page 55 of the new Wild Guides book 'Britain's Birds'.

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

Long staying single at at Killingworth Lake on 1st (BS).

**Birds of Unknown Origin**

No sightings



## LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

A.Allen, P.J.Allott, N.Anderson, A.H.Banks, M. & R.J.Bentley (MB/RB), T.Blake, J.S.Booth, G.Bowman, C.Bradshaw, T.Brewis (TBr), A. & L.Brunst, D.J.Carr, M.J.Carr, P.R.Cassells, M.N.Coates, M.J.Cook (MJCo), T.Daley, E.Crabtree, T.Daley, I.B. & K.Davison (IBDa / KDa), T.R. & J.Dean, I.R.Douglas, J.Fairclough, T. & J.Farooqi (TF/JFa), P.C.Fletcher, D.F.Forshaw, I.Forsyth (IFo), C.D.Hampton, J.R.K. Harrison, C.Hartley, M.Henry, M.Hepple (MHP), 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.Leat (DLe), D.Lovatt (DLo), J.P.Lumby, P.R.Massey, S.V. & A.J.McCormick, L.J.McDougall, D.McKeown, A.D.Mclevy, M.McNeely (MMcN), A.D.Mould, M.Natgrass, A.J.Newson, N.F.Osborne, R.Poyer (RPo), A.J.Richards, J.Richardson, M.Richardson, I.D.Robson, L.A.Robson, J.A.Roper, M.R.Smith, B.Steel, R.Stevens, D.R.Watson, T.Watson, S.Westerberg, G.Wilcox, K.W.York.

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), Helen Snaith (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).

North Northumberland Bird Club (R Poyer and J Lumby), Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

## Apologies for any accidental omissions

Proof reading was by Mike Smith.

Mail distribution by Paul Stewart.

Clive Hammond is Data Manager.

Edited by Steve Barrett [NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com](mailto:NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com)

## RECORD SUBMISSION

Please email records for the month to [ntbc.records@googlemail.com](mailto: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](mailto: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. 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 [ntbcorg@jobentley.plus.com](mailto:ntbcorg@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 [ntbcorg@jobentley.plus.com](mailto:ntbcorg@jobentley.plus.com)

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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://www.ntbc.org.uk)

**WILLOW TIT SURVEY**

The RSPB and Rare Breeding Birds Panel are running a UK Willow Tit survey in 2019 and 2020, working with bird clubs across England, Scotland and Wales in order to estimate the population of this rapidly-declining species. Last year around 50 tetrads (2-km squares) were surveyed in Northumberland by NTBC members and other volunteers, a fantastic effort which we hope to build on in 2020 to make a great contribution to the national survey, but also to get a better idea of the species' status in Northumberland. Surveying involves by visiting pre-selected tetrads (2-km squares) throughout the species' range in the county; note that those who did the survey in 2019 will be asked to survey different squares in 2020. Surveys will require two visits to search suitable habitat between mid-February and mid-April. For more information please see <http://www.rbbp.org.uk/rbbp-surveys-WT.htm> and if you're interested in taking part, contact Mark Eaton at [mark.eaton@rspb.org.uk](mailto:mark.eaton@rspb.org.uk).

**Dr Mark Eaton**

**Principal Conservation Scientist, RSPB Centre for Conservation Science**

**Chair, European Bird Census Council & UK Rare Breeding Birds Panel**

**Address:** RSPB, Suite 3, Floor 2, MEA House, Ellison Place, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne & Wear, NE1 8XS, UK

**Phone:** 07880 784293

**Skype:** markalexandereaton



Mike Henry  
'05

Red Kites by Mike Henry